



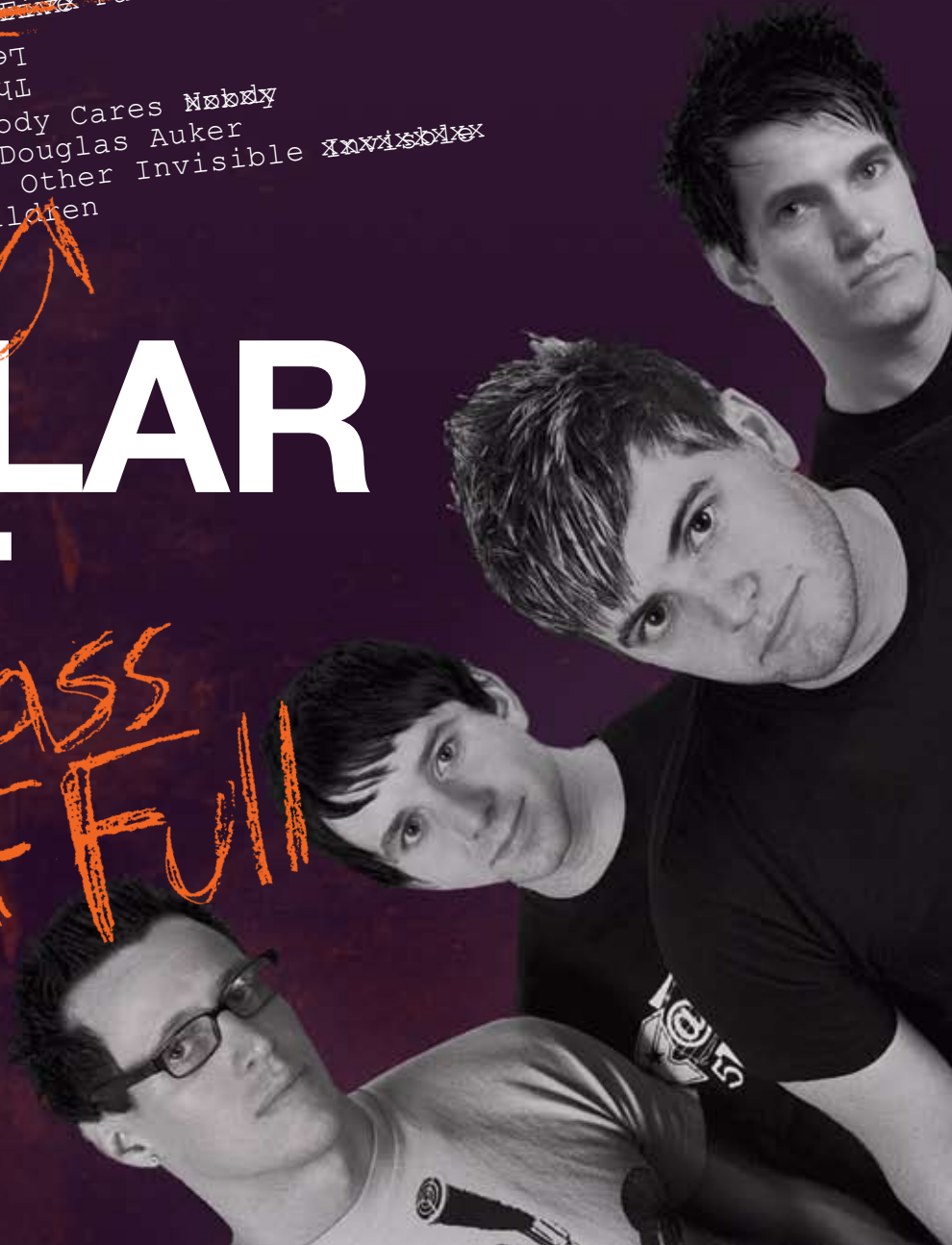
# AWAKEN

ISSUE #105 AUG/SEPT 2006  
ISSUE 105  
AUG/SEPT 2006

Featured in this issue -  
Inhale Exhale - A New Breath of Fresh Air  
House of Heroes - Their Becoming & Beyond  
also Red and Family Force Five  
Leeland + Nevertheless  
The Turning  
Transition and  
New Reviews of  
Columns include  
Nobody Cares Nobody  
by Douglas Auker  
The Other Invisible  
Children

# STELLAR KART

THE GLASS  
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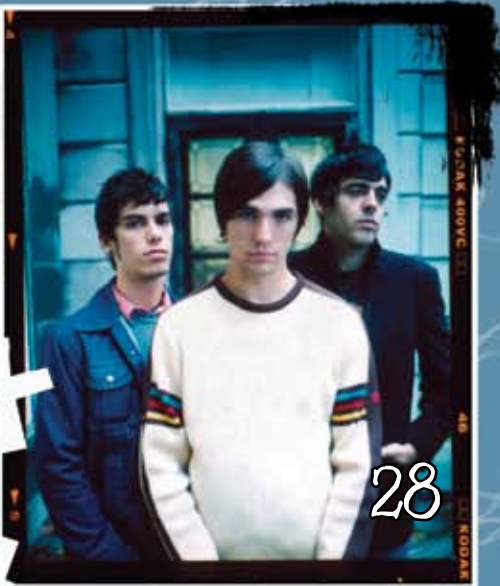


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AWAKEN  
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# EXTREME TESTIMONY



INTERVIEW FEATURING  
BRANDON MILLS OF  
DECYFERDOWN

I grew up with my mother always dragging me to church every Sunday, so I knew a lot about the Lord. I had lost my father when I was eleven years old. Then, when I got into my teenage years, I started hanging out with the wrong crowd. They were all friends of mine, and we all went down this path together. I slowly got into drugs, partying, and doing that whole scene. I just ended up getting into a lot of bad things; I would constantly steal, and I was always in and out of court.

When I was about 18, I got a court order sending me to a Christian rehab facility. I actually ended up learning a lot there; why I was the way I was, needing to fill the void in my life. I felt like I had made a real commitment to Christ in that place, but I still wasn't completely delivered of all the things that I had been involved with. When I got out of rehab, I fell right back into the same things. I became severely addicted to cocaine and was back to shooting up. I was at a really bad place in my life, even to the point of pawning and stealing from my own family. Anything that had any value to me, I would sell so I could get high that day.

Basically one night, I was really strung out on coke, and I was almost in tears because I couldn't stop doing it. I remember sitting at my buddy's house, in his bedroom, real jacked up, and I just started praying. I prayed, "Lord, I feel like I'm going to die and go to Hell. I cannot stop doing this stuff. If You can hear me, I need help!" Then two weeks later, I got arrested. It was in the back of that police vehicle, in-between the seats, handcuffed, and upside down that I

remember saying, "Thank You. Thank You, Lord!" I knew that I couldn't get away, get out of that cop car, or get out of being locked up to get anything. I couldn't get high if I wanted to or not. I felt that this was His way of providing an exit point. It was just an awesome experience. I was actually only in jail for a couple of days, but while I was there, my family brought me my Bible. I had some time alone with God. I really felt like He was starting to renew me and give me another chance.

After I got out of jail, I did lose some of my cravings. My cocaine addiction was gone instantly, and I needed that so much. God just took it away from me. I actually had a stash in my car that I knew was there, and as soon as I got out of jail, I went and looked for it. But, it was gone! A friend of mine had actually taken it. I was so glad that it wasn't there! I was so sick of always being in trouble and being strung out. I felt like I was at the end of my road. I did struggle with wanting to smoke pot, but God just delivered me from it. I did slip up a couple of times, but it was a growing process. It was Him teaching me. When I did slip up, it was miserable. God was showing me that this wasn't me anymore. It just wasn't enjoyable anymore. He had totally taken the enjoyment and hype of it away. I didn't want anything to do with it anymore. I had no desire for it anymore.

I had always played music, so when I got out; I bought back my acoustic guitar that I had pawned. That was the only thing that I could afford to get back! I was actually in a band before all of this happened. I pawned my electric guitars, all my amps, and everything

else so I didn't have anything left. But, I was able to get back that acoustic guitar. I think my mom or somebody else lent me the money to get it, and I just started writing. God was giving me all these songs about renewal and His grace towards me and my life. These songs ministered to me like I knew they would minister to other people. It was just really cool. During that whole period in my life, I really felt God's love and I knew that He was always there.

I was 21 when this all happened, and now I'm 28. This was the start of the band back then. I was writing those songs, and then I got with Josh, our drummer. I had the opportunity to go into prison and share my testimony. That was the first thing I ever did. I saw five or six guys in prison rededicate their lives and give their lives to Christ just from sharing my story that one time. The doors just began to open. People started asking us to come and play at their youth retreats. They said that they had a lot of youth that needed to hear what we had to say. So I would get with Josh, and he would come play drums. It was nothing big; we sat on stools and just played. At that time, that's all we did. A lot of kids got hope with what we had shared.

That's how this whole band got started. We just started going anywhere and everywhere where someone would open a door. Slowly we got back into the whole rock thing. That was my heart, I always loved rock music. We just hit it hard, and any money that God would bless us with, we poured back into the band. Josh, Caleb, and I had been together for about 8 years, and then Chris joined us about 4 years ago.

# Nobody cares...

Matthew 27:46 ~

*About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in loud voice, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

**H**ave you ever felt this way? I have, and I would like to share about a time in my life when I felt like nobody cared for me. When I graduated from high school, I enlisted in the United States Navy with my two brothers and step-brother. Coming from a broken family and being less than a year apart, my brothers and I were inseparable. I didn't know what it was like to be separated from my brothers.

The four of us were in the same company in boot camp. After about five weeks into boot camp, we were actively involved in "hell week." One job, I was randomly selected to perform, was cleaning dishes in the galley. This was one of the worse jobs. After one day of working in steaming hot, dirty water, I broke out with an eczema rash. I went to the medical hospital thinking that a little ointment would solve my problem. Much to my surprise, things took a turn for the worst, so I thought. After an examination, the Navy told me I would have to be honorably, medically discharged. This news broke my heart, I felt like a total loser. I

returning home would only feed my feelings of rejection.

God created us to have a relationship with Him. At the time when I was going through this, I didn't turn to Him for help. I focused on my circumstances instead of going to the Father and believing that He had something else better for me.

In preparation for this article, I asked the Lord, "Why did I feel like nobody cared for me at that time?" His response was, "I felt that way when I was on the cross! I had to take on the sins of the world, and I was spiritually separated from My father."

Jesus couldn't feel His father at that moment when He took on our sin. This is how we are when sin separates us from our heavenly father. Romans 6:23 states, "*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

I really thought I knew God, but I didn't. God had a plan for my life, but I didn't know how to hear from Him. I didn't have a true relationship with Him. Because I did not know and put His ways into practice in my life, I was separated from the Lord. When we don't trust Him in everything, we are not allowing Him to be apart of our lives. We are actually living in sin.

to believe this lie.

After 12 years of living in sin, I finally realized that my life amounted to nothing without the Lord. I was causing hurt in the lives of the ones I loved. I realized His spirit was real and drawing me. At this time, I rededicated my life to Christ creating a turning point in my life. I began the process of developing a relationship with my heavenly Father. He accepted me for who I was... a sinner. Nothing was too big that He couldn't forgive, and I didn't even have to clean myself up before He would accept me. The more I put into the relationship, the more He revealed Himself to me. It is a process. I understand now how much He loves me and cares for me.

Make a decision that you are going to serve God. No matter how you are feeling, do not quit. Know who you are in Christ. God loves you so much that He gave His son to set you free. "*If the son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.*" (John 8:36) Jesus died for us so that we can live in victory. That is our blood bought right as children of God. He shed His blood because He truly cares for us!

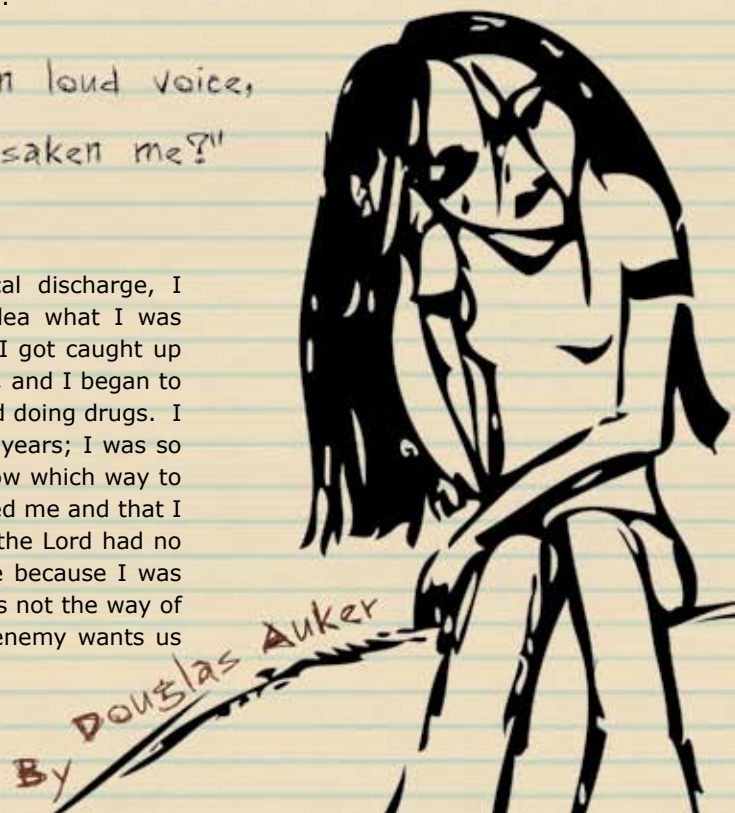
For more information on Christ First Ministries and Douglas Auker, visit [www.christfirstministries.org](http://www.christfirstministries.org).

*About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in loud voice,  
"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

was devastated to think that I would not continue with the vision my brothers and I had. I broke down in tears in front of my officer. I begged him to allow me to stay because I did not want to go home. I was afraid I would be rejected by my family.

My parents both suffered from past hurts and had difficulty showing their love to me and my siblings. There was a piece missing in my childhood because my parents did not know how to show the love of Christ. I was starved for my parents' affection. I longed for someone to hug me and say, "I love you!" Deep down inside, I knew

After receiving the medical discharge, I returned home with no idea what I was going to do with my life. I got caught up in all the lies of the enemy, and I began to get involved in drinking and doing drugs. I lived this life for about 12 years; I was so depressed that I didn't know which way to turn. I felt like no one loved me and that I had no future. I believed the Lord had no reason to want to help me because I was living this sinful life. This is not the way of our heavenly Father; the enemy wants us



## FM Static - [Critically Ashamed]

When Trevor McNeven and Steve Augustine of Thousand Foot Krutch decided to create FM Static, it was an idea that was just simply genius. Three years after their debut album FM Static returns with a hard hitting, mood boosting album that will have you laughing and crying until the end. With songs spanning from Avril Lavigne to Volkswagen Jettas, Trevor does an outstanding job of making fun of everything that has ever become popular in the mainstream market. Even William Hung managed to make it into a song. So if you're sick and tired of albums that bring you down and put you in a bad mood, then look no further than to the new FM Static album, *Critically Ashamed*. - **Wesley Whetstone**



## Day of Fire - [Cut & Move]

Tune up your air guitar and get ready to rock! It's been almost 2 years since Day of Fire first impacted the scene with their debut album which won them a Dove Award and a Grammy nomination. Now with the release of their sophomore album *Cut & Move*, once again Day of Fire is going to achieve even more success. *Cut & Move* contains the same grungy feel as their first CD did, but with more of a harder edge. Day of Fire's front-man, Joshua Brown, carries his own unique thunderous vocal style that stands out. On *Cut & Move*, Day of Fire has a tighter sound, and they have taken it up a notch with their signature mix of raging riffs and catchy hooks. Lyrically, the songs deal with topics about addiction, abuse, and abandonment, but offers hope through God's love. - **Mike Gates**



## House of Heroes - [Say No More]

The wait is finally over! The long anticipated sequel to their self-titled debut album has arrived. While there are only two new songs, "You Are the Judas of the Cheerleading Squad" and "The Invisible Hook," the new versions of the old songs are still sweet sounding. The album is well worth the buy, for old fans who still remember last years hit video *Serial Sleepers*, and for those new to the scene. The band maintains their solid rock edge throughout the album, not turning off the highway of rock in any manner. I will say no more except this: excellent! - **Eric Whetstone**



## Red - [End of Silence]

Red's *End of Silence* starts out with a calm, piano based intro. It's like the calm before the storm because exactly one minute and ten seconds into the album, Red explodes with the first track, "Breathe Into Me." If you didn't know this was a Christian band, you would never see the spiritual references in the music, making the album enjoyable for anyone who has an open ear to listen. The pacing of the album is extremely well done; heavy songs blend well into slower songs which blend nicely back into heavy songs. This is further proof that not only do you have to have a set of well written songs, which Red sure does, but you also have to know exactly what order they need to be in to be received well. While this is an overall well rounded album, I personally enjoyed the slower songs to a great extent. "Pieces" is a wonderful showcase for the vocals which then goes right into "Break Me Down," which is a great mix of both sides of Red. Overall a wonderful experience. - **Mike D'Ulisse**



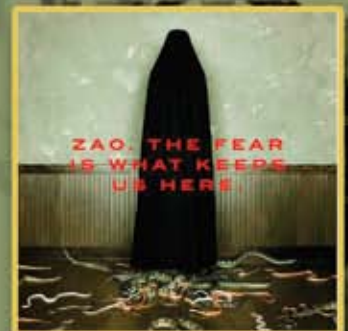
## Run Kid Run - [This Is Who We Are]

Run Kid Run's debut album *This Is Who We Are* hasn't left the CD player in my car since I bought it three weeks ago. The four-some, which consists of two former members of Side Walk Slam, blend Pop, Rock, and Punk with notable lyrics that find me singing along in my car when no one is watching. The first drum roll of "We've Only Just Begun" had me hooked. These guys aren't afraid to write lyrics about their past mistakes and just simply praise God for His goodness. "The Modern March" is a prayer about our need for Christ and how our human faults get in the way. In "I'll Forever Sing" the chorus says it all, "I have made my choice to follow, I'll worship you alone forever." I promise that if you buy Run Kid Run's *This Is Who We Are* you won't be disappointed. - **Ali Hadenfeldt**



## Zao - [The Fear Is What Keeps Us Here]

*The Fear Is What Keeps Us Here* is an album that is hidden in the shadows of some of the most climatic times for Zao. This new release, produced by Zao and recorded by Steve Albini (Nirvana, The Pixies), is still same old Zao, yet it has a lighter feeling to it. For some reason, this release is still pumping, aggressive, harsh sounding, and all with great instrumentation. Some recognizable differences are that it is rawer sounding and has the "lighter feel" than previous Zao releases. While it is still aggressive, it also has a hard rock "vibe" that helps the album to have that lighter feel. Lyrically, it's talking mostly about how people are stubborn or stuck in their own ways with a deeper and slightly darker theme based off of "fear". Zao's newest release shows that they can change up their sound and stay true to how they want to do their music. The Zao way. - **Len Nash**





[Knuckles Up] - **Flatfoot 56**

This album is something unexpected, and utterly unbelievable. Finally, there is an Irish sounding band, akin to the Dropkick Murphys, in the realm of Christian music. Flatfoot 56 doesn't just resemble the sound of the Dropkicks; it adds to it and polishes its edges to a new shine. Essentially, *Knuckles Up* is one very uncommon sounding album. The sound is that of straight up punk. No fancy add-ons to this band, they have stayed true to the punk name. The bagpipes in "Brotherhood" are so... (Insert synonym for amazing here). In fact, take the word you inserted, and place it over the entire album because it holds true. Put your Knuckles Up for Flatfoot 56 (Your thumbs too)! - **Eric Whetstone**



[Self-titled] - **The Longing**

God whispered and Jason Ingram stopped to listen. Ingram, the gifted songwriter for dozens of top artists like Joy Williams, Rebecca St. James, and Building 429, brought his life to a halt to listen for what God had next for him. After what, according to Ingram, was a number of experiences that taught him to find his identity in Christ, he emerged with a band called The Longing. What resulted was a low-key worship album that at the core simply desires God's presence. Ingram leads listeners to a place where brokenness brings grace, humility brings goodness, and surrendering brings comfort. On "My Offering," Ingram sings about giving his all to God, casting his fears, doubts, dreams, and crowns aside. This act of sacrifice is laced throughout the album as Ingram sings about bowing his heart down and lifting it up to God. The album also includes the celebratory anthem, "Salvation Song," and the mercy plea, "Heal This Land." - **Andrea Wolloff**



[The Best Worst-Case Scenario] - **Fair**

Aaron Sprinkle is back, and it's about time. You may know Sprinkle as the producer for bands such as Acceptance and Emery or you may have one of his numerous solo CDs. Now after a three year hiatus, Sprinkle has started a new band, Fair, with three friends, and their album *The Best Worst-Case Scenario* off of Tooth & Nail Records never ceases to amaze me after countless listens. Whether you are a fan of Sprinkle's earlier albums or haven't heard his music, you won't regret this purchase. The single "Carelessness" showcases the bands melodic, Indie/ Pop feel that's throughout the album. Don't stop listening part way through the record, because the end of the album is just as solid with tracks "Confidently Dreaming" and the powerful "Unglued." Intoxicating melodies, strong harmonies, Sprinkle's voice, and lyrics in *The Best Worst-Case Scenario* top off a near perfect album. Welcome back. - **Ali Hadenfeldt**



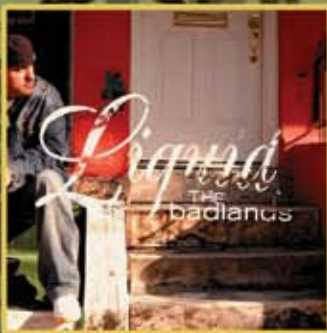
[The Healing of Harms] - **Fireflight**

Fireflight's debut album, *The Healing of Harms*, has been my most anticipated CD release for 2006, and I must say that it was well worth the wait. Orlando, FL's Fireflight is a female fronted, Christian rock band that brings a fresh sound that digs deep inside your heart, mind, and soul. From start to finish, *The Healing of Harms* is filled with hard driven guitars, pulsating drums, and scorching melodies. My favorite track is "You Decide," which also features Day of Fire's frontman, Joshua Brown, on guest vocals. *The Healing of Harms* is heavily saturated with thought provoking, positive, and spiritual lyrics that offers a ray of help and hope. The album is produced by Skidd Mills who has also worked with Saliva and Skillet. Lead singer Dawn Richardson carries dynamic vocals that can't be compared to anyone else. Dawn, along with band mates Wendy Drennen, Glenn Drennen, Justin Cox, and Phee Shorb are going to heat up the summer and hearts with this album. - **Mike Gates**



[We Can't Stand Sitting Down] - **Stellar Kart**

The summer camp punk rockers are back with *We Can't Stand Sitting Down*, another adrenaline pumping masterpiece. *We Can't Stand Sitting Down* is the follow up to Stellar Kart's 2005 debut album, *All Gas. No Break.* Before you press play, you should prepare yourself for a rollercoaster ride. With the opening guitar riff of "Procrastinating," you'll be pushed back in your seat, until you reach "Me and Jesus," the first single of the album that is almost written to perfection. Proceeding on the track with the upbeat "Loose Control," this song contains such a powerful message that should be taken to heart by everyone that hears it. So when you finally reach the end, don't be surprised if you want to start the album all over again. - **Wesley Whetstone**



[Tales From The Badlands] - **Liquid**

Turn up the volume, crank up the bass, sit back, and enjoy the ride; just don't forget to buckle up! The minute I played the opening track, "Back in the Day," it took me back to when I was growing up in the 80's. Liquid has put together a well produced album that is full of infectious beats that are mixed with a fusion of R&B, Old School Hip-Hop, 70's Soul, Jazz, Funk, Latin, and Reggae flavors. Born and raised in Philadelphia, PA, Liquid is a multi-talented and gifted artist with a fresh vibe, who delivers smooth vocals with lyrics that are poetic in nature. Signed to Gotee, Liquid is a modern day story teller who shares about his life growing up in the inner city. It's hard to pick a favorite track because the whole album rocks, but I love track #6, "Sunrise," which is a lyrical masterpiece that reminds us that there is always a light of hope to pierce the darkness. Liquid brings old school to the new with *Tales From The Badlands*, definitely a must have CD. It makes me wish I still had my '77 Grand Prix to cruise in. - **Mike Gates**



*transitionmusic.net*

"If you want something done right, then you have to do it yourself!" That is a common saying that I first heard from my father growing up, and it must be a phrase familiar to Mike Herrera as well. Herrera, punk legend and front man from MXPX, is the producer of *Get There*, the Floodgate debut album from Transition. Most would agree that Herrera knows a little something about punk rock, and now he has passed along his wisdom to Transition. The track entitled "Winter" on the new album features vocals by Herrera.

Transition's *Get There* is their debut album for the band as a signed artist, but they already have two independent albums including a self-titled EP that

sold a few thousand copies in a short amount of time. It was this independent album that first caught the attention of Floodgate Records who brought Transition on board to join their family that already consisted of The Myriad, *Forever Changed*, and *Mourning* September.

Transition formed in 2003 in their native city of Pittsburgh, PA. The band consists of some rather young talent: vocalist Dan Smyers, guitarists Steve Biringner and Matt Colussy, bassist Dustin Hook, and drummer James Caligiuri.

Transition's music overall has a very solid punk sound to it with the familiar vocal resonance that you hear in that particular genre, short strokes of distortion on six-strings, driving base, and the 1-2 count on the drums. Yet their music still has

a sense of independence in comparison with other bands as of late.

As a musician myself, one thing I can appreciate about their music is that each track changes rhythm several times throughout, making for an interesting mix. Some tracks may start in half-time tempo, move into a "punked-out" 1-2 count, and then into a 4-count. Bridges and choruses have the ability to stand alone if they would need to, and that is a sign of a good song. For those of you who don't understand what I'm saying, just listen to the album and enjoy it.

From a lyrical standpoint, the band has a mix of topics ranging from reminiscing childhood memories to wanting to break out to find ones' self, and tackling issues that many teens face. But, the overall goal seems to be positive and to have fun with their music. According to their web site, [www.transitionmusic.net](http://www.transitionmusic.net), a lot of youth are looking for self-pity music to fill a void. Transition offers optimism instead and refuses to add to the stereotype.

...*Nicholas Gao*

# Transition



*leelandonline.com*

Many times I have wondered and pondered what would happen if something was truly taken from a divine encounter straight from the depths of Heaven and put to life on an album. Something so supernatural that it was untainted and untouched with today's standards and influences. What would happen if we threw away song theory, writing styles, and offered even just one ear to hear the sounds of Heaven? This is what happens when you take an untainted 17-year old, who goes by the name Leeland Mooring, and just let him declare what he heard in the midst of Heaven. How may you ask does such a young man have such wisdom beyond his years? Leeland has one key ingredient that raises them to levels that many will

never reach. As they would simply put it, it's inspiration from "Jesus (The Ultimate Musician)."

"Tears of the Saints," is an example of one of these songs that was inspired out of an experience with Leeland one Sunday afternoon. "I was playing piano, just worshiping, and I asked in prayer, 'God, just give me your heart for the lost.'" It was a hope to feel the longing God feels for people struggling to find their way. "And then I started crying - it was as if God gave me a little glimpse of his heart," Leeland continues. "'Tears of the Saints' came out, and it's about how for every person who is out there lost there is probably about five people praying for them. We want to see kids saved," states Leeland. "What's awesome about this song

live, is how it touches people," bassist Jake Holtz adds. "The Lord is just blessing people. You can see change coming across their faces. It's nothing we're doing. God's just working through us with this song."

"Our responsibility as a band is to be a light to people and to fulfill the Great Commission. Secondly, our vision is to write songs that are vessels for the presence of God. Through our songs, we hope people experience God in such a new way that they are inspired to draw closer to him" claims Jack. "What people hear on the record is five young guys that have hearts to glorify God," says Jack Mooring. "That's what it's all about for us: Declaring to God and to people how amazing He is."

With purposes like these, Leeland has taken their listeners beyond music and into a place that they can be ministered too. Leeland's music takes you beyond listening pleasure and into an experience with the Creator. It's like they break open the flood gates of Heaven, and you just let it pour down in pure refreshment.

# Leeland

*...Shane Calhoun*



*turningmusic.com*

If you enjoy bands that rely on strong vocals and deep, challenging lyrics, then you may already have the debut album by The Turning. If not, you may still be as nervous as I was about the direction of music. Don't get me wrong, the "screamo" style of hard rock and screeching vocals that has become so dominant with up and coming bands holds a place in my heart even when the singing is incoherent. Sometimes nothing is better than driving down the highway blaring Underoath, Spoken, or Anberlin while the window is down, but I often find myself searching for new bands with that melodic-modern rock sound; a sound that you can hear when listening to U2 or Casting Crowns... The Turning to the rescue.

The Turning, out of Nashville, Tennessee, makes their home at RKT Music, which released their debut album June 6th. The founder of RKT Music, well known Grammy-winning Christian artist Michael W. Smith, has described their first album as "infectious."

Vocalist Jacob McGinnis offers powerful melodies and thoughtful, challenging lyrics while bass, drum, and guitar players Matt Warren, Jeff Goff, and Jeremy Little bring that modern rock feel to the table.

The album title, *Learning to Lose*, comes from the song "For You," and its meaning is explained by frontman (McGinnis) who said, "You actually lose more by winning. We don't serve a God who is occupied with winning and losing. He is

concerned with the journey and what our hearts learn and become on the way." The main message, says McGinnis, that the band wants to get across to their fans is to just be themselves.

The band has said they exist to influence people through their music and the way they live their lives. They hope to lead people, young and adults, by breaking their own worldly restraints that they have through their insecurities. It is through this process that they can gain the freedom to really reach out to the world and show them Jesus Christ.

The debut album by The Turning is smooth and can easily bring you to a state of rock-worship. Some of their favorite bands listed on their website have obviously influenced their style. You can hear some U2, Chris Tomlin, and Foo Fighters in their music though they have their own unique style that will be another added chapter to the book of melodic-modern rock.

...*Nicholas Gaio*

# The Turning



*neverthelessmusic.com*

Hope is not a common theme among today's music; in fact, it's so rare that it's almost unheard of. Nevertheless is among the few, the few that dare to stare defiantly at today's popular music and scream, "BOO!" Not as a scare, but as a "Hey, we've got hope!" shout out. The concepts instilled in their music are the exact opposite of depression, loss, and despair (common themes of modern music). The band's live show has a joyous air about it; everyone has a good time. Hope, that word not dared uttered, is all through the lyrics, promoting God's love all across the board. It's safe to say that the band cares more about spreading God's love and making friends than selling records and making money.

"The moment we stop caring about the people who buy our records is the moment I hope the band breaks up. We are going to try to shake hands with every single person we come in contact with, and if it ever reaches a point where we can't, we will come up with something else to let people know we care. We are here for others, to help people, to give them something that will see them through, not just for ourselves. There is something larger at stake. When you are dead, album sales won't matter;" says Nevertheless. That is a statement profound enough to shake the lives of most modern individuals, especially considering society's love of money and popularity. Just take a quick look at a phrase from "Patience and Devotion": Sweet

Patience, the product of our love; We can rise above together; We'll make it though rain fills the sky; We can fly through any weather.

Any doubts on the spirituality and devotion of this band now? Even if you don't stare deeply into the lyrics, striving to find a deep spiritual meaning, there is a profound truth staring back out at you in each line. That passage from "Patience and Devotion" tells how God can pull us through anything and everything; all we have to do is be patient enough to wait for it. The love this band has for people screams out throughout their album *Live Like We're Alive* and during their stage performance. Flicker records made no mistake signing up Nevertheless; we can only hope that they stay for years to come, and that they never lose sight of their vision, or their hope.

*...Eric Whetstone*

# Nevertheless



The Other

By Bryan Kemper  
[www.standtrue.com](http://www.standtrue.com)

# Invisible Children

Lately, I have seen a lot of promotion for the Invisible Children film and projects. When I looked into it, I found it to be amazing and was glad to see so many people willing to take a stand for these children. Anytime we see innocent children being hurt, used, and/or killed; we should stand up and be a voice.

I noticed that a lot of bands, individuals, and organizations are getting involved to help bring the atrocities that are happening to these children to the light. People are willing to go the extra mile to make sure everyone knows about the plight of these poor children.

While I am in full support of the work

being done for Invisible Children and would encourage everyone to take a look at the website, ([www.invisiblechildren.com](http://www.invisiblechildren.com)), I am somewhat confused.

I have approached many of these same people who are getting involved with Invisible Children about another horrible tragedy that sees thousands of little children brutally killed every day. I have told them about the over 4,000 little babies that are ripped from the protection of their mothers wombs on a daily basis in our own country. From many of these people, I have heard things like the ones listed in this article.

These are actual things I have heard from people, and there are so many more I can

list. The problem is that abortion is seen as controversial, and the Invisible Children project is not. For some reason, Christians have developed an attitude that can't ever offend people so we stay away from things we call "controversial issues."

I say the only real controversy is that people who believe that every child is created by God and has value as a human person are silent. When we know that these children are humans being slaughtered by the thousands everyday in this nation, and we won't take a stand, that is controversial.

The very fact that we believe that God created the universe, sent His Son to die on the cross, and that He is the only way



- I don't want to get involved with a political issue.
- I know it is wrong, but it is not for me to tell someone else what to do.
- **At least they won't have to grow up in this world.**
- We don't know the parent's situation, maybe they can't afford a baby.
- **I don't want to judge anyone.**
- That is cool that you stand up, I just have other things I am called to do.
- **The fetus is not "really" alive yet.**
- We just need to talk about Jesus, instead of issues.
- Abortion is inevitable, so we might as well keep it safe and legal.
- **I can't deal with abortion, it depresses me.**
- I don't believe in legislating morality.

big is your God"? It amazes me sometimes that people think that we can't accomplish things. Through Christ we can accomplish anything. Philippians 4:13 reads, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

I know that this may make you feel uncomfortable, and if you are one of those who has given an excuse as to why you can't take a stand or be a voice, it should. When people challenge society with things like the Invisible Children film, it is meant to get us out of our comfort zones and make us realize that we must take action.

Christ tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. When we know our neighbor is in danger, we have an obligation to stand up. He taught us in the parable of the Good Samaritan that our neighbor is not just the person who lives next door; our neighbor is our fellow human person. The priest and the rabbi walked by the man in the ditch and ignored the plight of their neighbor. The Good Samaritan stopped and loved his neighbor. He did not stop and ask God if he was called to a ditch ministry, he simply helped his neighbor because he knew we are all called to do so.

The Invisible Children are our neighbors and it is our duty to be a voice for them. The other invisible children, the ones who die by the thousands every day in America, are also our neighbors, and we have a duty to be a voice for them as well.

It is time we, as believers, realized the only true controversy about abortion is our silence. If we believe that the children in their mother's wombs are children, there is no excuse for silence. While the world may try to smother us with their rhetoric about "choice," we must hold firm to the truth. The truth is that God is the creator of every single human person, and He commands us not to commit murder.

I want you to think about your reaction to what happened on 9/11. Think about

what went through your mind, what your feelings were when you saw the carnage of the attacks. Remember the overwhelming feelings you may have had that day. We as a nation saw thousands of people die in one day, and we reacted. We poured our hearts out and did so much to help as we were confronted with a horrible evil. We saw the truth and had to do something about it

More people die from abortion every day in this nation, than the number of people who died in the attacks on 9/11. Why are we not overwhelmed by this evil? Why is it not registering that what takes place in abortion mills around the country is not just as horrific? Maybe it is because we have allowed it to remain invisible.

*"If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small. Deliver those who are drawn toward death, And hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, 'Surely we did not know this,' Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?" (Prov. 24:10-12)*

Got Questions? Email: [bryankemper@standtrue.com](mailto:bryankemper@standtrue.com)

to salvation, that is offensive. It offends people that we would say you can't earn your way to heaven, that Christ is the only true answer. It is offensive to say there is only one truth.

I would also say it is offensive to God that we would turn our backs on His precious little children because we don't want to be political. While there are many aspects to standing up for life that fall into the political arena, the systematic slaughter of over 50 million children since January 22, 1973 is not a political issue; it is a life and death issue.

Abortion is a hidden crime that takes place behind closed doors and we seem to want to keep it that way. Our silence has helped energize the abortion industry and helped them to steer their rhetoric to convince people that it is inevitable, so we might as well accept it.

I cannot and will not ever accept that the killing of an innocent child is inevitable. I cannot and will not ever say that we cannot make a change in this world and bring a stop to the holocaust that is killing over 1/3 of our generation. I cannot and will not ever believe that the killing of a child can be safe and should be legal.

If you think this is a pointless battle and that we can never win, I ask you, "How

Can you hear their cry? Are you waiting to be called to a ditch ministry? Will you stand true?



# Stellar The Half

It is said that some of the greatest things in life are the ones that just fall into your lap. No effort, no work, just a gift from God. Many times it seems that we take things into our own hands and just punch the throttle. What happens after this sudden burst of energy? Some of the biggest crashes that this world will ever see. With the release of *We Can't Stand Sitting Down*, Stellar Kart has taken these life learned lessons and packaged them into one album featuring a constant flow of positive and inspirational messages.

This high energy pop/punk band is on their way to high places. Stellar Kart, consisting of Adam Agee (vocals, guitar), Jordan Messer (drums), Cody Pellerin (guitar) and Tay Sitera (bass), met at church and joined together to lead worship at Mountain Ridge Baptist Church in Glendale, Arizona. They played locally and then gradually reached their way to what is now known as Stellar Kart. Even with a serious message, Stellar Kart keeps their music high-energy, and like the record's title suggests, these guys never sit down! This is evident in the group's musical style.

**Leaving with but one last remark, is your glass half empty... or half full?**

# Kart & Glass Full

by **Derek**  
Weaver



**AM: So you just completed recording your new album, *We Can't Stand Sitting Down*. Who came up with the idea for the album title? Tell us how your time in the studio went.**

Adam: It's funny. We were all just sitting in the van, and we all came up with the name. We were talking about sitting, and how we were so tired of sitting in the van. Tay said, "I can't stand sitting." I said, "We can't stand sitting down." Then Jordan said, "That's the album title!" We were all like, "Yep!"

We were in the studio for eight days, but it was awesome. It was really fun. We had a great time doing it. We'll have to take more time eventually on the record, but we got everything that we wanted in eight days. It was a blast!

**Is there a main message or theme that you're trying to get across on this album?**

Yeah, I think one of the themes would be we can't really make it through life on our own - we need God's help. Another one would be hope. If you feel like giving up, if you feel like there is nothing left to live for, there is hope out there - God does provide that hope!

A lot of it is just about our lives and what we went through over the last seven or eight years of our lives: dealing with high school, college, and then on the road. Overall, it's positive - positive message, positive lyrics. It deals with some tough subjects, but with an optimistic feel.

**How about your influences for this record? Was there anything in particular besides life situations?**

We're influenced a lot in a negative way with all the music that is out there. 90% of the music today is about how hard life is. We're listening to it too, and we're getting nailed with it all the time. That influences us more than anything to want to spin that around and look at the bright side - look at the "glass half full" kind of thing. We want to be one of those bands that stands out and writes about: there is a reason why we are here, life doesn't suck all the time, and it's going to be ok.

**Now that your done with the Hearts of the Innocent Tour with Kutless. How did that go? Any stories/disasters/highlights you would like to share?**

On that tour, it was pretty clean cut. The last couple of shows on the tour were when things start to go a little crazy. Actually, we were in Montana a couple weeks ago, and there was snow all over the ground outside. We were playing our set, and then Jon Micah from Kutless comes in with a pile of snowballs just

chuckin' them at us. We said, "Ha, ha. You're so funny." Then, Cody our guitar player said, "Ok. You throw stuff at us; you get stuff thrown at you!" So Cody goes out, gets a shovel, shovels some snow, and dumps it onto Jon Micah while he's playing his set. Then, Cody gets another shovelful, and does it again! Jon Micah got two shovelfuls of snow on him at that show.

**In addition to touring, the band has worked with the Silver Ring program. Have you been working with any other types of programs lately?**

We haven't done anything with them in a while because we've been touring nonstop. We don't have any other formal relationships with any other programs. Compassion International is out with us on this tour, and it's been fun to work with them and learn what they do. They are amazing. We kind of started a relationship there, but we're not teamed up again with anyone yet.

**If you wouldn't be doing the band thing, what do you think you would be doing? We found out you went to college and had some basketball dreams.**

Yeah, I played basketball, and the reason I'm not playing now is because I got injured and kept getting injured. That's the reason that I'm playing music today. I would probably be coaching basketball in high school or teaching.

**Have you thought about what you may pursue if the time comes to move on from being a touring artist?**

I wouldn't mind trying to pursue coaching or teaching. It's definitely an option. If it's not another job in the music industry - working at a label, working with another band, or road managing - it would probably be teaching.

**Do you have any advice for bands that are just starting with a label?**

Enjoy every moment because you never know how long it's going to last. Number one would be, don't loose touch with your family and friends. Keep those relationships strong. Especially, don't forget to spend time with God and spend time in the Word. That's something you can leave pretty quickly once you get out on the road and get really busy. Don't get to busy and quit spending time with the right people.

**Has there been any particular message or topic from the Bible that has had the greatest impact on helping you get to where you are today?**

A verse that comes to mind for me would be Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me



**strength.** I can't really figure this "life" thing out by myself. I try to do things my way, and it usually never works out. I'm usually wondering why these things are happening.

Whenever I just sit back, listen, quit talking, and just listen to what God has for me, it becomes obvious. We've been through a lot of things. We've been together about four and a half years, and we've had a lot of things go terribly wrong and not work out when we thought they should. A lot of things happened that felt like it was holding us back. From my perspective, I couldn't see the end result and the purpose of these bad things happening to us. Now as we move along in our careers and get older, certain doors are now opening. Things are happening that wouldn't have been happening if we hadn't gone through those things and hadn't learned from our mistakes that we made at that time.

That verse just ties into God's plan. I just love that He's got that plan for us, and every now and then He reveals a little piece to us.

### Share with us a story when God was definitely watching over you.

There is a bunch of things with the band that are hilarious. We were suppose to play a show in Phoenix, Arizona and then do an afternoon show the next day in Napa Valley, California which is far away. We had to finish our show in Phoenix and then drive all five of us in a Ford Expedition, including our gear in the back, to Napa Valley before 1:00 p.m.!

I'm driving all through the night as fast as I can without getting in trouble. Nobody's sleeping; nobody can sleep in those cars! We switch drivers in the morning. We're just driving, and we're like, "We've got to make it there by 1:00 p.m.! We got to make it there!" I called ahead and told them I didn't think we were going to make it there by 1:00 p.m. They said it was ok because they had gotten another act that could go on, but we need to get there by 1:30 p.m. because we had to be off by 2:00 p.m. So we were still hurrying!

We ended up getting there at 1:25 p.m.! We roll up, walk on stage, play, and we made it! It was amazing! One wreck on the freeway, some stop lines, or some traffic and we wouldn't have made it to the show. It's just things like that that is obvious that God wants us there. He wants us to realize that God's in control. If He wants us to be there, we'll be there. It's things like that every now and then that reminds us that God's saying, "I'm here and in control! You guys might think you're tough, but this can be taken away at any point. Keep the focus on Me, and I'll get you through it!"

### Anything you would like to share with our readers, any messages on your heart?

The main thing is God loves us in spite of us - no matter what! The things that we do sometimes don't deserve love. I know a lot of things I do in my life doesn't deserve God's love... especially the way that He does love me. Whenever I start to feel unworthy and I don't understand why He's still going to love me or anybody else, He still does! I get reminded of that by the way He is with me all the time.

If you know God and have a relationship with Him, then you know what I'm talking about. Whenever you get stripped down to where you feel like nothing, then God just overwhelms you with His peace, hope, and joy that comes from His love. I just can't imagine living without it. That's what gets me through the day.

**Enjoy every moment  
because you never know  
how long it's going to last.**





# INHALE EXHALE

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

The week had just begun and the humidity was at an all time high. Magazines were sucking up the moisture and the clouds reflecting gloomy days ahead. I was standing at our venue trying to reflect on what the week would bring and the results thereof. After roaming around, I finally found myself conversing with Stand True Ministries finest, Bryan Kemper. As our conversing would continue, it would abruptly come to a halt as I looked up to see an unfamiliar face sporting the typical screamo, hardcore attire with long scraggly hair, snake bite lip rings, and a massive beard that was surely insulating the heat (at all time highs) on that humid afternoon. It was then that I would meet Andy Levy, newly found lead singer of Inhale Exhale, smiling ear to ear. Within the first few moments of meeting Andy, I knew this was one guy I had to figure out.

The week continued on and the rain poured and the festival grounds quickly turned into an oversized mud pit. Concert goers of all likes had finally given in and became one with the sludge for the rest of the weekend. Andy came strolling into the venter tent, mud splatter flying everywhere, ready to tackle this interview and add it to the list of accomplishments for the duration of the event.

Inhale Exhale, recently added to the Solid State Records line-up,

features Andy Levy on vocals; John LaRussa, formerly of Narcissus, on guitar; Brian Pittman, formerly of Relient K, on bass; and last but not least Bobby Poole II, formerly of John Reuben, on drums and clean vocals.

Many would expect a singer with such a veteran line-up to feel pressured and anxious about pulling his end of the stick, but not Andy Levy. Instead, Andy takes full advantage of the opportunity and views it as a once in a life-time break that must be executed quickly and effectively. Using the knowledge gained only through many years of experience in the music industry, Andy has been able to capitalize on the group's collective insight.

"It can be intimidating with these guys, but its awesome! I love that I am out with people that are experienced. I am so glad that these guys know what they are doing, and are happy too because this is round two for all of them to do this again from the beginning. I know a ton of bands that start out, order a ton of merchandise, and spend a ridiculous amount of money. They don't manage their money and do stupid stuff. It's really cool that these guys already know what they are doing. They know they should only order a certain amount of product because only this much is going

to sell. We actually have everything setup properly, and it's cool to have guys that have been around and know the ropes," states Andy Levy.

This was very evident when IE entered the beach stage at Alivefest 2006 as the crowd rolled in with just enough merchandise to go around to the concert goers' literally contagious affection for the group. It was no surprise to hear the announcement that Haste the Day had personally requested that Inhale Exhale be added to their headlining PureVolume Silver Bullet Tour.

Andy, growing up in the outskirts of Canton, Ohio, has truly put something lyrically together in their upcoming release entitled *The Lost. The Sick. The Sacred.* that you will not find elsewhere. "A lot of my lyrics are from years ago and some of them are even from when I wasn't a Christian. It's really cool because they actually make sense now. Lyrically, I try to keep everything inspirational and positive because I don't ever want to come down on anybody," proclaims Levy. "Our music is all about hope. There is hope and there always will be hope no matter what you believe, even if you're not a Christian. We are going to be out with secular bands and secular tours playing in front of kids that hate God, hate their parents, and have no hope at all. I just want to offer hope to them, and it's great to be a part of that."

Tuning into his very own playlist, Levy considers Relient K, Mae, Atreyu, Chasing Victory, Still Remains, The Showdown, and House

of Heroes to be among his top 10 list. When asked about his own writing styles and what artists inspire his very own lyric writing, Levy refers to Further Seems Forever album entitled *Nothing To Hide*. Levy comments, "The lyrics on that album are really inspirational and uplifting. I guess that's what I was going for because I really want this to be a positive album full of hope for kids that are struggling with anything."

While talking about IE's upcoming release, *The Lost. The Sick. The Sacred.*, Levy explains, "Where I was going with this record was that a lot of people get down on life and feel that we live in a crap world. I mean there are wars, this and that, and other negative things in everyday life. There is a lot of stuff that we end up doing for ourselves that is negative whether it be drugs, sleeping around, or depression. But, our main message is that we are not born by chance. You are here for a reason, and you're worth so much more than you will probably ever think you are. There is a God that loves you, no matter what you believe. He sent His Son to die for you, and He would do it all again. We are all so special to Him, and I don't think that a lot of people realize that."

Nearing the end of our time together, Andy had but one thing left to share on his mind that he just couldn't resist proclaiming. "Be sure to check out Twelve Gauge Valentine. They just got signed to Solid State and have a southern rock feel to them. They are amazing live! Be sure to check them out on the Solid State website!"





# RED

"Red — a color resembling blood, a revolutionary activist, 'in the red'— at a loss or in debt." While this is just what the dictionary says, it holds mostly true to the band Red. As lead vocalist Mike Barnes puts it, "'Red' stands for the blood of Christ and what it represents: passion, pain, but ultimately, redemption." So far, that covers the blood part. Where does revolutionary activist fit in? For starters, just being a Christian in today's world is being an activist, and to be a Christian band just ups the bar. Red's songs imbue a sense of passion and longing for Christ, stirring up deeper emotions in the souls of man, breaking today's barrier that bars Christians from popularity. Over 24,000 Myspace friends break that bar and show just how popular and awesome Jesus really is. 'In the red,' the last part of the definition and completion of this little introduction. One glance of the lyrics in each song shows just how easily that quote ties in. Each song talks about individual losses, problems, and fears; then adding in various ways Christ can pull you out of the dumps and raise you up. Just go on the words of Jasen Rauch (guitarist), "No matter where you've been, the endgame of salvation is still the same."

Red did things a little backwards compared to most of the music world; they recorded before they toured! As unbelievable as that sounds, it worked out very well for the group, taking off the burden of touring and recording at the same time. The past two years have been spent with renowned producer Rob Graves in the studio, recording tirelessly for many days (over 700) to produce the amazing End of Silence. Mixed by Ben Grosse (Red Hot Chili Peppers, Fuel, Sixpence None the Richer), End of Silence turned out even better than expected, better than most, if not all, freshman albums put on the market.

Red really outdid themselves in the studio, even managing to get signed to Sony records, an awe inspiring feat. Randy Armstrong (bassist) elaborated on his days in the studio, saying sometimes it was just 'luck' and it happened right away, and other times it just took a while, maybe a long while. The same goes for all musicians, even those who have been doing this for years. The question is, is there really that much work to be done in the studio? Well, the hours of toil and sweat, the blistered fingers, the hoarse vocal

ords, and the all around exhaustion put it rather bluntly; it is a lot of work. Work that paid off for Red, their album is absolutely amazing. Take that sweat and toil, combine it with perseverance, and receive an album.

Now for a new sweat, a sweat earned in a set time of approximately thirty minutes. This new sweat, the sweat of touring, can have quite a stench to it. It is amazing how much work a group of people can do on a little stage with a couple instruments in half an hour. The hardships of touring can be a phenomenal burden to bands: instruments breaking, vehicles breaking down, getting lost,

and the list goes on and on. Fortunately, Red has not suffered any of those problems yet. Keep them in your prayers; no one knows when a tire will decide to blow. Red has suffered something else though; it seems the band has a problem with injuring each other. From broken pinkies to bleeding heads, they are at least consistent in bringing an awesome show (if you like blood). If you don't like blood, the rest of their show is astounding; instruments flying everywhere, bodies going all over the place, and screaming vocals tearing up your ears, but blame the headache on standing in front of the speakers, not the band! To date, the worst injury involved Michael and Anthony. "Anthony swung his guitar around his body



and smashed it into Michael's head causing the guitar to break, and Michael to get seven stitches," said Randy. OUCH, that seriously had to hurt. The band spent that night in the emergency room with Michael, and everything turned out better than expected.

What happens on tour while they aren't smashing each other with instruments and working up a sweat? For starters, they all have PSPs. Video games are a great means of entertainment on the road, plus the PSP can play movies and get on the internet. Their favorite past-time is not any of those though. It is sleeping! All the exhaustion from the night before cannot always be subsided during a bumpy van ride at two or three in the morning. "A twenty

minute power nap can do wonders; I catch them when I can."  
-Randy Armstrong.

Red has come a long way from what they once were, a pop/worship band running around in Pennsylvania. Randy and Anthony grew out of pop music and moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where they met up with other members of the band in the local mall. The lyrics started to form, the message started to grow, and the music started to evolve. The band really started to hit it off from there. Music seemed to take over their individual lives and bring them together in harmony to become what they are now, Red.

# FAMILY FORCE 5

By: Nicholas Gaio

Lets say you had a few different CD players going at once; they are all at a high volume setting. With one stereo, you are shaking the walls with Rage against the Machine. Through the other speakers, you are jamming to the Beastie Boys. With the third stereo, Punk rock makes an appearance. When the different styles mesh together like different colors of hot wax, the sound that you hear would be similar to a Family Force 5 album. It is very hard to get them into one category because they have such a unique style.

"We are not your everyday average Emo or Screamo band. It's hard to categorize us. We're just so out there. We have a crazy rock, punk sound that we call it 'Crunk punk,'" said Solomom Olds (aka " Soul Glow Activatur). Soul Glow plays guitar, sings in Family Force 5, and is one of three brothers in the group.

Jacob Olds (Crouton) and Joshua Olds (Fatty) are the other two brothers. Also in the band are Nathan Currin (Nadaddy) and Derek Mount (Chap Stique). Family Force 5 is a high-octane group full of energy and passion, and they recently signed to Gotee and Maverick. They are a new band with a new album out entitled Business up Front, Party in the back. I had an opportunity to speak with Soul Glow Activatur about Family Force 5, music, and life.

**FF5 formed 2 years ago, describe to me the journey so far.**

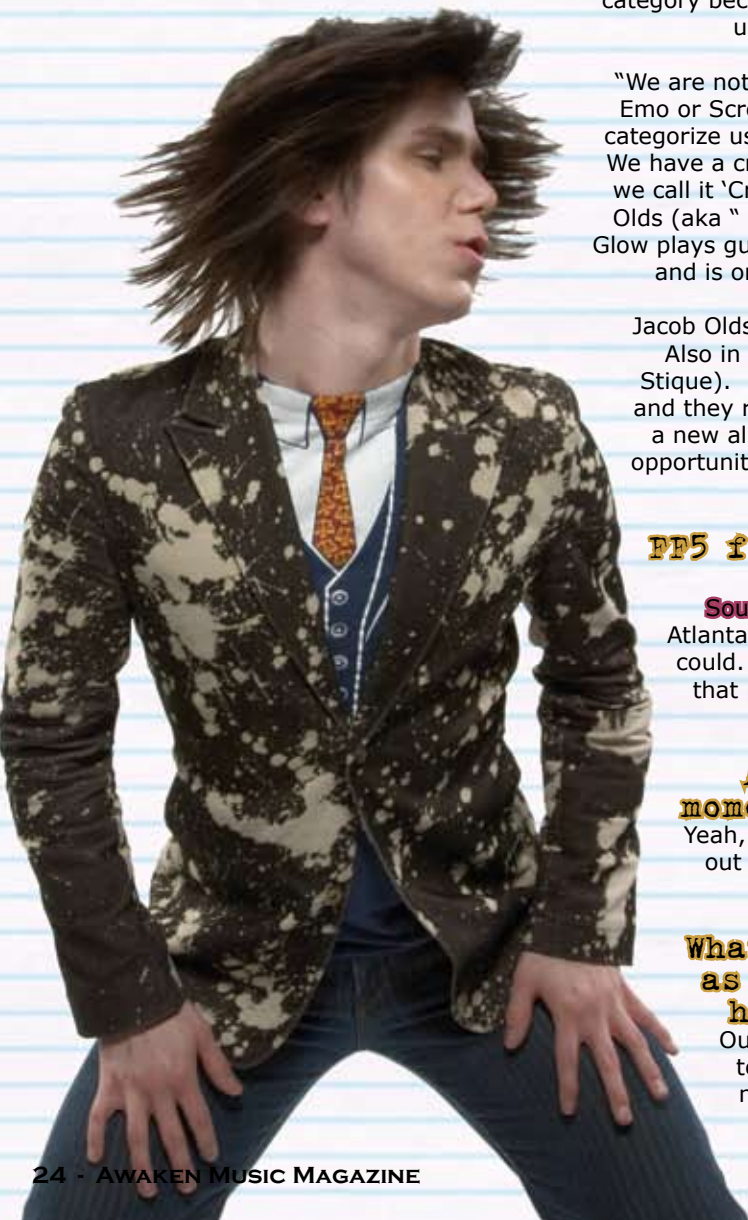
**Soul Glow Activatur:** We started playing in these little bars around Atlanta, playing for nobody. We burnt our CD and gave it to everyone we could. Then the right people started coming around to see this live band that people said put on a good show. One thing led to another, and we got a record deal. Now were on the Warp Tour!

**Any special experiences or memorable moments that stick out in your mind so far?**

Yeah, actually we just played our CD release party in Atlanta, and we sold out the Coca Cola Roxy Theatre. It's the first show we ever sold out! There were 1300 kids there! That was exciting.

**What do you feel your responsibility is as musicians in a Christian band? And how would you describe your purpose?**

Our purpose as a band that loves Jesus Christ with all their heart is to show kids how to have fun. There are alternatives to the other music that is being played right now. We want to show people that there are Christian guys that can have fun. Christians can party too! We are showing what the joy of the Lord is in our hearts and



showing people how crazy we are about that. That's our mission.

**For someone who has never seen it before, describe what a PF5 show is like.**

Well, it is like a couple of guys that are supposed to be on Ritalin, but didn't take their medication and then they broke into a Red Bull truck and drank all the Red Bull.

We come back with cuts and bruises all over ourselves! That's what a live show with us is like.

**I know sometimes it can feel like:**

**"Not tonight, I don't feel like it. Not this song, not again. I just want to go home." What gets you on stage every**

**night even if you don't feel like it?**

Well... We love it! Sure every artist gets tired of their songs now and then or tired of being up on stage every night, but there is something about being on stage and getting in front of people that really want to hear you. If there's five people that want to hear us or 1000 people, we're going to give the same show. We give it our all every time because you never know who's going to be in the audience. A life could be changed! We are changing lives and touching people with the art that God has given us.

We are trying to be reflectors of Jesus Christ both on the stage and off the stage.

**What has your experience been thus far with Gotee?**

It's been great; they are really cool guys. We are going to kick it into high gear and really blow up this band, that's what we were just told by Gotee. They are cool guys, Toby Mac is an amazing business man and an amazing guy of integrity. He is just an all around awesome guy.

**Interesting that you mentioned Toby Mac, my next question was going to be how has it been for you guys to work with him? What have you learned from him, and how has he brought you along?**

I've talked to him about everything from music to my marriage. I actually produced a song for his last album (*Diverse City*) called "Whoopsi Daisy." It just grew into something. After working with him for a while, he said "Hey, I really like your band a lot. I would like for you guys to be on our label. I could definitely push you guys." I talk to him at least every two weeks. He is a great business man, but one thing he also does is make sure that the bands on the label are all walking straight with the Lord. That's a very important thing.

**Describe to me the best part of your job?**

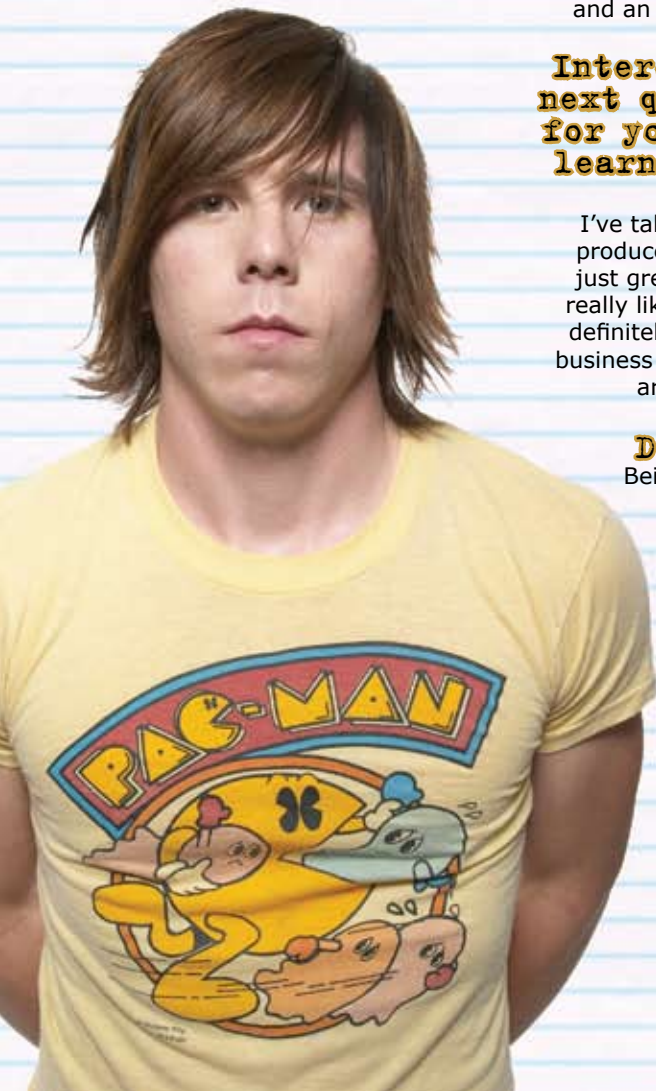
Being able to play in front of people is the best part for me. Recording a new album is great and interviews are fun, but there is nothing like getting in front of people that are singing your songs. I can't describe it. It's just one of the greatest feelings ever. And of course having people say, "Yeah, I'll buy your CD," is nice too! A few years ago, we were giving them away.

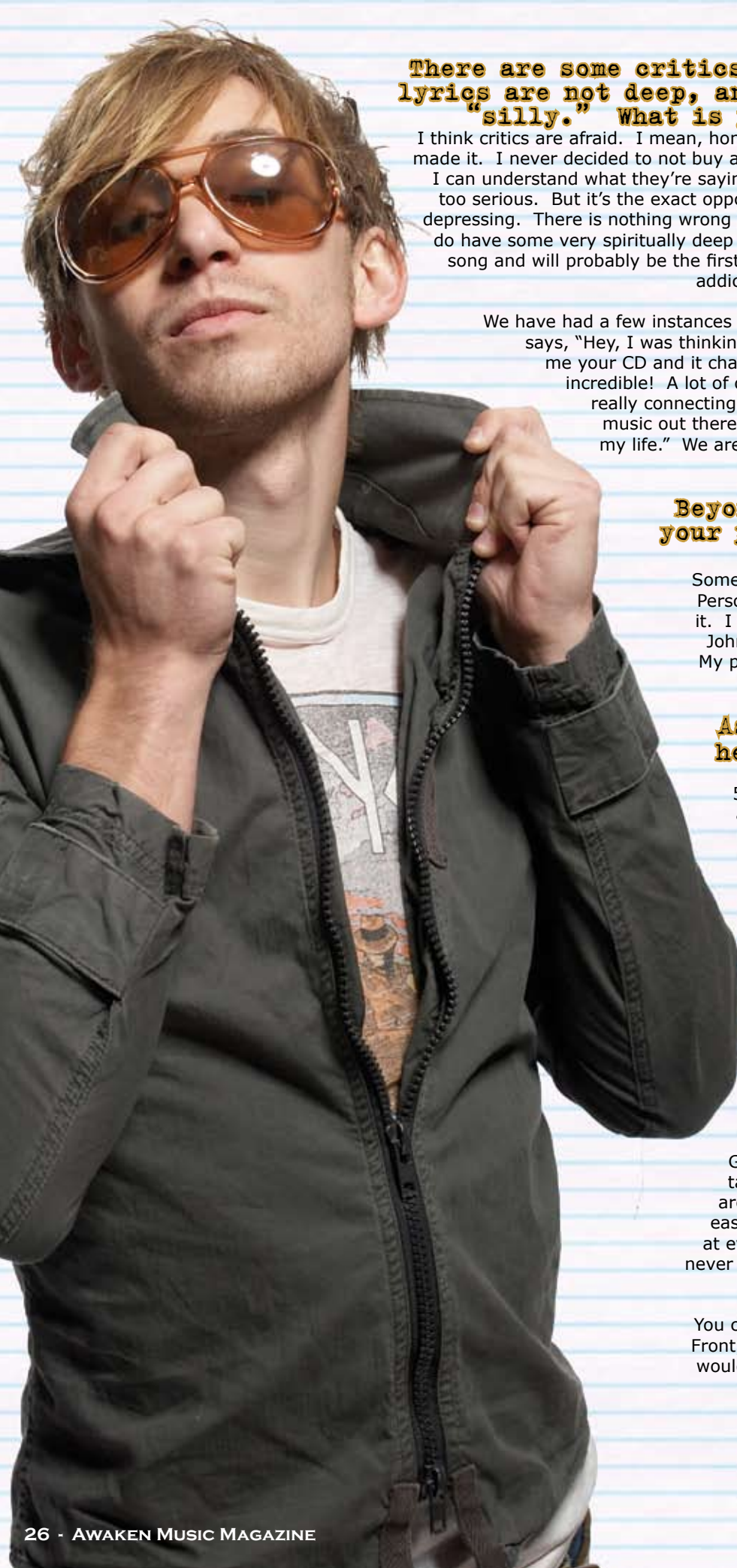
**On the other hand, what is the most difficult part of your job?**

Keeping a straight walk with the Lord. That's a struggle that any Christian goes through. It's tough, especially when you're in the type of arena we're in. We are in front of a secular crowd a lot, and we need to make sure we are walking right.

**Ok, Business in the Front, Party in the Back, the new album. Tell me about it.**

It's a party album! That's what it is. You put on our CD and you have fun. We hope that it makes people smile.





**There are some critics that have said that your lyrics are not deep, and I've even heard the word "silly." What is your reaction to that?**

I think critics are afraid. I mean, honestly some of them are musicians that never made it. I never decided to not buy an album because of a critic. Yet in some way, I can understand what they're saying. A lot of our music is just having fun, not too serious. But it's the exact opposite from all the music out there that is just depressing. There is nothing wrong with dancing, singing, and being crazy. But we do have some very spiritually deep songs as well. "Love Addict" is a very spiritual song and will probably be the first single on mainstream radio. It's about being addicted to God's love.

We have had a few instances where someone comes up to us at a show and says, "Hey, I was thinking about killing myself, but my friend showed me your CD and it changed my life!" To me, that is amazing; that's incredible! A lot of our songs are just goofy and fun, but they are really connecting with these kids because there is a lot of other music out there that is depressing. You know, stuff like "I hate my life." We are the exact opposite of that, and we want to show kids that.

**Beyond music, what are some of your passions and your other band members' passions?**

Some of the guys are really into cars and paintballing. Personally, outside of playing music, I enjoy producing it. I have been doing some work on Toby Mac's record, John Reuben's record, and 4th Avenue Jones' record. My producing career has been starting to pick up some heat, but playing music is my main passion.

**As a band, where are you guys heading? What are your goals?**

We want to get the word out that Family Force 5 is out there, and that we have a great live act and party album. We want people to know that Christians can have fun, and we also want to spread a positive message through our music and walk straight with the Lord. This music is for everybody, Christians and non-Christians. Here's a cool thing... the guy who runs the Warp Tour knows us and knows that we are Christians. He had our music playing in the background the other night when he had a party on his bus!

Family Force 5 has a sound that is unprecedented thus far with their mixture of style. Their main message according to Soul Glow and the guys is to live life to the fullest and take advantage of situations right now. "There are Christians out there that can have fun just as easily as people in the secular world. We play hard at every show, and play every note as though we've never played it before. That's what Family Force 5 is all about," said Soul Glow Activatur.

You can get Family Force 5's new album Business Up Front, Party in the Back in stores now. And the band would love it if you stopped by [www.myspace.com/familyforce5](http://www.myspace.com/familyforce5) and said hello.

[FamilyForce5.com](http://FamilyForce5.com)



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# [HOUSE OF HEROES]

...their becoming and beyond



House of Heroes, featuring A.J. Babcock, Colin Rigsby, and Tim Skipper, in their latest album release, *Say No More*, has truly broken the modern corporate molds and created their own subset in today's vast entertainment market. A.J. Babcock, background vocalist, bass player, and serving as the primary lyricist, has helped to put an album together that is truly worth listening to just for the lyrical content if nothing else.

House of Heroes is no newcomer to the world of music and the industry red tape that comes with it. In their earlier days known as "No Tagbacks," the band was constantly on tour building up what many would refer to as a grassroots fan base. While known as the "No Tagbacks," in 2001 they released *Ten Months* on Four Door Entertainment. At that point in time, they were well known for their pop/punk style of music, but had finally reached a point in their lives where the punk influences left nothing more to be desired. It was at this point in time that the trio decided it was time to move on from their teenager pop/punk years, so they entered a new era, with a new identity known as "House of Heroes." This new change caused the artists to completely revamp everything they had previously completed, and to start with a fresh slate. After working on several demos, the release of *What You Want Is Now* would come in 2003 on Vanishing Point.

At this point, the members had already started to experience a vast majority of the aspects of the music business. "We were re-

ally naïve back then. I don't think we realized all that went into making this work. Getting out there and trying it for ourselves only brought us closer together and refined our vision of what we would become," states Babcock. After all their hard work and devotion to the new found group, things finally started to really launch when Gotee Records started showing some interest in the group.

As the trio watched their destiny being paved right before their eyes, some minor potholes started to form along the path that in the end would prove to be a blessing in disguise. These setbacks started to form when the band was thrown into an eight month deadlock while waiting for the previous record label's red tape to vanish. "On one hand we were angry and frustrated that we couldn't officially move forward and were tied up by some legal troubles," Babcock explains, "But we also knew having the time to spend on the material would really help us come of age and write our most progressive and well thought-out effort to date."

Now that this has all passed, House of Heroes followed up with the re-release of their *Self-Titled* album now referred to as *Say No More* on Mono Vs Stereo featuring two added bonus tracks. Much of the lyrical content refers back to the times when they were off the touring circuit just waiting to be able to go out once again. This off season was ignited in 2002 when their first tour blew up along with their van leaving them in debt and left with

what is now often referred to as the defining moment in their musical careers.

"I think it was definitely something that we had to go through to humble us and make us realize that it's about being a part of something where the end result is greater than the sum of all its parts. It's just a really exciting idea that you can have a band that is way bigger than the three guys who make it up. The only way I can explain that time period is to say that it was the Holy Spirit pushing us on because we didn't have any reason to push ourselves on. We were more excited about being in a band than we had ever been. I look back on it now, and I'm like, 'What? That doesn't make any sense.' We should have hung up the towel. I think it's something that we definitely needed to go through to humble us because even though we hadn't achieved any level of success at all, we were getting a little cocky in our thinking. We went through that period of time where our identity was in this band, and now that's not our identity at all; there is such a greater reason," states Tim Skipper, lead vocalist and guitar player.

As far as creativity is concerned, HOH has definitely planted their stake far within the solid depths below. "As Christians, we're called to be creative people and called to do something different from the rest of the world," reasons Babcock. "I think that's generally overlooked sometimes in Christian circles where a band

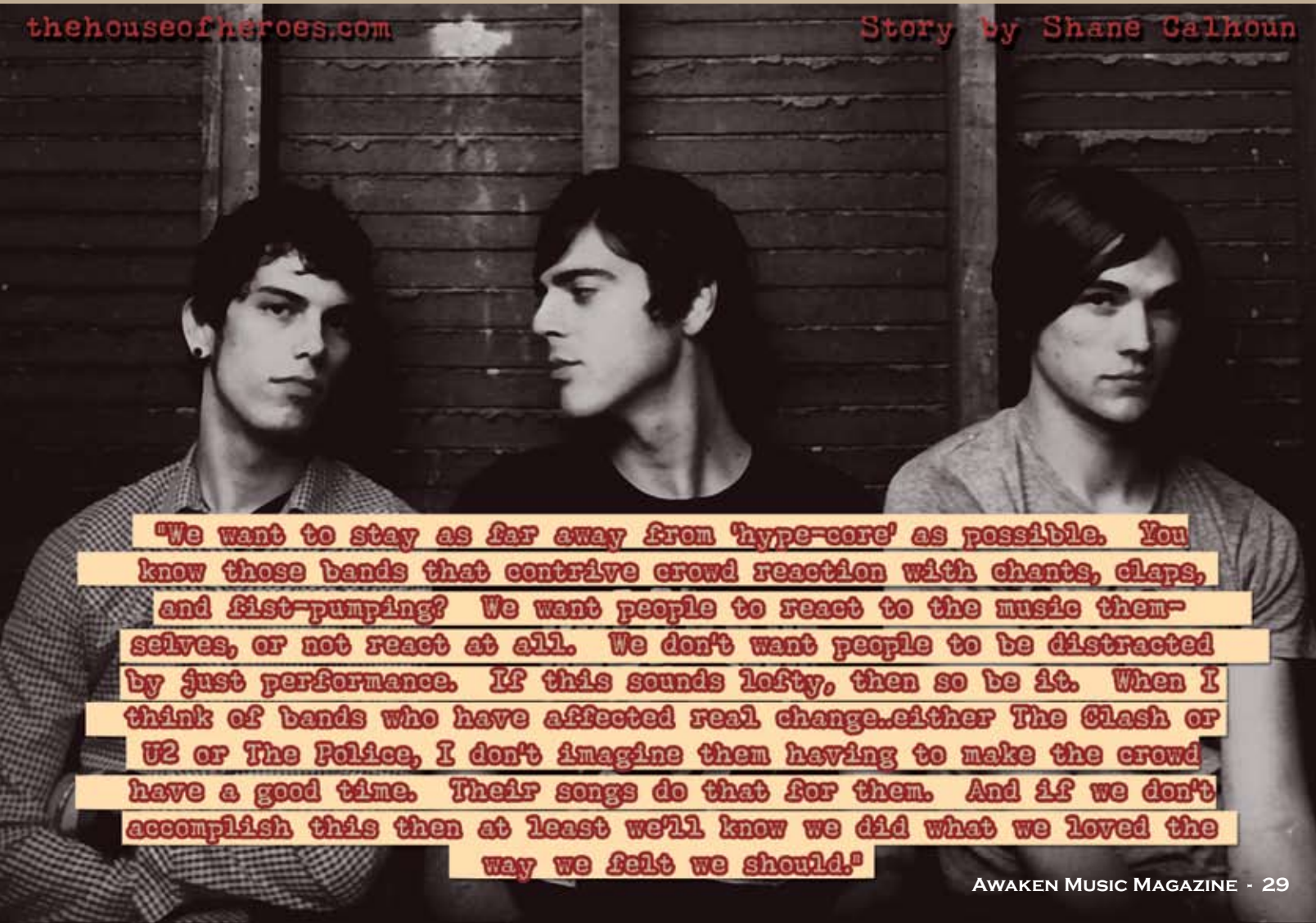
comes out just to be the cleaner version of a hit in the mainstream. There's definitely shining exceptions that go into new and creative directions and that's the category we'd like to be grouped in. House of Heroes has a voice of its own, and we're committed to our call of doing something different." Many artists have proclaimed this message, but have they actually stuck to their guns?

The group actually had the opportunity to change up their track listing to reflect a new sound designed to sell records which proclaimed to be the difference between selling 9,000 records and 900,000 records. Although after hearing this over and over throughout the market, the guys may have contemplated the idea for a matter of seconds, but it was then that they decided to take their first major stand in the music industry. "We were just thinking to ourselves, 'Well, we wrote our songs this way for a reason.' We realized that we just had to keep doing what we were doing. If people liked it, that was awesome. But that's not to say that we never write songs in that formula. We just don't set out to write them any specific way," claims Skipper.

House of Heroes recently has been on the road touring through the summer months at major festivals preparing to launch their new tour with Black Pool Lights, featuring a former member of Get up Kids, as they patiently await the arrival of drummer Colin Rigsby's firstborn.

[thehouseofheroes.com](http://thehouseofheroes.com)

Story by Shane Calhoun



**"We want to stay as far away from 'hype-core' as possible. You know those bands that contrive crowd reaction with chants, claps, and fist-pumping? We want people to react to the music themselves, or not react at all. We don't want people to be distracted by just performance. If this sounds lofty, then so be it. When I think of bands who have affected real change..either The Clash or U2 or The Police, I don't imagine them having to make the crowd have a good time. Their songs do that for them. And if we don't accomplish this then at least we'll know we did what we loved the way we felt we should."**

SPOTLIGHT

# CHIMERA TWILIGHT

[www.myspace.com/chimeratwilight](http://www.myspace.com/chimeratwilight)

Ken Bray: Guitars, lead vocals  
Ralph Price: Bass, backup vocals  
Ryan Luciani: Drums, backup vocals

Chimera TWILIGHT is a Progressive/Indie/Post Hardcore trio band out of Illinois comprised of members all under the age of 20. They have produced quite a collection of catchy songs that keep you listening and wanting more. With very hooky melodies and amazing style of vocals, they will surely catch on with the crowds.

"We devote every inch of our being to music. We love it and it's our passion." With one listen, you can only back up that statement. Chimera TWILIGHT has over 85,000 plays on MySpace and 31,000 on PureVolume. With the release of their newly recorded E.P. on July 22nd, it should only be time before they have record labels knocking down their doors.

**Can you explain "Chimera TWILIGHT." Where did the name derive from? Is there a specific meaning behind it?**

Chimera TWILIGHT was a name that was created by one of our founding members. It basically represents the dynamics of our music. Chimera is a mythological monster that represents our harder moments, and the twilight of our name represents the soothing ambience that we have in our music.

**What message do you want your listeners to receive from your music?**

All of our songs have different messages. Mainly, we want listeners to have a great time listening to our music, and hopefully we can provide a soundtrack for every moment!

**What has been your hardest issue you've faced so far with the band?**

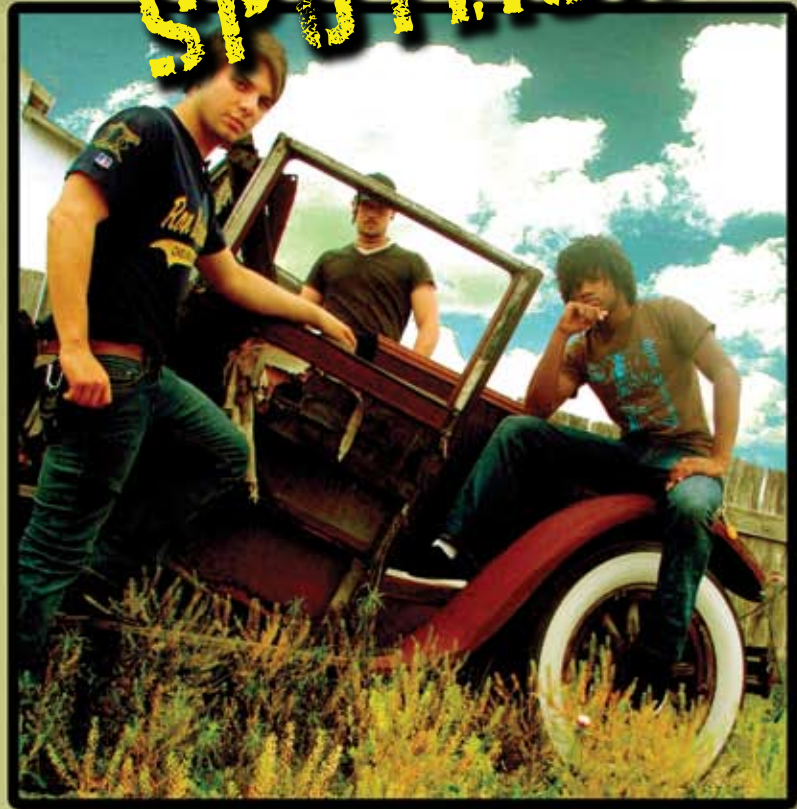
Our hardest issue as a band so far has been deciding what to play in our set. We're constantly writing and thinking of new ways to be entertaining on stage.

**Has there been a time when you knew God was watching over the band?**

He's helped us in giving us all the dedication and the confidence to truly go for what we believe in.

**What would your fans be surprised to know about you?**

We all attend Columbia College in Chicago, which is an arts school. But for the most part, we are normal people who enjoy making music.



**Was there a time when the band felt like giving it up?**

We have our fights every now and then, but that's something that every band goes through. We've learned that each one makes us stronger and helps us reach our goal.

**How was your time in the studio?**

We recorded this album at two different studios. The first was at Columbia College in Chicago. This was nice because we all attend school there so we could walk from the dorms to the studio. Our friend, Brandon Paddock, mixed 2/3rds of the record which was awesome because we were right there with him working hard.

The second studio was a place called The Shop in Morton Grove, IL just outside of Chicago. Originally track #1 and #4 on our record wasn't supposed to be on it, but we were writing a lot of new material and really wanted to feature some of it on this record. We called up our friend, Marty Abezetian, and recorded those two tracks. The recording process there was very strenuous. I remember being there from 8pm to 8am many times mixing and tracking. The lack of sleep was definitely worth it.

Indie Avenue is brought to you by:  
Douglas Shank a.k.a. "The Indie Guy"

**Nevela** - *Don't Forget Your Wings Captain*  
[www.myspace.com/nevellamusic](http://www.myspace.com/nevellamusic)

Nevela is Orange County, California shining at its finest. This five man Hardcore/Metal band holds its own ground with raging guitar riffs and thundering drum beats. When wondering who to compare Nevela to, you might find it hard. They may remind you of a combination of Underoath and As Cities Burn.

**Fixed Til Tuesday** - *Aww Son 2006*  
[www.myspace.com/fixedituesday](http://www.myspace.com/fixedituesday)

Fixed Til Tuesday is a Post Hardcore band from Birmingham, Alabama. These five guys produce a sound that is similar to Burden Of A Day when they scream, but they can take a turn and be comparable to Sullivan in some of their songs. Their lyrics are positive and carry a powerful message.

**Serving Suggestion** - *Community 2005*  
[www.myspace.com/servingsuggestion](http://www.myspace.com/servingsuggestion)

From Cape Town, South Africa comes Serving Suggestion. These three band mates are pumping out crafted Punk/Rock/Emo music with very catchy songs. Serving Suggestion's vocals may remind you of larger acts such as Matchbook Romance. While the music constructed keeps the Punk/Rock sound to it, you'll still find a hint of originality.

**Juneau** - *Safe and Sound 2006*  
[www.myspace.com/juneaurock](http://www.myspace.com/juneaurock)

Juneau is a foursome Rock/Alternative/Crunk band from Texas. Juneau has a distinctive sound that is hard to describe. On one side, they musically resemble bands like Hawk Nelson while on the flipside, they could be compared to bands like Brand New. The vocals are very solid and easy to listen to and may remind you of bands like Less Than Jake.

**Kurios** - *Story Unfinished 2004*  
[www.myspace.com/kurios](http://www.myspace.com/kurios)

From Allentown, PA enters the rock band Kurios. Kurios is a 4 person band that is creating songs that are very easy to listen to. Their guitar riffs that vary from song to song brush and blend all the lines of bands such as Blink182 to Sullivan. The vocals throughout all the songs remain strong and solid, containing a message that is untainted and honest and resemble those of bands such as The Starting Line and Sullivan.

**Our Finest Hour** - *2006 Looking*  
[www.myspace.com/ourfinesthour](http://www.myspace.com/ourfinesthour)

This Hardcore/Indie, five member band goes by the name of Our Finest Hour. This band from Jacksonville, Florida may remind you of bands like Chasing Victory while on the other hand remind you of softer bands like Doubting Paris. Our Finest Hour has a very well balance of screaming and singing mixed together to infuse nothing but catchy songs.

**7-Miles** - *Demo 2006*  
[www.myspace.com/7miles](http://www.myspace.com/7miles)

7-Miles is an Indie/Rock band from Morganton, North Carolina. Their music is very upbeat and can be listened to over and over again. Their lyrics are not hard on your ears, but there also not plain and boring. 7-Miles music style may mirror bands like The Early November while their vocals may remind you of Lifehouse.

**Type Nine** - *Demos 2006*  
[www.myspace.com/typenineonline](http://www.myspace.com/typenineonline)

Out of Houston, Texas is four piece band named Type Nine. This is a Indie/Rock band that will provide you with a inspiring message through their lyrics. Type Nine's sound can be compared to or considered bridging the gap between bands such as Halifax to Relient k.

**The Red Coterie** - *Pre-Release Demos 2005*  
[www.myspace.com/theredcoterie](http://www.myspace.com/theredcoterie)

The Red Coterie is a five member Indie/Rock band from Whittier, California, and they blend plenty of hooky electronics in their music while still getting the energy of rock music. With some time, The Red Coterie might start to remind you of acts such as JamisonParker or Motion City Soundtrack. The Red Coterie is a band you should definitely give a listen to.

**The Red Airplanes** - *E.P. 2006*  
[www.myspace.com/theredairplanes](http://www.myspace.com/theredairplanes)

The Red Airplanes is a talented band from southeast Texas. This five piece group has a blend of Indie/Rock/Powerpop that leaves you listening to song after song. Their vocals range from being calm and soft to being almost a shout that demands attention. Their original sound is very catchy and keeps your attention. Overall, The Red Airplanes might remind you of acts such as The Academy is... or Dashboard Confessional.



ROMANS 6:6

KNOWING THIS, THAT  
OUR OLD SELF WAS  
CRUCIFIED WITH HIM,  
IN ORDER THAT OUR  
BODY OF SIN MIGHT  
BE DONE AWAY WITH,  
SO THAT WE WOULD  
NO LONGER BE SLAVES  
TO SIN. ROMANS 6:6



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