

CULTURE

The truth is all that matters

Musician Mark Weigle helps Portland celebrate Leather Pride

BY GLENN SCOFIELD WILLIAMS

Mark Weigle rocks. His music comes from the most honest kind of personal place—one with integrity of truth and the emotional weight of life. His music moves us, in the course of a song, from one man's experience to a universal one.

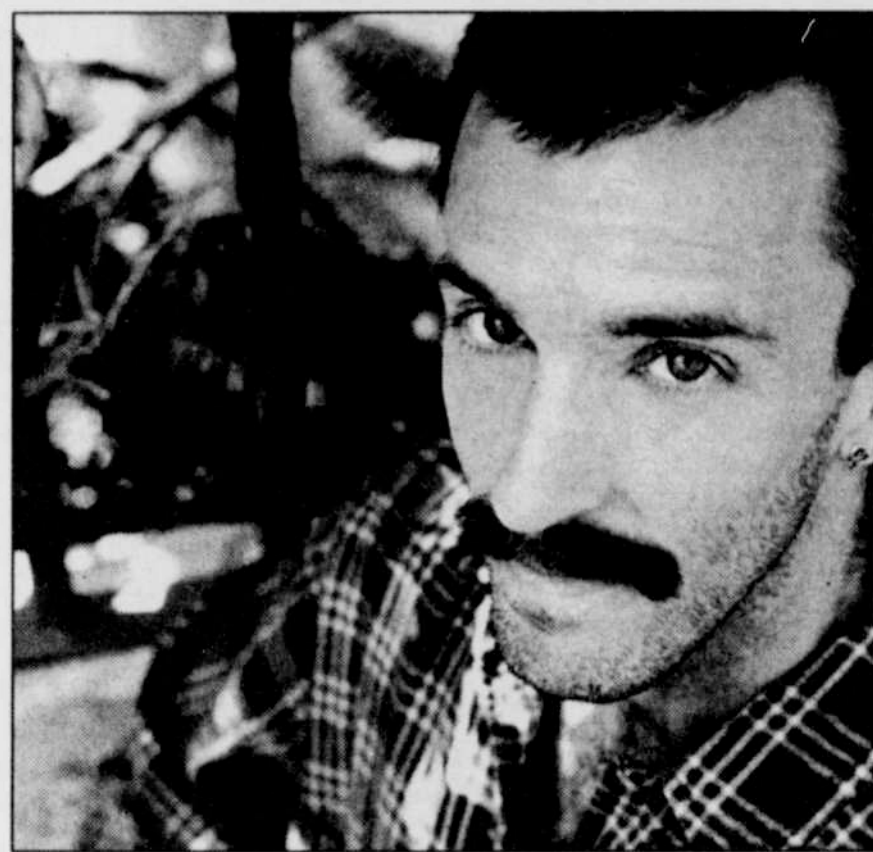
Billboard talent editor Larry Flick chose Weigle's second album, *All That Matters*, as one of 2000's Top 10 Best CDs. The magazine later singled him out again in the article "Unsigned Artists Who Deserve Grammy Recognition," naming his song "A Good Day" as the Record of the Year.

So why isn't he on the cover of music mags? Why no VH1? Why isn't he playing the big venues across the country? Because Weigle is one of those massively talented artists who make big record companies skittish—he writes openly about the gay experience.

"I'm glad folks like Melissa and k.d. are out in their personal lives," Weigle confesses to *Just Out*. "I feel like the next step is for GLBT artists to write truthfully about who they are."

The independent Bay Area musician has a large and loyal grassroots following that includes fans of acoustic, country, pop, leather and bears. "I've dealt with a lot of frustration in my career," he notes, "but all along I've consistently heard from folks—particularly gay men—who have had powerful experiences through my music. So I stay motivated to reach them."

Weigle's first album, 1998's *The Truth Is*, includes the crowd-pleaser "The Two Cowboy



Bay area musician Mark Weigle plays in Portland on Aug. 2 and 3

Waltz." He followed up with *All That Matters*, which includes the blazing pop happy "A Good Day." Then came *Out of the Loop* with an astonishing R & B slash on the body obsession of gay culture, "Love Your Body," and a subculture's pride anthem, "Bears."

All three albums feature a smooth, acoustic style reminiscent of a great singer-songwriter tradition like James Taylor or Jackson Brown.

Weigle's new album, *Different and the Same*, is an extraordinarily eclectic collection of well-crafted covers: from an erotically charged twist on Tommy Tutone's "867-5309" to a Motown-

style version of Kinsey Sicks' "AZT" to a cover of "When I Go" by Portland's own Dave Carter (to whom the album is dedicated).

Billboard's Flick insightfully claims Weigle's songs "honor gay experience without shutting anyone else out."

But don't take our word for it. Weigle comes to Portland for an Oregon Leather Pride Week concert Aug. 3 at Embers. He'll also perform a few songs during the Uniform & BuzzCuts Party at the Eagle, as well as during the Rosetown Ramblers' monthly country dance, both Aug. 2.

"Mark is a wonderful singer and has an amazing stage presence," says Andy Mangels of InUniform.net, who brought Weigle to town. "I wanted to have a celebratory and fun event for Leather Pride that was not solely about cruising or fantasy but which was pure entertainment."

And regarding that fickle music industry, hope comes from *Performing*

Songwriter magazine: "Weigle's songs carry with them a sense of decency, compassion, love and trust. If that's an agenda, we should all sign up." ■

MARK WEIGLE performs during the Rosetown Ramblers' country dance from 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Aug. 2 at the Portland Metro Club, 618 S.E. Alder St. Cover charge is \$5. See sidebar for other appearances.

GLENN SCOFIELD WILLIAMS writes poetry, prose, plays, periodica and porn in Portland.

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Leather Pride is here again



This year there are plenty of times and places to strut your sexy stuff for Oregon Leather Pride Week, Aug. 1 to 10.

New to the scene? "Don't be afraid," says Andy Mangels of InUniform.net. "Introduce yourself politely to someone who seems to be interested in the same things you are. Explain you're new...ask some questions. Most people love to talk about their interests, whether traditional or exotic."

Been here before? Ah, you know what to do....

Balls, parties and concerts

• **Fourth annual Leather, Feathers & Fur Fetish Ball:** DJ, dancing, costume contest and stage acts. 21+ only. Sponsored by Portland Leather Alliance. (8 p.m. Aug. 1. Fez Ballroom, 316 S.W. 11th Ave. \$12 from *Spartacus and Dancing Muse Boutique*, \$15 at the door.)

• **Mark Weigle concert:** Ms. Oregon State Leather 2002 Maria Webster opens. Sponsored by InUniform.net. (7 p.m. Aug. 3. Embers, 110 N.W. Broadway. \$10 from *Spartacus or Gai-Pied*, \$15 at the door.)

• **Queer Only Dungeon Party:** Sponsored by Angel of Portland. (8 p.m. to 4 a.m. Aug. 8. Ascension Dungeon, 5224 S.E. Foster Road. E-mail tickets@angelofportland.com.)

• **Bears in Leather Beer Bust:** Sponsored by Oregon Bears. (9 p.m. to midnight Aug. 8.

Gail's Dirty Duck, 438 N.W. Third Ave. \$8 at the door.)

• **Bad Girls Mixed Play Party:** Pansexual partying sponsored by Bad Girls. (9 p.m. to 3 a.m. Aug. 9. Ascension Dungeon, 5224 S.E. Foster Road. E-mail contact@pdxbadgirls.net.)

Gatherings and socials

• **Leather Social:** Squeaking and drinking. Sponsored by Dustin Posner. (9 p.m. to midnight Aug. 1. *Gail's Dirty Duck*, 438 N.W. Third Ave.)

• **Leather Tastings:** Demonstrations by local S/M experts. Sponsored by Portland Leather Alliance. (Noon to 4 p.m. Aug. 3. *Panorama*, 341 S.W. 10th Ave. \$3-\$5.)

• **Movie Night:** Sponsored by Portland Leather Alliance. (7 to 10 p.m. Aug. 5. Location to be announced.)

• **Leather & Lace Show:** Fetish on parade. Sponsored by the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court. (8 p.m. Aug. 7. Embers, 110 N.W. Broadway. \$5.)

• **Erotica Show & Leather Archives Display:** Erotic acts, dancing and an exhibit from Chicago's Leather Archives & Museum. Sponsored by Blackout Leather Productions. (7 p.m. Aug. 8. Embers, 110 N.W. Broadway. \$5.)

• **Leather Family Barbecue:** Potluck picnic. Bring meat or whatever to grill and a side dish to share. Sponsored by Blackout Leather Productions. (6 to 9 p.m. Aug. 6. Washington Park Rose Garden, Pavilion D.)

Fund-raisers and charities

• **Kinky Auction:** Dancing, entertainment and an auction to benefit Portland Leather Alliance. (5 p.m. viewing, 6 p.m. auction Aug. 2. Fez Ballroom, 316 S.W. 11th. Free.)

• **Uniform & BuzzCuts Party:** Uniforms encouraged. Haircuts and bootblacking to benefit Outside In. Musician Mark Weigle plays a few tunes. Sponsored by InUniform.net. (9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Aug. 2. *The Eagle PDX*, 1300 W. Burnside St. \$4.)

• **Leather Pride Bash:** Chaps & whips, chips & dip all to benefit Back to School. Sponsored by the Eagle PDX. (10 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. Aug. 9. *The Eagle PDX*, 1300 W. Burnside St. \$4.)

Contests and fanfare

• **Mr. & Ms. Oregon State Leather Contestant Meet & Greet:** Meet the competition. Sponsored by Blackout Leather Productions. (5 p.m. Aug. 8. Embers, 110 N.W. Broadway. Free.)

• **Mr. & Ms. Oregon State Leather Contest:** Includes traveling display from Chicago's Leather Archives & Museum. Sponsored by Blackout Leather Productions. (7 p.m. Aug. 9. Embers, 110 N.W. Broadway. \$10.)

• **Victory Brunch and Rose & Thorn Community Awards:** Food and honors. Sponsored by Blackout Leather Productions. (11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Aug. 10. Embers, 110 N.W. Broadway. \$12.) ■