

Eric Alexandrakis pushes music limits with 'I.V. Catatonia' album

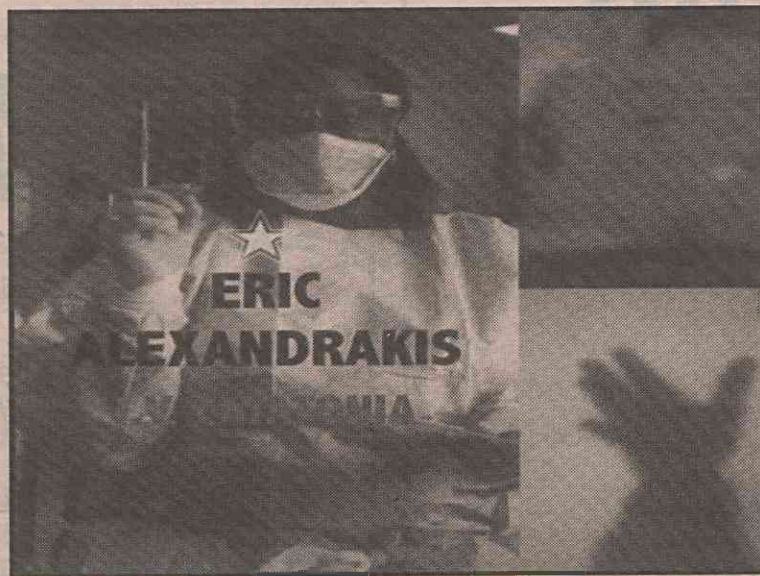
Katie Beaver
Reporter

There is only one word to describe Eric Alexandrakis's new album: original.

The Miami-area musician falls into no certain genre of music, accepts no stereotypes and pushes all the invisible boundaries in the music industry with the release of his album "I.V. Catatonia." It is a sampling of sound and music (these are altogether two different things on this album) that is best described as an original mixture never before heard in the world of top-40 hits.

Alexandrakis is a 27-year-old musician with a master's degree in music business. Duran Duran's John Taylor noticed his first recording project, recorded at his home in 1997. While Alexandrakis's music career took flight, however, his personal life came crashing down around him.

Amid the hours of studio sessions and musical experiments, Alexandrakis was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease. Instead of quitting, he dove into the creation of a new album based on his experiences with his cancer treatments.



Courtesy of Y&T Music

New artist Erik Alexandrakis puts out album that would not be "just what the doctor ordered."

The result of his actions is the eclectic, original work "I.V. Catatonia." Nothing in this album fits the typical mold of pop music or any other music genre, for that matter.

For example, one of the tracks consists of a woman saying, "take your vitamins" repeatedly for over a minute. Another track includes such an odd collection of sounds, including ocean waves, the buzzing of flies and an airplane taking off.

This is not to say that Alex-

andrakis does not have talent. He composed all the music and lyrics himself, and he makes each sound individually with no help from outsiders. When the cacophony subsides and Alexandrakis's voice can be heard, it is realized that the man does have some talent.

However, this album is not for the faint of heart. Those who revel in the bubble-gum sweetness of Britney Spears and the Backstreet Boys will not take kindly to the 22 tracks based on Alexandrakis's cancer and his cancer treatments.

This album is meant to be a message, but for the most part the ocean waves and airplane take-offs are too loud for the listener to make it out.

Impending actor strike could lead to industry slump, even in N.C.

Lisa McChristian
Reporter

Fans of reality television may be getting more than they bargained for when the impending writer, director and actor strike begins this summer.

The Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild contracts end May 1 and June 30, respectively. Both groups have committed to hitting the pickets lines in protest over residual payments for DVD's, videocassettes and foreign releases.

Planning ahead for months without writers and actors, major television networks are racing to create more scriptless programming like Survivor, The Real World, The Mole and Boot Camp.

Major Hollywood studios have cranked up their production schedule in anticipation of quiet months ahead. Currently, there are 125 films in production, a 76 percent increase in spring production from last year.

Big name actors like Kevin Spacey, Harrison Ford and Julia Roberts contributed millions of dollars to a commer-

cial actors' strike in the fall. Other actors like Ben Affleck, Matt Damon, Brad Pitt and Anthony Edwards have vowed to support the strike and stay faithful to their union.

Both Elizabeth Hurley and Tiger Woods were issued fines from SAG and brought before the board for doing commercials during the previous strike. Scabs, or entertainment talent who will ignore the strike, will face loftier fines and possible expulsion from their unions.

In a recent interview, Affleck said he and Damon would use the time to work on their screenplay follow up to the Academy Award-winning Good Will Hunting.

Recent studies have shown that the motion picture and television industries account for nearly 185,000 jobs and \$24 billion spent in Los Angeles County alone. The strike would raise the country's unemployment rate from 4.8 percent to 6.9 percent.

The strike will also hit close to home, shutting down Screen Gems Studio in Wilmington, N.C. Screen Gems is the home of WB staple Dawson's Creek and the studio responsible for John Travolta's upcoming action film, Swordfish.

SUMMER CONCERTS

May 7: Train at the Tremont Music Hall in Charlotte

May 8: Evan and Jaron at Amos Southend in Charlotte

May 8: Sting at the Greensboro Coliseum

May 10: Bon Jovi at the

Alltell Pavilion in Raleigh

May 11: Crazy Town at The Ritz in Raleigh

May 19: Lil Bow Wow at the Cricket Arena in Charlotte

May 25: Eric Clapton at the Charlotte Coliseum

June 1: Brooks and Dunn at the Alltell Pavilion in Raleigh

June 2: Brooks and Dunn at the Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre in Charlotte

June 9: James Taylor at the Alltell Pavilion in Raleigh

June 13: Backstreet Boys at the Raleigh Entertainment and Sports Arena

June 17: Backstreet Boys at the Greensboro Coliseum

August 3: Aaron Carter at the Paladium at Carowinds in Charlotte

August 31: Janet Jackson in Charlotte

September 1: Janet Jackson in Greensboro

September 5: Janet Jackson in Raleigh

September 11: Aerosmith at the Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre in Charlotte