

CORY MCABEE

The Billy Nayer Show can best be described as a multitude of things - a musical group, conceptual art: pan Vegas lounge show, part kiddie show from Hell - wherever what category they may fall in at any given time. It all springs from the imagination of Cory McAbee. He, along with friend and business partner/drummer Bobby Lurie created The Billy Nayer Show as an outlet for their creative endeavors; most notably the band which bears the name. In addition to being a musician, McAbee can also add artist/ animator/filmmaker to his list of talents, displayed in the short films he wrote and directed, *BILLY NAYER*, *THE MAN ON THE MOON* and *THE KETCHUP AND MUSTARD MAN*.

The BNS has 4 albums out: *THE BILLY NAYER SHOW*, *THE KETCHUP AND MUSTARD MAN*, *THE VILLAIN THAT LOVE BUILT* (which was on the verge of release at the time of this interview in 1998) and *RETURN TO BRIGADOON*, released in 2000. 2001 will see the release of the BNS' first

feature film, *THE AMERICAN ASTRONAUT*, a "musical space Western" with the accompanying soundtrack album.

Hello Cory.

Hello sir.

Since I'm in the Midwest, where people who haven't come to SF haven't heard of you-who are you and what is *THE BILLY NAYER SHOW*?

Well, the name "BILLY NAYER" is sort of an umbrella name under which everything falls. We do films & music, and our

films are musicals or music oriented. I started the band at the same time I started my first animated short, *BILLY NAYER*.

The animated short was hand-painted; housepaint on paper and it took about 2 1/2 years to paint. I didn't know how to do animation or make film at the time, so it was an 'experiment'. The entire time I was working on it, I had no idea if it'd work.

It played at Sundance a few years ago?

Yeah, it premiered at Sundance in its final form. It did show a couple of times with a poor soundtrack. We went into a studio and eventually redid the soundtrack-when I first made the film, I made the soundtrack in a friend's living room, then acted it out, lip-synched, on film. I set up my own rotoscope facility in my bathroom -

you ever do any animation?

I've experimented with it.

You know how registration pins work?

Yeah.

I knew of the concept, so what I did was, I hot-glued a cabinet door to my bathroom wall & used the rim of the door for registration; like tucked the paper into it.



Billy Nayer

so the corner of the paper was the registration. Then I traced the outline, painted it in, then reshot them & synched it up with the soundtrack. And it turned out beautiful -it premiered in its final form at Sundance in 1993: was part of the International Tournee of Animation & it's been on PBS a few times on a show,

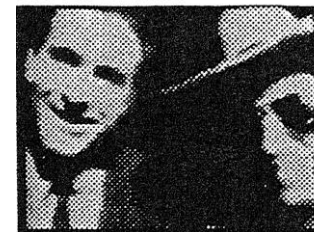
ALIVE TV. So it's gone on to live a very wonderful little life for itself, for a 3 minute film. Anyway, it worked - I was very excited to see it work.

You followed up *BILLY NAYER* with the live short *THE MAN ON THE MOON*. shot with a Pixelvision camera.

That was at a time when they'd just taken them off the market. They hadn't become popular and I had no idea what one was. I was working as a bouncer at this club & this guy... he worked there sometimes; he was a roadie - he came in with this camera & said, "Here, use this." He didn't know that I was making films or anything, he just gave me this Pixel camera.

I had just broken up with this woman - she was living with me at the time & she'd just moved out. So I wrote this thing, *THE MAN ON THE MOON*. about a dejected husband who goes off to live on the moon with his cat. It was a 20 minute piece sort of a musical in a

way. There's a nice scene with Buck Naked that's one of my favorites it was kind of a human Muppet scene with the 2 of us crammed into the camera.



The Man On The Moon (w/Buck Naked)

Then after that, we did *THE KETCHUP AND MUSTARD MAN*. which is a stream-of-consciousness rant done as a musical. That was based on different things - one of which was this little guy; he was like this very old, homeless Irish guy who'd walk around in the middle of the streets with his broom. He was like a little videogame character, watching him walk through the traffic, sweeping. He would come up to people and speak stream-of-consciousness just all the time:

"I know how they're gonna do it they're gonna come out of the truck riding their