

Aggielife

air today, gone tomorrow ids from the '80s make comebacks with mixed results

BY GRAY WHITTEN
The Battalion

The Billboard Magazine Hot 100 Charts are usually as predictable as Dennis Rodman's hair color. But some artists prove themselves to be pillars of the music business.

In a time when most acts follow the standard hit single/double live album/fade away cycle, longevity is a truly unique quality.

The genre of rock is perhaps the most willing to accept 'oldies' making a comeback.

Some succeed, such as U2, which constantly re-invents itself, or the Rolling Stones' never-ending series of increasingly elaborate tours.

Not all bands are as fortunate in terms of support and sales.

From the band's heyday, when selling five to 10 million albums was the norm, Van Halen has come a long way in sales.

The band's March 1998 effort, 3, sold less than 500,000 copies and quickly dropped off the Billboard 200 chart, and the radio.

Others have given up the genre completely and moved to electronic experimentation.

A new Guns 'N' Roses album, minus Slash and produced by Moby, is rumored to be closer to techno than the hard rock that made Axl Rose a household name.

Fans of the band still exist, even if they are not the most vocal these days.

Evidence exists in the fact that *Appetite For Destruction* the band's multi-platinum debut, still sits at No. 10 on the Billboard Catalog Albums chart after 381 weeks.

The chances of that seem slim. Estranged guitarist Slash is currently in

the studio at work on a new album, according to the band's promoters at Geffen Records.

Austin Glaves, a junior management major, feels that rockers with roots in '80s are still widespread and influential.

"For me, Metallica was the band that started it all ('80s metal)," he said. "And they still are the '80s metal band."

With two albums on the Billboard Top Pop Catalog Albums chart, a measure of sales for top-selling older albums, Metallica remains a strong seller as well as a mighty presence on the concert circuit.

Annual tours and prolific production of music have kept the band in the eyes of the public.

Bands do not need to be of the long hair and angst variety to sell records. R.E.M. has built a strong career since its quiet start in Georgia in the early '80s.

Kellye Gaskill, a junior journalism major at the University of Texas, said she still thinks of the band as very but feels less strongly about recent efforts.

"Their earlier stuff is a whole lot better than the stuff they're putting out now. I especially like *Reckoning* and *Life's Rich Pageant*."

With the loss of drummer Bill Berry and the decision not to tour in support of its forthcoming album, R.E.M. presents fans with additional challenges.

However, considering the record-breaking album contract signed with Warner Brothers Records last year, the band seems determined to continue no matter what gets in their way.

New bands appear every week on MTV, BET, CMT and the rest, but very few will be around long enough for the next generation to enjoy them.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GUNS N' ROSES WEBSITE



PHOTO COURTESY OF VAN HALEN WEBSITE

Left: Guns N' Roses lead singer Axl Rose wows fans.

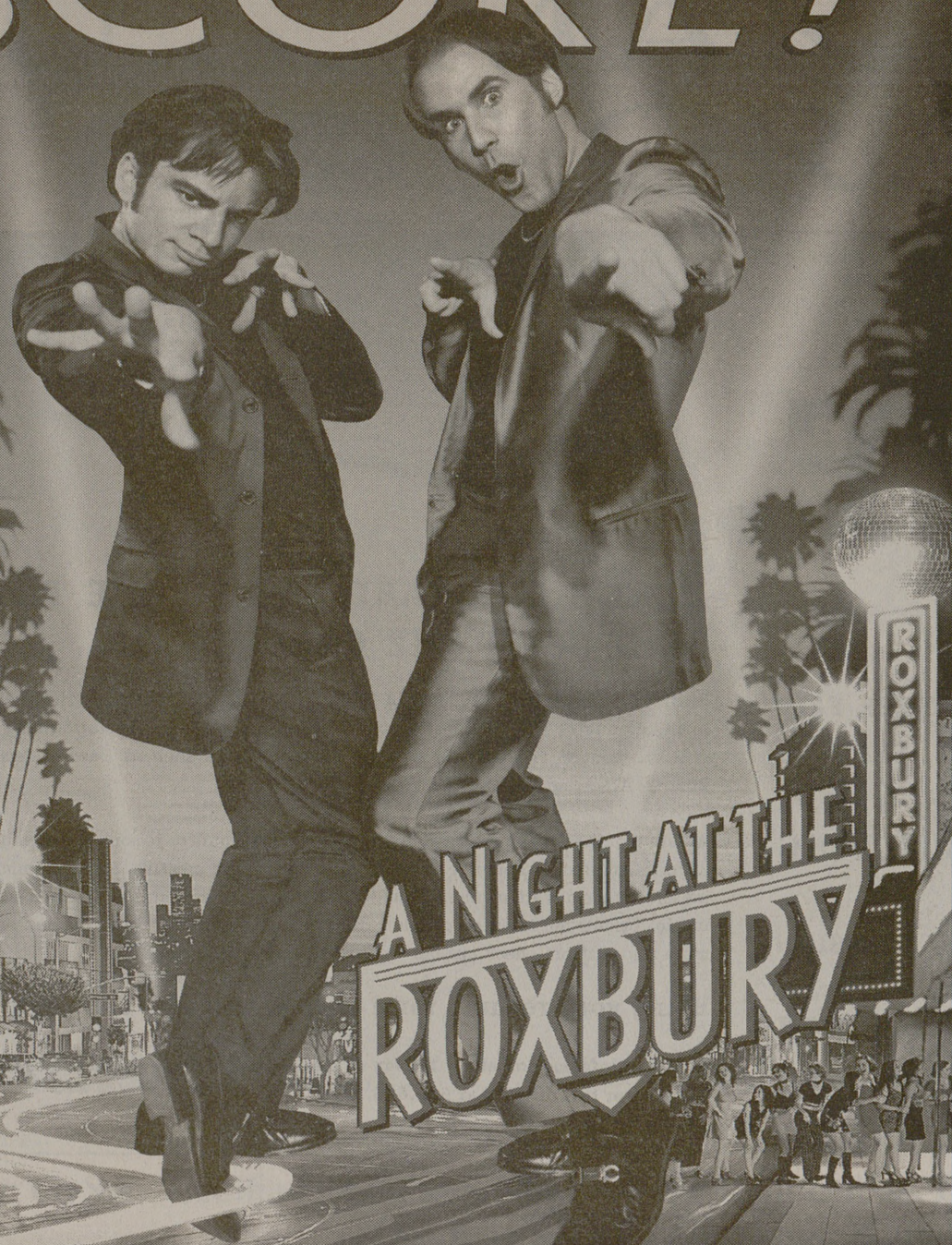
Above: Van Halen ushers in a new era with lead singer Gary Cherone.

Below: REM band members watch Michael Stipe belt out another song.



PHOTO COURTESY OF REM WEBSITE

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