

and George was his friend, hanging out at the studio at the time. And George would just chirp in with an idea here and there, and we felt that he warranted co-production on some tracks. So we gave him that, and from there he got the confidence to become a producer. That's when Rick and George were still in New York, and it was still Def Jam. So we've had a history together as well."

"It's really strange because we've been around at the foundations of a lot of the contemporary things that are happening right now. Those two have been very influential. We've been around a lot of people at the birth of their careers. I'm not saying we had a hand in it, we were just there."

"Someone asked me if we were the grandfathers of Grunge, and we were like, 'fuck off!' We're only 30 you know!"

SH: "So do you think of the people who are with you now as hired hands?"

IA: "I see it completely as a band again now. Scott Garrett, who plays drums, is a 26-year-old from Washington DC, played in a band called Pop's Cool Love and a band from LA called Nevermind. He's really fluent in Hip Hop culture and Go Go beats. It's one of his favourite styles of playing. We now have Craig Adams, from The Mission, playing bass. It's weird, because when Jamie (Stewart) left, the chemistry of the band was destroyed for a while, and it was really hard to recapture it. So we sort of used musicians out of convenience."

SH: "So who do you think your fans are?"

IA: "I think the fans we have are just into music, you know. Just open-minded people who can see the merits of Metallica, and can see the merits of us. We don't have any demographic of fans. We get teenyboppers, we get Hard Rockers, just all sorts."

SH: "So do you have much of a relationship with the fans?"

IA: "I do when I'm at the shows. I've gone to jail for fans. I got arrested at a

concert, when security guards were beating up members of the audience. I ended up belting three of them and going to jail for it. I nearly got thrown into jail in Ohio for doing the same thing, for jumping on a security guy, but he knocked me out before I even hit the ground anyway. Punched me in the face."

SH: "Do you still get nervous before shows?"

IA: "No. I'm a slut for the stage! I'm not intimidated by crowds. I'm not intimidated by people sticking bottles in my face. I'm a total exhibitionist. I get more excited than nervous. It's a rush."

"I like playing live as long as we're not doing something that's conservative. The 'Ceremony' tour was okay, but it was kind of dull. After playing '(She Sells)

Sanctuary' for ten years, it's kind of boring, even though people want to hear it. That's why I'm really concerned with the new material, pushing

the new stuff to the foreground, laying the foundations. It's the most



Shannon Hoon (left) and Ian Astbury: just call him journalist-child, for that is his name ...



Shannon shows Ian his best interviewing bobble-hat ...

important thing we've got right now."

SH: "What areas of music are exciting to you now?"

IA: "Some of the areas I like are like Techno, which is really progressive. A lot of what is still very underground is Techno-culture. I think that once it crosses over into Rock music, we might be onto something really radical. That's our secret masterplan. We're working on Techno stuff right now."

SH: "Do you work on other stuff outside of The Cult?"

IA: "Yeah. I did a record with a group called Messiah. I just sang for them, and I co-produced (former Sex Pistol) Steve Jones' last album, but that was more of a lyrical and vocal thing."

"I think it's very healthy to work with other people. Billy (Duffy) worked with Bob Rock on his record, and did something with Johnny Marr for an NME compilation album."

SH: "I think they want us to finish. I guess that's it ..."