

Singing the King's praises with Mojo and Skid

By **BETH TRIPP**
Staff Writer

It's Saturday night and I'm waiting for a friend to call. The phone rings and someone asks for Beth. I say hello and a gravelly voice yells out, "Hey Beth! It's Mojo!" Yes, all you Elvis groupies, it was none other than the madman of mania, Mojo Nixon, calling from Ft. Lauderdale. His ever silent parter, Skid Roper, listened in on an extension but declined to talk.

Mojo and Skid will be bringing their unique brand of music, which has been described as a "mutant cross breed of Howlin' Wolf, Lou Reed and Richard Pryor," to the Brewery in Raleigh tonight.

Mojo proudly informed me that he was born in Chapel Hill and was a "Tar Heel born and a Tar Heel bred and when I die I'll be a Tar Heel dead." He also claimed to be a relative of Frank Porter Graham, former UNC president. "I'm from the bad side of the family. They were scared to talk about me."

Mojo's opinions on the current political state were very definite and clear cut. "Jesse Helms is an evil slime who should be castrated so he can't reproduce. He doesn't believe in freedom. This country was founded by people who believed in religious freedom and freedom from taxation without

representation. If George Bush is elected, can you imagine reading in the paper that the president took decisive action? He makes Jimmy Carter look like Teddy Roosevelt."

Being a true blue Tar Heel, Mojo still keeps up with UNC basketball. He was pleased with the team's performance this season, but worried that "aliens in small space-ships will think J.R. Reid's hair is an aircraft carrier and land on it."

Some viewers may have seen Mojo trashing videos on MTV. If they only played Bon Jovi and Whitesnake three times a day instead of five times, he feels that

they would have more room for bands like the Beat Farmers and the Replacements. He doesn't like bands like the Cure, Depeche Mode and the Pet Shop Boys because "they're funny looking and their music just doesn't make me want to lay down naked on a dirt floor and drink moonshine." But he thinks local guitarist Dexter Romwebber is "a musical genius."

On Mojo and Skid's latest album, *Bo-day-shus*, their smash hit has been "Elvis is Everywhere" in which they salute the little bit of Elvis in everyone. Everyone, that is, except the anti-Elvis — Michael J. Fox. Neither have been to see

"Bright Lights, Big City" yet, because they refuse to watch "the Satan's movies." They also worry that all their neighbors will get plastic surgery to look like Fox, then band together to shoot them.

Mojo expects a large crowd at the Brewery tonight and warns everyone to be there early. "We'll probably have to helicopter in." As for the show, he says, "We plan to cover a Charlie Pickens song — 'If That Was Love Can I Have My Money Back?' and maybe bite the heads off of some chocolate bunnies."

God bless Elvis.

*Into her perfect world, comes a perfect stranger—
and suddenly...nothing is perfect any more.*



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After a rough year, Vaughan bounces back

By **RHYS WILLIAMS**
Staff Writer

Stevie Ray Vaughan is an interesting phenomenon. He is at the forefront of the recent resurgence of interest in the blues — a musical style noted for its technical simplicity — yet he's also one of the few guitar players on the planet to fully master the subtleties and the dynamics of Jimi Hendrix' music.

Vaughan's first album, "Texas Flood," appeared at a time when synthesizers threatened to dominate the market, yet the LP was a glorious celebration of the guitar, intimidating the listener with emotional depth, technical virtuosity, and wall-to-wall guitar solos.

His first appearance in Britain was at the annual three-day Heavy Metal festival held near Reading. His Hendrix-esque blues stole the show and won rave reviews, and the future looked decidedly bright. He never returned to Britain, and has now forfeited a potentially lucrative market to people such as Robert Cray. Above all, with so much natural talent at his disposal, he almost threw it and his life away in a wash of alcohol and drugs.

In America, Vaughan first came to the attention of the record-buying public through his guitar-playing on David Bowie's *Let's Dance* LP, and he is still much in demand for studio dates, as recent records by A.C. Reed and Jennifer Warnes testify.

A native of Oak Cliff, near Dallas, the 33-year-old Vaughan released four albums with his own band, Double Trouble, before he partied once too often last year and was

obliged to visit an alcohol and drug rehabilitation center. Now on tour again, he regularly delivers anti-drug messages to his audience that would make Nancy Reagan proud.

The tour will last "from now until the end of July," he says, "and at the end of the tour we're going back into the studio to record a new LP." The LP will be the band's first studio album since 1986's *Soul To Soul*, although last year saw the release of the *Live Alive* album.

There is also talk of Vaughan recording an album with his older brother, Jimmie, the guitarist with The Fabulous Thunderbirds. "There is a record I want to do with my brother," he says. "But we're gonna do my record first."

Vaughan and Double Trouble played at Memorial Hall on Sunday, and the packed house was a credit to the band's live reputation, in that they have no record release to generate publicity. Considering the hour delay due to power failure, the two-and-a-half hour show was well received by an audience that was — allegedly — stone cold sober. Vaughan had said during the sound check that he was looking forward to the show, and his enthusiasm seemed to reflect his cleaned-up image.

Of the younger generation of blues musicians, the Vaughan brothers have been by far the most influential. Around Chapel Hill, Stevie Ray's influence can be seen in a number of bands, especially in Danny Morris' Blue-Note Special, who will be playing with Johnny Winter in Winston-Salem next Wednesday. If Vaughan's anti-drug message is only half as effective as his musical influence, it will still be worthwhile.

For the moment, however, Vaughan is just taking his initial steps without the artificial crutch of alcohol and drugs. Once this tour is over, his rehabilitation will be completed with his new album. With the recent death of a UNC student being linked to drugs, Vaughan's message is especially salient: Let the good times roll, but know when to stop.

"THERE is a sense in which Jackson is a 'natural' democratic candidate, expressing perhaps the party's increasingly McGovernite soul. Jackson pulls white votes in the university regions of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Michigan, and Wisconsin, enclaves of radicalism, but also the pacesetters intellectually for the national Democratic Party. There is a sense in which Jackson has had the courage of their deepest convictions, and they share his vision of a disarmed, redistributive, socialist America."

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