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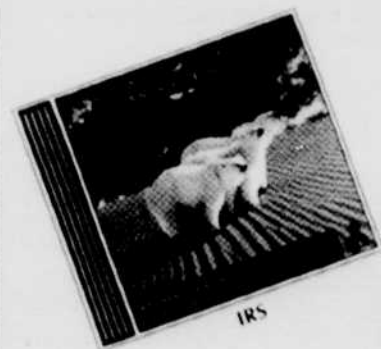
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Primus climbs to fame on 'thrash-funk' sound

By Ross Hubbard
 Emerald Contributor

Herb Alexander, Les Claypool and Larry LaLonde came together 3 years ago to form the latest version of the band Primus. Now, they are touring the country with bands Public Enemy and Anthrax in one of the most diverse concerts ever.

When lead guitarist LaLonde was asked who would enjoy this concert he said, "This concert is for people who like all kinds of music except maybe country western."

With Primus being described as a thrash-funk band, Public Enemy a rap band and Anthrax a heavy metal band, it's hard to argue with that.

But how is it that this band from San Francisco came to be in the position it is now? It started when Claypool, the band's lead vocalist, borrowed \$1,000 from his dad to press the band's live debut album, *Suck on This*, he said. Now, with Primus gaining popularity, its third album, *Sailing the Seas of Cheese*, has sold more than 200,000 copies.

When asked if Primus could be considered an up-and-coming band because of this, LaLonde replied, "Bands come up and go down all the time. Now, for us it has just been a gradual climb. We can go out on tour and people know who we are, not just the people in San Francisco."

Since they're looking for the exposure right now, it had to be a big thrill when *Rolling Stone Magazine*

came out with an article about them in the Oct. 31 issue. "I am just glad to be in *Rolling Stone Magazine*. It is a pretty brief thing. The guy only spent a weekend here talking to us. It is nothing surprising, but I am totally stoked about being in a magazine, especially *Rolling Stone*," LaLonde said.

As far as looking ahead to what the new-found success might bring them, LaLonde said, "We pretty much never look too much into the future, but we know what we want to do and are just going to go out and try to do it." Their current tour, now in its third week, certainly should open some doors.

Recently on MTV, Public Enemy and Anthrax said they chose Primus to tour with them because they played music that was neither rap nor heavy metal but somewhere in between.

But how do Primus members view the groups they are touring with? "Public Enemy is something this band has always been into. When they played the first night, I was blown away. It's total hard-core crazy stuff. They're amazing. And Anthrax — they're really cool. They're heavy metal and punk, super loud and super heavy," LaLonde said.

As for Primus, they will go on tour with Fishbone four days after this tour ends. After that, who knows, but with the great enthusiasm and spirit they are showing now, the sky's the limit.

Hard-edged hustler portrait filmed on Portland's streets

★★★ 1/2
 FILM: *My Own Private Idaho* opens tonight at the Bijou Theatre. Rated R.
 ● — don't bother, ●● — wait to rent, ●●● — worth the time, ●●●● — a must see

ADMIT ONE
 My Own Private Idaho is the latest film by Gus Van Sant (*Drugstore Cowboy*), and focuses on the lives of male street hustlers. If that doesn't get you, maybe this will — it was filmed in Portland.

Mike, played by River Phoenix, is a young narcoleptic with a troubled past. His involvement with prostitution gets him the money he needs to search for his mother. Scott, played by Keanu Reeves, takes part in order to escape from his father, Portland's mayor.

The movie opens with a dictionary definition of "narcolepsy," and then we see Mike standing on a road in the middle of nowhere. "I always know where I am by the way the road looks ... one-of-a-kind like someone's face," he says before falling to the ground.

And before the film is over, the viewer is taken down many roads and sees all kinds of faces, as Mike and Scott travel

to Idaho, Las Vegas and Italy in search of Mike's mother.

Aesthetics play an important part in this film. Van Sant uses a clever device when he brings the viewer inside the Film Follies adult book store in Portland. The camera pans over magazines to reveal Mike and Scott scantily clad on the covers. They come to life to discuss why they are on such display.

This movie, however, is not merely a happy trip through stylish images. Pessimism prevails throughout. The "American Dream" is torn apart visually, and the audio track follows suit.

The film, with its many attributes, also has its flaws. While Phoenix's performance is commendable, Reeves is weak. The storyline also gets a bit confusing at times, with Van Sant trying to accomplish too many things with one script.

But despite its shortcomings, *My Own Private Idaho* is a film that stays with you. The images are concrete yet do not take away from the seriousness of the subject matter.

By Christina Komesian
 Emerald Contributor