

# Solo Plant enters 'Manic Nirvana' with departure from familiar style

**ROBERT PLANT**  
*Manic Nirvana*  
Atlantic Records

By **PATRICK HAYS**  
Of The Battalion Staff

I would be highly surprised if Robert Plant came out with anything less than a really good album.

His latest release, *Manic Nirvana*, picks up where *Now and Zen* left off, and takes musical trips heretofore unexplored by Plant in his solo capacity.

The first track, "Hurting Kind," sounds similar to "Tall Cool One" from *Now and Zen*, but the similarity doesn't continue through the rest of the album. The remaining tracks encompass pure, hard-driving selections as well as more relaxed, esoteric cuts.

Plant makes good use of his resources. The band is the same one which recorded *Now and Zen*. They are: Chris Blackwell (drums), Doug Boyle (guitars), Phil Johnstone (keyboards), Charlie Jones (bass) and Plant (vocals).

*Manic Nirvana* proves the versatility of these guys. It's clear that when they went into the studio they weren't trying to "be different." Many bands, when entering the studio, suffer from trying to build a better mousetrap in musical terms.

They say, "Let's do something really cool and different — a real ear-catcher," instead of trying to strive for musical excellence. Plant and company avoided that syndrome.

They took their talents, set some high musical goals and achieved them, disregarding the norms which permeate some areas of rock music.

I'm not saying these guys aren't concerned with selling records, it's just not their first priority. They're trying to make good music first, and they're succeeding.

But then again, all of Plant's solo albums have shined brightly. He first came out with *Pictures At*



Robert Plant (center) goes a second round with his band on *Manic Nirvana*. Left to right: guitarist

Doug Boyle, drummer Chris Blackwell, bassist Charlie Jones and keyboardist Phil Johnstone.

*Eleven* in 1982 and followed it up with his best solo effort in 1983, *The Principle of Moments*. Nineteen eighty-five saw the release of *Shaken 'N Stirred*, a fantastic album, and then of course, *Now and Zen* hit the stands in 1988.

Plant breaks new ground on *Manic Nirvana* with an acoustic guitar piece, "Liars Dance." The guitar is accompanied only by Plant's smooth voice.

He also pays tribute to the Woodstock festival. At the beginning of "Tie Dye On The Highway," crowd noise fades in and the words uttered during the early morning hours at Woodstock follow: "What we have in mind is breakfast in bed for

400,000."

On *Now and Zen*, Plant incorporated samples from selected Led Zeppelin songs. He used pieces of "Black Dog," "The Ocean" and "Whole Lotta Love" on "Tall Cool One," and he pulls the same trick (sort of) on "Your Ma Said You Cried In Your Sleep Last Night" from *Manic Nirvana*. That song contains words from "Black Dog."

*Now and Zen* was the first time Plant did anything with his solo material remotely related to Led Zeppelin, and it wasn't until that tour that he played any Zep songs in concert.

One has to have sympathy for him, as he is constantly bombarded

with questions about a Led Zeppelin reunion tour.

He, along with Jimmy Page and Phil Collins on drums played Live Aid. Then he and Page and John Paul Jones, with Jason Bonham on drums, played in May 1988 at the Atlantic Records 40th anniversary concert in New York's Madison Square Garden.

Still, he has insisted repeatedly that a Zep reunion tour will never happen. The sad thing is that he is continually hounded about it.

In the meantime, however, he continues to churn out good music — something he does very well — and *Manic Nirvana* is testament to that.

## Recycle

(Continued from page 6)

said Bryan City Councilman Bob Reese. The two governments will be looking at solutions including recycling, he said.

"We don't want to just bury it," Reese said. Although reasons to recycle abound, it doesn't pay much. The going rate for glass is about 2 cents per pound, and paper pays anywhere from \$5 per ton for newsprint to \$40 per ton for white paper.

(But) the more people recycle, the more recycling operations there will be and lessen the need to rape our own resources," Albert said.

Some local recycling operations include:

- Brazos Animal Shelter. Provides 24-hour drop-off for bagged, bundled or tied newspapers or computer paper. Call 775-5755 for address and assistance.
- Brazos Beautiful Inc., and Bryan Iron and Metal. These businesses operate four 24-hour drop-off sites for glass and aluminum. The drop-off sites are at Academy and Skaggs Alpha-Beta in College Station, and at John's Katfish Kitchen (near Wal-Mart in Bryan) and Sue Haswell Park in Bryan. Call 696-5391 or 775-7171 for more information.
- Bryan Iron and Metal also buys almost all kinds of scrap metal except tin cans. Their number is 775-7171.
- Brazos Beverages Inc. Buys aluminum cans only. 775-6322.
- Bruegging Paper Stock. Buys clean, rigid plastic, all grades of paper, aluminum cans and glass. 822-2473.

- City of Bryan Solid Waste Department. The city does not pick up recyclables but provides information and assistance for people who need to dispose of used items. 361-3631.
- City of College Station Solid Waste Department. Accepts used motor oil and car batteries. 764-3690.
- The Deluxe and Cafe Eccell. Provides 24-hour drop-off site for glass, aluminum, newspapers and cardboard. 846-7466.
- Twin City Mission. Recycles all grades of paper, glass, rags, appliances, furniture and anything else that possibly can be reused. 822-7511.
- Valley Recyclers. Buys aluminum cans and glass. 775-9800.

A more complete list is available from the Texas Environmental Action Coalition. For more information, call Mike Worsham at 846-8748 or Mary Albert at 846-6767.

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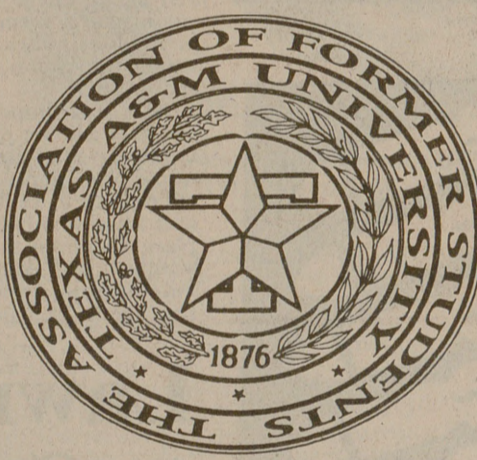
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