



Livin' on a Parody

Spoof-rockers Steel Panther are stoked that their CD *Feel the Steel* is a hit



Steel Panther's Michael Starr is dealing with his first dose of fame.

"I'm at the doctor getting some penicillin," claims the newly minted hair-metal hero with a laugh down the line from Burbank, Calif. "Dude, I am not kidding! I don't know what the f--- is going on, but I got something going on down there, so I had to come see my bro."

True or not, that ain't all Starr has going on these days. He and his big-wigged bandmates — guitarist Satchel, bassist Lexxi Foxxx and drummer Stix Zadinia (say that five times fast) — are sitting on one of the unluckiest hit CDs of the fall. The Spandex-sporting sleaze-rock outfit's debut disc *Feel the Steel* — a hilariously over-the-top spoof of '80s hair-metal bands like Bon Jovi, Van Halen and Poison, complete with fearsome guitar shredding, tight-trousered vocals and lyrics offensive enough to make David Lee Roth blush — has rocketed straight to the top of the Billboard chart (OK, the comedy chart, but still). It's landed them festival gigs from Japan to England. It's got critics calling them the new Spinal Tap. And after 10 years of toiling in the metal trenches of Los Angeles, it's helped make them the sultans of the Strip, drawing celebrities like Pink, Jessica Simpson and Kelly Clarkson to their Monday-night residency at the Key Club.

In short, as Starr puts it in our exclusive Canadian interview: "Life is f---ing good." Even if he is supposedly waiting for a shot in the butt.

While he waited, the foul-mouthed 44-year-old Starr shot from the hip about Cleveland steamers, Lexxi's mom and 50 Cent's bullet wounds.

Here's what we can print in a family newspaper.



HAIR TODAY ... Stix Zadinia, Satchel, Michael Starr and Lexxi Foxxx of L.A. sleaze-rock outfit Steel Panther are ready to roar.

Congrats on having a No. 1 album — on the comedy charts. How does that feel?

I am stoked. I've never had a No. 1 album. I don't care if it's in the category of Oldest Heavy Metal Band in the World. If people find it funny, buy the record and laugh your ass off. Because you know what? We're like herpes; you can't stop Steel Panther from bringing heavy metal back. We just keep coming back, slow and steady.

It's about time somebody brought back metal. What went wrong with music?

Honestly, it started back in the Nirvana / Pearl Jam days. In the mid-'80s, life was good. MTV was rockin' Bon Jovi and Crue and Guns N' Roses. Then about '92, everything started to change. Flannel shorts, stringy dirty hair, combat boots and jean shorts were what guys

were wearing onstage. And honestly dude, when that s--- started, all my friends in bands here in L.A. jumped on the bandwagon. And we were so p---ed off. We said, 'F--- this. We're staying metal.' We just stuck to our guns. But in the '80s, it was a little harsh for the label to hear a song like *Asian Hooker*. So we had to bide our time.

You're pretty well preserved for 44.

I get Botox. I've had a facelift. And I get collagen injections in my lips. I don't hide it. When you get older, stuff starts going. But for me, heavy metal needs to be preserved. If I need to get a hip replacement so I can do the kick off the drum riser, I'm gonna do it.

Where do you get your outfits? I'm amazed you can find animal-print Spandex

any more.

Once we got a record deal and they gave us an advance, we were able to hunt down the people that made clothes for guys back in the '80s. I found the girl that made clothes for Aerosmith on the *Permanent Vacation* tour. She was totally smokin' then; now, you know, she's a cougar. But she can f---ing sew, dude!

What do you say to women who think your lyrics are misogynist?

Most of the girls who say that usually end up backstage ... I am not kidding! They say, 'I can't believe you're talking like that!' but they're watching the show. It's like when you drive by a car wreck on the freeway — there's something about it you like, but you can't figure it out. We let the girls know what it is they're attracted to — and

it's usually our c---s.

You've already written one song about a sex move called *The Shocker*. Are there other songs in the works?

Yeah, actually. We have a song we're working on right now called *Cleveland Steamer*. I'm telling you dude, the chicks are going to love this.

Gene Simmons took Polaroids of groupies. What do you take to remember them by?

We don't really like to take pictures of chicks; we like to keep the memory. Because when you're totally hammered and partying, chicks look way hotter than they do when you're sober. We prefer to leave it looking like they did when we were drunk.

The other thing you have to

remember them by is the reason you're at the doctor.

I got this from Lexxi's mom. Don't print that, because he'll be hurt if he knew I did it again.

Van Halen refused to have brown M&Ms backstage. What do you refuse to have?

Nothing. We want everything. We'll take it all back to the hotel. But dude, Van Halen were in a position to do that; we're still fighting an uphill battle to bring metal back. Some people don't want it to come back. It threatens their livelihood. You think 3 Doors Down wants us to bring metal back? You ever been to a 3 Doors Down concert? You don't need to go; just watch a guy paint a house.

You're not shy about naming names; your song *Death to All But Metal* calls out a lot of people, including 50 Cent. Is that smart?

What, that whole putting-a-cap-in-your-ass thing? That's all a f---ing show. He's never been shot. I know his mom. That's from chicken pox; he just scratched 'em really really hard.

You guys all have tattoos but Satchel. How come?

He's afraid of needles, which is really good, because he was snorting heroin for a while, but never injected it. Who knows what would have happened to him. You really have to learn to moderate your drug and alcohol intake. For instance, you don't want to do blow right before you go onstage; you just want to have a couple shots of Jack. Then during the guitar solo, you might want to partake of some energy boosters, if you know what I mean. Satchel's guitar solo is about six minutes. That gives me time to change my wardrobe, dry my hair, redo my eyeliner and do some energy boosters. And maybe stretch out my hamstrings.

is that a euphemism?

No, man. When you're 44, you gotta stretch.