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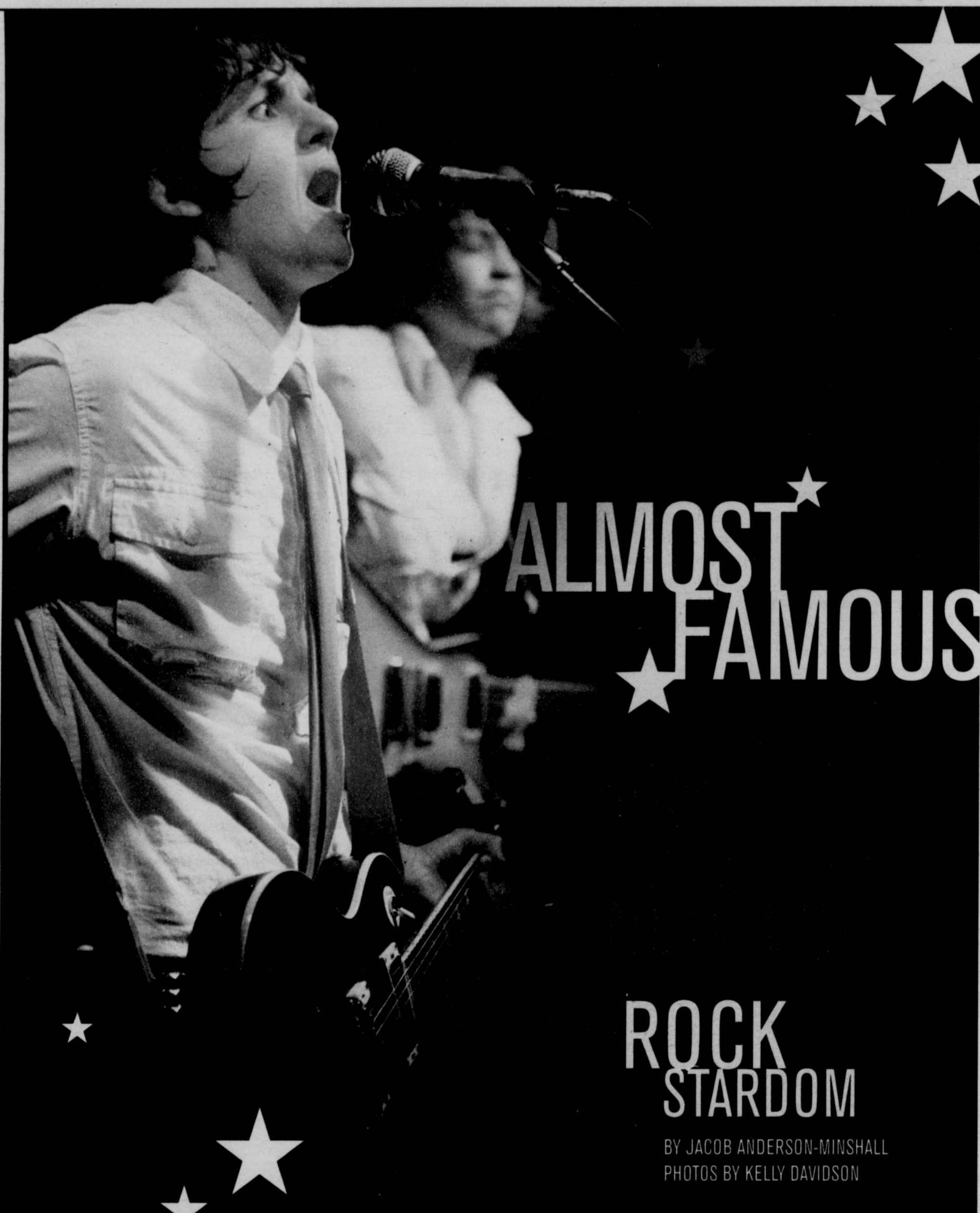
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ALMOST
FAMOUS

ROCK
STARDOM

BY JACOB ANDERSON-MINSHALL
PHOTOS BY KELLY DAVIDSON

Lucas Silveira, trans frontman to the nearly famous all-queer rock band The Clinks, has had a remarkable year. Highlights of 2007 include releasing a major label debut, joining Cyndi Lauper on the True Colors tour, garnering mainstream kudos, being kissed on the mouth by comedian Margaret Cho, topping Logo's *Click List*, getting tattooed by LA Ink's Kat Von D and appearing on late-night television.

But nothing quite prepared Silveira for the discovery that his musical heroes, The Cult's Ian Astbury and Billy Duffy, were fans of his. Now opening for The Cult—including a March 24 appearance at Portland's Roseland Theater—The Clinks snared the coveted gig because Astbury saw the band on the cover of New York's *Go* magazine.

"He picked it up and was like, 'Oh, this is an interesting story,'" Silveira relates. "And then he kept reading it and he was like, 'Oh, this is a really interesting story!' He went online and listened to the music and said he was blown away. [Ian] is a very political human being, and he's always been a great supporter of the queer world and things that are just not seen as 'normal' in society. I think his goal in life is to normalize these things. He told me that he felt honored to have our audience members come out to their shows and to look out and see queer kids in the audience...[because] that's

exactly what he'd always wanted for himself—to have an audience that diverse. It was such an inspiring feeling to hear one of my heroes say that to me—you know, that he admired me. I was like, 'Dude, you got to be kidding me!'"

A former small-town boy, Silveira was raised in a village of 600 on Portugal's Azores Islands before relocating to Canada. He's been rocking the north since the mid-'90s, playing solo gigs for nearly a decade, then founding The Clinks in 2004. Last year Tommy Boy Records released the band's debut, *Snakehouse*; the single "Oh Yeah" made it to Logo's *Top 10 Countdown*; and Silveira's story seemed to spark a chain reaction. More often than not, it was the novelty of his transgender identity that initially attracted media attention, but the band's rocking beats cemented its critical acclaim and enabled The Clinks to break out of the so-called gay ghetto.

Since then, the Toronto-based foursome has received attention from queer and mainstream presses, including coverage from *The Village Voice*, CBS, MSNBC and an appearance on *The Late Show with Craig Ferguson*. By last summer, Silveira had become North America's best-known trans guy, the band had become the next big thing, and—much to Silveira's amusement—its work elicited references to "overnight success."