

"I MET AN 11-YEAR-OLD TRANS KID THE OTHER DAY. HIS MOM SAID HOW IMPORTANT IT WAS, SEEING PEOPLE LIKE ME IN THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA..."



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Don't think Silveira is anything less than humble, though. "When I'm on stage I feel like a rock star," he confesses. "I think that's where I have to place it. It's kind of like a persona. I don't think I've attained the kind of position that the word really garners. I'm not saying we're not successful, because in the eyes of any band, we are—but I do want to reach the next level. I don't want to always have to struggle. I want to give myself that push to go up the next level and then I'll call myself a rock star."

Still, Silveira contends, there will always be some exertion. "You can't just expect things to fall into your lap. We, as a band, have a really, really strong work ethic. I think that's what's really important. The way this industry works these days—there are so many acts out there and music is seen as so disposable that you have to constantly make yourself available, constantly put yourself out there, always try to be as visible as possible."

Between keeping visible on an upcoming episode of *LA Ink* and The Cliks' 2008 tour, Silveira and the band will hit the studio to record a new album, which should reach stores by early 2009.

"I love playing shows, and I do love touring to a certain extent," Silveira maintains, "but traveling is hard...work. It's difficult to write on the road. You travel from one city to the next, [and] you're always tired. It catches up, and finally...you go to your hotel room and sleep 20 hours. And it's not a matter of choice. Your body just needs it."

The rocker has also begun to experience some of the dark side of fame. "I've had two separate occasions where...women grabbed my ass," Silveira divulges. "You know what? That ain't cool, man. I know that I'm the lead singer of a band, and I know I'm here to sign autographs, but my body is still my body. It's situations like that where it can get a little weird."

Still, Silveira recognizes that there's a certain sense of intimacy

fans develop for their favorite musicians. "You do have to sort of put that in the back of your head. They have a familiarity with you that you don't have with them. How do you translate that in meeting them? You just have to be careful not to give people the wrong idea."

Silveira clarifies: "99.9 percent of our fans are not like that. They're down-to-earth, intelligent people."

And there have been are situations where he has encouraged a level of intimacy. "I do try...to help certain people within the community who have reached out to me. I met an 11-year-old trans kid the other day. His mom said how important it was, seeing people like me in the mainstream media. [It] makes him feel like he's not alone and he's normal. I feel honored that these kids would look at me that way [and] that I can make somebody feel less alone and less isolated."

Now that he's a role model, Silveira argues: "The most important thing I can do...is just be myself. I'm not perfect. I make mistakes. I'm a normal human being. And I think that's probably the best thing I could show anybody."

Looking into the future, Silveira dreams of "a lot less touring and a lot more creating. I always tell people, right now as a band our No. 1 goal is to tour in a bus. Then bigger audiences. World domination. We just want to keep doing what we're doing but obviously doing it a bigger level every time we try." 10

THE CLIKS open for *The Cult* 8 p.m. March 24 at Roseland Theater, 8 N.W. Sixth Ave. Tickets are \$30 from TicketsWest.

Trans author JACOB ANDERSON-MINSHALL writes the weekly syndicated column "TransNation," which runs in queer publications from San Francisco to New York. He also co-authors the *Blind Eye* mystery series with his wife, Diane. Contact him at jake@trans-nation.org.

Heather Alexander's fans believe in magic. Playing Celtic-inspired tunes at Renaissance fairs, sci-fi fantasy conventions and *filk* (Internet folk music) concerts—not to mention recording several albums—she had a large cult following in communities steeped in make-believe and fantasy, magic and lore. But in the winter of 2006-07, even Alexander's fans couldn't believe their eyes.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF HEATHER ALEXANDER

Northwest trans musician believes in magic
by Jacob Anderson-Minshall

In November 2006, after a farewell concert, Heather Alexander walked through a gate on the stage and disappeared. She was, quite literally, never seen again.

The following spring, word surfaced that Heather Alexander had retired. Before leaving, she'd apparently chosen an heir to carry on her musical heritage. The heir, Alexander James Adams, who bares a subtle resemblance to Heather Alexander, debuted on stage with a pubescent boy's cracking voice and an intimate knowledge of Alexander's extensive musical library.

"I call myself The Heir, because that was what I was doing," Adams explains. "I was inheriting all of Heather Alexander's music and her magic and her world. The title was to let people know I was kind of like Heather's chosen one. Because nobody knew at first what was going on." Adams admits the title helped smooth the transition.

Billing himself as the Fairy Tale Minstrel and identifying as an FTM, Adams declares that the best tale he's ever spun was one about his own life.

"I made a fairytale girl. That's who I was. And I was terrified because I realized I'm going to take everyone's little fairytale princess and transform her into—what?"

Fortunately, Adams could tap into a storytelling tradition and harvest a metaphor to explain the female-to-male experience to his unique audience.

"In Irish Celtic stories there's a fairytale line of the *fae*. They steal infant children and they leave their own kind in place. Heather was a changeling...a fairy-child. After...living amongst the mortals, she decided she wanted to go home [and] the fairies let me out. I was a stolen child from the beginning. That's how I come out. I say I've basically lived in fairyland for 44 years and now I'm here in the mortal world and I'm kicking around, becoming a real boy."

The sci-fi fantasy community has accepted both Adams and his creation fable. "I thought, 'Oh my God, I'm going to lose every male following I had.' I've been surprised: I lost very few. I found that the guys were actually very game to take me on as their little brother and show me the ropes. They're getting great glee out of telling me how to behave."

The experience has deepened Adams' faith in magic and mankind. "It's impressed me with exactly how kind

...[IT] MAKES HIM FEEL LIKE HE'S NOT ALONE AND HE'S NORMAL."

—LUCAS SILVEIRA



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