

music, but I'm not a huge country music fan. Everybody in the band really likes The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, etc. so **the** writing comes from **that** basic rock **tradition thing**.

*You had a **shot at** a slot in last year's (1997) Lillith Fair as part of a contest over which there was some **controversy**. what's the story on that?*

well **what** happened was, **someone** sent me an e-mail telling **me** about this on-line contest. I sent **in** a package -there were about **500** bands that sent packages **in** &we were **among** the final 8 chosen. The **winner** of the **contest** was to open for the Lillith Fair in Portland, OR. The problem was, **the** people who were **running** the **website** were not **technologically** astute, so it was **very** easy for People to cheat I was **in** touch with the people from **Levi's** (who was **sponsoring** the contest) after it had gone on for a week They'd figured out that **one** computer had

voted a million times; **they** ended up **throwing** out **all** of the votes & bad the **original 5** judges who picked the finalists pick the winner, who ended up being this woman named Essence. It was nice to be **one** of the

Left to right: Micheal Zapruder, Patti Spiglanan, Evan Eustis, Micheal Conner, Dan Laskoff. Photo by Jill Nierman



finalists, **though**. They just underestimated people's computer savvy and also the desperation of these bands wanting to **win**. I'll tell you something about this business **which** I've realized. and I **think** it's getting more &more like this -it's **really**, really hard to get beyond a certain level without

personal management. **It's** very much an 'old boys club' **that's running** the music business; there's not that **many** people **running** things & they all know each **other** & they're all **buddy-buddy**. I **kinda** question

whether anybody's **actually** listening to music anymore, when it's just **a matter** of listening to what the '**buzz**' is, **what's** hot or when some buddy of theirs calls **them** **up** and says. "Check this **out**." For example, we just got **turned** down for NXNW, **which** is the Portland version of SXSW. I knew a

contact person who knew the people making the decisions [for choosing bands], and they said that 1700 bands applied to play at this festival -there were 300 slots available, but there was a lot of what they termed "working it" for the slots, which means if a band has a record company or management or something behind them. they're [the management] gonna know who's **running** the festival & call and say, "If you take this band, you can have this," blah, blah; or, "I'll pay this money & have x Records Presents..." I'd really like to get management, but it's tough -it's not something you can go pursuing; **they** kinda have to pursue you. That's the way it works.

so you *take care of everything?*

I'm doing all the business; I do everything. I don't see any reason to quit doing that **until** we can get someone professional. But it's a Catch-22 situation, because **the** really profes-

sional managers aren't interested in you unless they think they're gonna make money, based on the fact that you have interest from a major label And it's hard to get interest from a major label unless you have Some sort of management. And there's so many goddamn bands... everybody and their brother has a band.

Have you toured extensively?

No, not really. We've gotten to L.A. once. It's really expensive toting with a whole band, especially my band. We all have pretty good jobs, so everybody's got tons of huge equipment. So to move all the **guys** even up & down the Coast would be pretty expensive. We're gonna try to do **that**; at least get up to Seattle & Portland.

I've actually been approached by some other record labels who were interested in **turning** me into a "folkie chick - Girl With A Guitar."

That's what's hot nowadays.

Yeah, and it's so much cheaper for them. If it was just me and an acoustic guitar, I could get in the car & tour back & forth the country. But to tour with a whole band... it's pretty expensive.

We have 1200 people on the mailing list&usually pull 150-200 people at the shows. It's a self-perpetrating little business; we could keep this going for 10 years and that's what I really wanted to do. If something else happens; we move to another level & can quit our jobs, **that'd** b-e great. But if that doesn't happen, that's okay too. Because I was consistent **and** kept at it & established us in the Bay Area, there's **no** reason why we just can't keep going. If YOU talk to any musician, probably their biggest **concern** is to just keep playing music. You can't do this just to make money, unless you're playing in a cover band at weddings.

Maybe something **will**