

night and they liked our music. It was just a great friendship right away. And they introduced us to their manager. Andrew Burton. BRENNAN: Lori had been members of BLR at her church over in Oakland. She was blown away by that aspect; Wow, there's more hip Christian people into the music scene."

LORI: We wanted to play with them again, so we asked Liz to try to set up another gig with them.

MATT: She eventually moved to London: she said that Andrew was interested in managing us. We talked to him & it was great, he'd be our manager. He seemed to be the kind of person we'd want to deal with.

RH: What direction do you see yourselves moving towards?

LORI: We're pretty young as a band, so we still love to experiment, trying different things that impress us, but we're always hoping to have a unity and a

focus, and make some progress in our mush. As far as I'm concerned the thing that's always gonna determine that are the vocals, the focus on the harmonies. We like to bring in a lot of different influences, but we like to try to keep that basic sound there.

AFTERWARD '99:

Well, LUCKY YOU did not get them welcomed into the arms of MTV - that honor went to 4 Non Blondes. I never knew what had happened with the band, other than an offshoot, **Bunny**, being formed Big Love Reunion sadly, stopped performing in 1991 or '92 with no recordings released to the public (as far as I'm aware of). The brief capsule review in Issue 3 spurred me to attempt to find out what had happened with the band.. I was fortunate enough to get in contact with Brennan Hester earlier this year & he was kind



The Sextants & 4 Non-Blondes

enough to answer a few questions about the album & what had happened with the band:

Q: What were the LUCKY YOU sessions like - did things go smoothly or was there pressure from the producer/label/yourself/whatever?

BH: The sessions were very nice and relaxed. We did a ton of preproduction rehearsal and arrangement stuff, so things moved pretty well. Most importantly, we had a table-top Asteroids machine that we got to play for free... That made it all worthwhile. We got a little bit of pressure from our A&R guy when the mixing came around. We had some strong feelings about the song order and some issues with the overall mix. This was turning into a long drawn out event, so I went to Radio Shack® and bought a handheld CB so I could talk to random people all over Hollywood - fortunately, this allowed me to do something else while everyone else had it out over that stuff. When it was all done ad we went to the Imago offices in New York for the "listening party". Terry Ellis (president of Imago) acted like he wasn't interested in the album in the slightest. A sign of things to come...

Q: Was it the album that you all wanted to make?

BH: I think so, at the time. As soon as we finished it and started our 9000 tours however, we had a lot of new stuff that we wished we could record.

Q: How did David Hidalgo (Los

Lobos) end up playing accordion on "She Thinks"?

BH: Larry (Hirsch the producer) had done a Los Lobos record and we were doing all our recording in Hollywood, so Larry was able to call David Hidalgo and ask him to stop by the studio. We played the song for him and showed him where we wanted the accordion - he said "Cool," and played through it once, then recorded it. Larry asked him what sort of payment he wanted and he said, Get me a six-pack of Bud™ and I'll be cool," and that was it He was very nice & very complimentary of our music.

Q: What were the problems at Imago at that time & how did directly affect the band in terms of label support, etc.?

BH: Problems at Imago... where to begin? Imago basically had no support department. I have a theory on how Terry Ellis operated his label - it seems to me that he was hoping to get lucky with one act that would just take off, but with little money or effort spent on his part. So he signed a bunch of us at once (Baby Animals, Henry Rollins, Aimee Mann, Suzanne Rattighan, Basehead, etc.) and he just sat back and hoped that some of us would do well without him having to invest more than the initial recording costs. We did 6 tours of the U.S. and Canada and more often than not, we'd arrive at places to discover that no advertisements for the show had been produced. And we'd always get the same question from club

owners: "Why didn't your label send the press materials to us? We would have put an ad in the paper." — We got pretty worn out from going out on long tours knowing that most of the time, people wouldn't even know we were coming. Also, I can't count the number of times we got to clubs and saw that our name was spelled wrong on the marquee (usually 'THE SEXTONS') Basically, Terry's unwillingness to spend a few bucks on press materials meant that we were guaranteed a Spinal Tap experience almost everywhere we went.\*

Q: What was the overall perception/reception of the album by the local music scene and was there any national attention?

BH: Basically, nothing changed on the local scene. The people in

\*"Appropriated" from an interview w/Aimee Mann, by Brett Milano - Boston Phoenix

Q: Your new album (I'M WITH STUPID) took a long time to get released. You were on Imago and the label went belly up... Then there were announcements that you'd signed to Warner Bros... Finally it wound up on Geffen a year after it was finished...

A: Unbelievable, isn't it? Your imagination can never be as bad as reality sometimes. Do you know about what happened?

Q: Well, I assumed there were some label problems.

A: Imago's financing was withdrawn because the label was losing so much money. Meanwhile, [Imago president] Terry Ellis owns my contract. So my label had collapsed and I couldn't look for another deal because it was all up to him. He was busy trying to start another label, and I said, "Look, either you start another label or you work on getting my record out." At one point he was going to make a deal with Warners to have them put the record out, but nobody at Warners had even heard it. So here I am, with my record about to come out on Instant Death Records.

Q: It's not often that Warner Bros. gets referred to as "Instant Death Records."

A: But they were just doing it as a favor to Terry Ellis. And I thought, "What's the point of putting my record out on a label where nobody's ever heard it? How much is that going to do for me?" So I called him up and said, "Look, you put this

clubs in San Francisco, at the time, were scared to death that they might appear to be uncool if they exhibited any appreciation for any band they were watching, so they pretty much just stood around and moped. WC had a group of people who liked us and weren't embarrassed to act like it before we got the record deal - they were still around, but none of the mopers converted, we had much more animated response on the East Coast. We would go to New York, play on the radio there and people would jam the phone lines calling in to talk to us. We played bigger shows for more people there than in SF - we played one show at The Palladium in New York where 3000 people showed up. (Some had pictures of the band that they were asking us to sign -

I guess Terry could afford to send out press materials as long as it was local.) Those shows were fun, but we knew that the Spinal Tap Tour would resume once we

out on Warners and I'm not fuckin' touring, I'm not doing interviews, no promotion at all because you are killing my record." It was getting to the point where I had to threaten going into another industry altogether.

Q: How did you get yourself out?

A: It was a long and complicated process. Geffen wanted to pay for the album. Meanwhile, Ellis tried to charge it to my account; and BMG [Imago's parent company] had already financed it. So how many times does he want to get fuckin' paid? Three times for the same object! I don't want to turn this into a rant about Terry Ellis, but people in this business just don't care about ruining people's careers...

Q: So you had a bit of a breakdown.

A: I've had what I would consider emotional breakdowns a handful of times at least. As recently as the last time I was in Europe [in November], I called my manager and couldn't stop crying, feeling exhausted and terribly isolated. And who am I doing this for? For Terry fucking Ellis? I mean, this guy doesn't give his bands enough tour support so they can have a bus to sleep on, and he's sleeping at the fucking Ritz?