

for a long time I was not into having machines play the music. While everyone else was doing a lot of sequencers and stuff like that, I was obstinate and wanted people to play the music. So when I finally did get into that, I had a different approach, and it just seemed different than what other people were doing. So it's more about trying to not repeat what everyone else does.

How does your approach differ?

For me, the biggest change came when the Internet started to become more of a household technology. I very early on real-

ized it would change the way music was marketed eventually and went to some trouble to point it all out to anybody who would listen. Now I'm at something of an advantage because I'm already at a place where other people have just started to realize they should be going to. [In 1998, Rundgren launched www.patronet.com — a subscription service that enabled fans to download his music directly from his website.] A lot of people have been hugely successful, and now not a lot of people can remember them, so having support from your fans when you venture out in these experimental forays is always kind of essential!

Tell me about your upcoming album.

As soon as I finish up this little bit of touring, I'm going to be sequestering myself in the studio to complete a new record. I had a record come out a couple years ago that was extremely well-received [2004's *Liars*], and it surprised me sort of, because I wasn't calculating to make a well-received record! So since then I've been trying to figure out what it was that made people respond so well to this record. It's in a way like the records I used to make. They have a high concept to them, they have a certain degree of eclecticism to them and the lyrics are *about* something, they're not simply local noises to go to the melody of

the song. I also want to work in a genre that I haven't really invested myself very much in before and which I think there isn't enough of but that there may be some interest in or need for. And that is what we used to call arena rock — the pre-punk golden age where it was like Genesis and Yes, Foreigner, Boston and songs with big hooks to them and big guitar riffs, large arrangements and a bit of musical prowess here and there, and that was designed to sound good in an arena. So I figure if I do a good job with this, it may be a self-fulfilling prophecy, and I may find myself playing in a lot of arenas!

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