

Live from the ice rivers of Venus (and the bars of Chapel Hill, North Carolina), space dudes **VALIENT THORR** are bringing the rock, the roll and the intergalactic back-story. **GET READY TO STRAP IN AND BLAST OFF.**

INTERVIEW: J. BENNETT // PHOTOS: DUSTIN RABIN

IF YOU WENT TO THE **WARPED TOUR THIS SUMMER**, you may have seen and heard what looked and sounded like a younger (but equally hirsute) version of the MC5 punching crowds in the chest with their sweet James Brown moves, hot Iron Maiden licks and musky, bare-chested bravado. And you probably loved it so much, you cornered one of the band members and told him how their set had just blown your fragile mind right into outer space. In a perfect Southern accent, he probably politely thanked you, said his band's name was Valient Thorr and casually added that they were from Venus, but their spaceship crash-landed in North Carolina. Which may explain why Lucian Thorr (drums), Eidan Thorr (guitar), Jjin Thorr (guitars, keys), Dr. Strangees (bass) and Valient Himself (vocals) are on a heroic quest to find their missing time machine—and kick out the jams—but it doesn't explain nearly enough. So, we called Valient Himself in his swank New York City hotel room to demand he delineate the mysterious origins of Valient Thorr and their new rock 'n' roll colossus for Volcom Entertainment, *Total Universe Man*.

interstellor OVERDRIVE

My editor claims that Valient Thorr were "everybody's favorite band on Warped Tour." What does that mean?

[Laughs.] I think it means we had a crazy summer. We've been doing this on Earth in this time stream, in this formation, for almost five years. With our backgrounds, and the different time streams we've been in and out of, we know a lot of people from all over. We've held Earth jobs from the highest-ranking public officials to the lowliest dish dogs. On Warped Tour, we made friends with all the security dudes, the catering dudes and the top brass of the whole organization. We don't have enemies. All we came with was positive vibrations, and it worked out for us. We've used to playing to jaded college kids, which is what we've been posing as on Earth forever now. They work at college radio stations and get all the records they want for free, so they're not interested in buying records. Since we started playing to 14-year-old girls, our record has actually been selling.

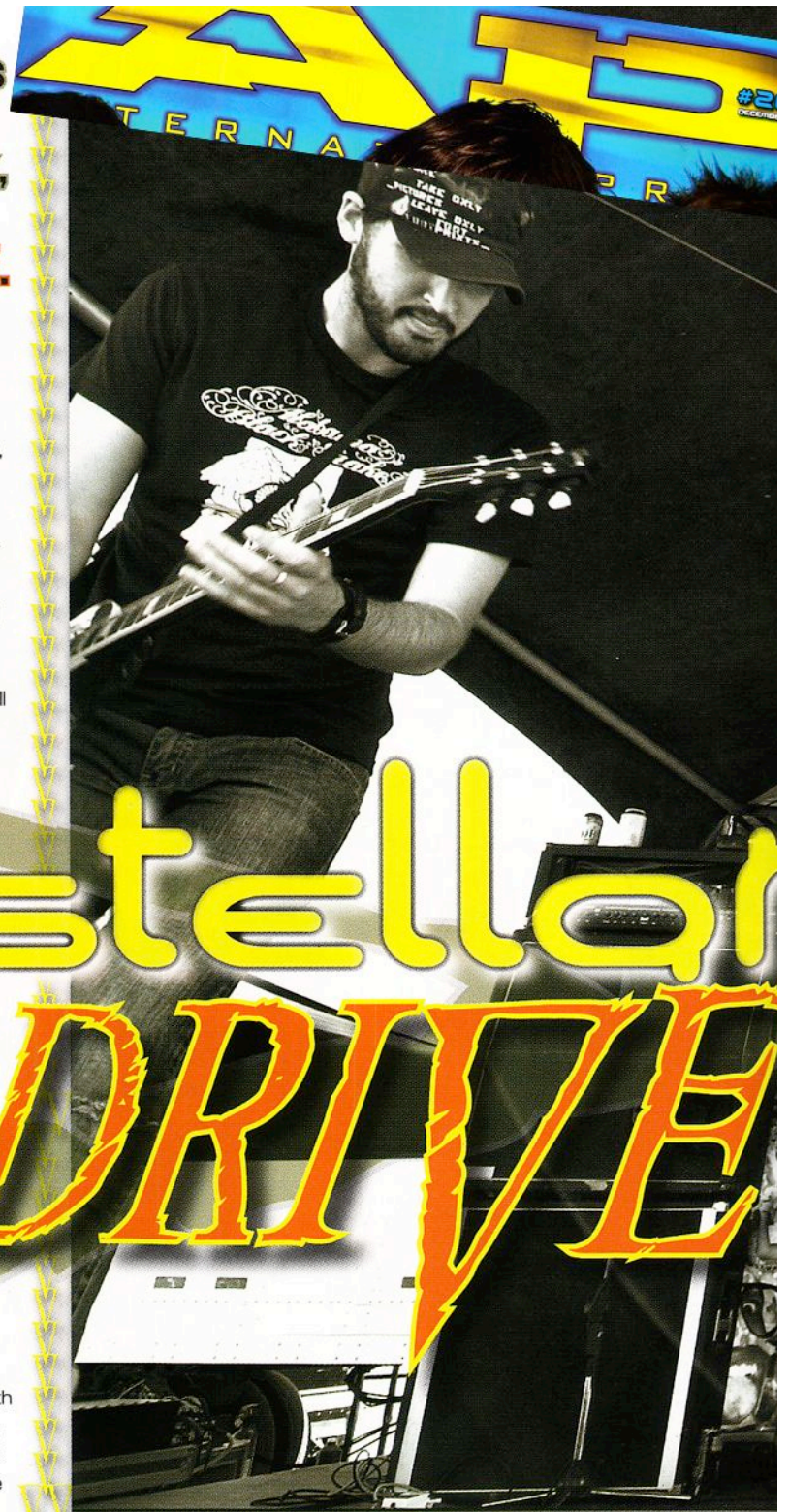
What do you mean when you say "time streams?"

Well, there was another Valiant Thor who came here. He had one "r" in "Thor" and spelled his name with an "a" instead of an "e." In our Valient, you'll notice it says "alien," and the two "r"s are for rock 'n' roll. This other Valiant came and got involved with

[former U.S. president] Dwight Eisenhower. He lived at the Pentagon, and then he disappeared. It's possible they tried to take him out, but who knows what happened? I feel like he might've planted his seed around, if you know what I mean.

You mean he "came here" in a spaceship? Or a time machine?

We had a spare time machine hidden in Virginia that Walt Disney stole in 1977, so we're stuck in this time stream. But we've been to the end of times and the beginning of times. Before I woke up and realized that I was Valient Himself, I was a mere Earth mortal, with real Earth blood. But then this dude in Australia had picture of me from before I was supposedly born into this Earth. Here's how I try to explain





Regardless of whether you believe any of this, on Earth, if you study art or music or the Bible or any kind of text that has been left down through time—these are ideas that go beyond an Earth person's body. We call them spirits—not like ghosts, but just ideas. So your ideas live beyond the grave. That first Valient Thor's ideas were collected, and that's how we became Valient Thorr.

Uh?

Valient Thor was the first Valient Thor sent out. When we came back to this time zone and crashed our spaceship in North Carolina, we were sent out to find the perfect life. Once you're in your journey and you realize that every life is perfect

and there is no right or wrong, you just let things happen. When we crashed, we were sad, because we couldn't figure out how an Earth man lives. But it was the perfect situation that we've always needed to put ourselves in, because every life is precious, and every choice you make needs to be stuck in stone so you become who you are. If you could change everything every day, you'd have no identity.

So, is Valient Thorr, the band, named after you, or are you named after the band?

I am Valient Thorr. There are many other Thorrs, like the ones who are with me. We are Valient Thorr.

Why name the band after yourself, as opposed to one of the other Thors?

Because I am Valient Himself. I am the commander.

How old are you in Earth years?

How old am I, or how old do my looks reflect? I'm about 26 or 27 in Earth years, but my Earth mother told me I look 40 and that I need to shave.

Was it a difficult transition from Venus to Chapel Hill?

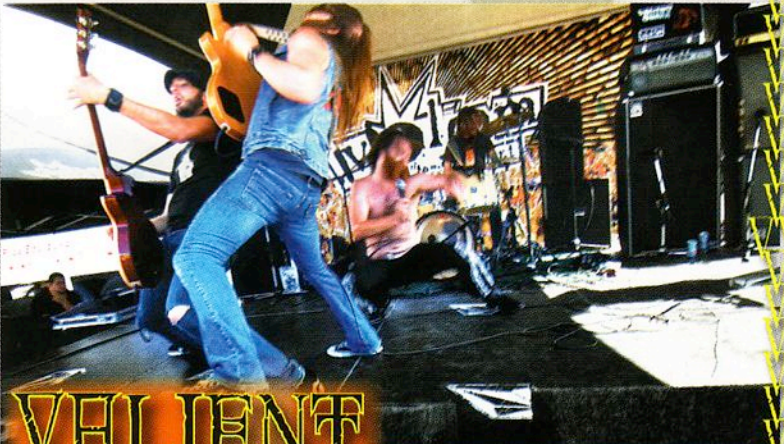
We came from the three ice rivers inside the planet Venus. Eidan and Lucian weren't with us in the beginning. We needed Eidan desperately—we never would've gotten to where we are now without Eidan. We actually ended up in Chapel Hill after we crash-landed in Greenville, North Carolina. It was Dr. Strangees' idea to get us the hell out of there. In our eyes, if we could infiltrate Chapel Hill, we could infiltrate the world, because so many Earth people pass through there. But when we got there, we realized nothing was going on, so we took over right away.

Does being from another planet give you an extraterrestrial edge over Earth bands?

Well, there's tons of killer Earth bands, and I don't necessarily think we're better than them, but I think the reason we're doing good on Earth right now is maybe because people don't believe we're from Venus. But it's not where you're from; it's where you're going—and who you surround yourself with. We're trying to get people to realize what's going on around them. I mean, there's way heavy stuff going down on Earth right now.

Yeah, I noticed that the Valient Thorr MySpace page says, "With no draft, there is no anti-war movement." It seems like not many Earth people are taking that to heart.

That's true. If there was a draft, it could be the best thing ever for the anti-war movement in the U.S. You see more and more people sticking their necks out now, like the lady who's been posted outside [President] Bush's ranch. It looks like things are getting heavy after [Hurricane Katrina]. But still, they're spending



VAIENT FOUR

millions and millions of dollars to fight and kill people, but when people are hurt they're spending as little as they can. It looks like a country that isn't even developed down there in New Orleans; it looks like something you see in *Nazi Geographic* when you're a young person. I guess there's tons of people critic and blaming, but it's seriously heavy when [the government] spends more to fight somebody than they do on helping their own people.

The question I think everyone wants the answer to is this: What is a "total universe man?"

I might as well just go ahead and say that it's me believing in rock 'n' roll and wanting to save and help people through rock 'n' roll. And I'm not talking about saving their souls or some crap like that; I might be saving them from bad art. People on this Earth make things a lot harder than they have to be. From bands to moms to girlfriends, everybody makes life way harder than it has to be. All that have to remember is that when rock 'n' roll became *rock music*, that's when it died. But if you bring the "roll" back, rock 'n' roll can live again. *ait*

YURI GAGARIN

A cosmonaut in the Soviet space program, 27-year old Yuri Gagarin became the first man in space on April 12, 1961. Ironically, he died in a plane crash in 1968. Says Valient Himself: "There's a crazy Mongolian singer/songwriter from Tennessee who has a song about Yuri Gagarin, and it made me laugh."

KIM PEEK

The inspiration for Dustin Hoffman's character (and Oscar-winning performance) in *Rain Man*, Kim Peek is a 54-year-old "mega-savant" from Salt Lake City whose collection of superpowers includes the ability to read two pages simultaneously. Valient Himself is a big fan because, "Kim memorized all the area codes and ZIP codes for every city and town in the U.S., which is the most amazing, ridiculous thing I've ever heard of."

VACHEL LINDSAY

A poet and vagabond from Springfield, Illinois, Vachel Lindsay spent most of his life traveling the country, often by foot. He committed suicide in 1931 by drinking a bottle of Lysol. As Valient Himself points out, Lindsay "walked and talked for his supper, touring the U.S. and entertaining people in exchange for food and shelter."

DAVID ICKE

An English conspiracy theorist who believes the world is ruled by shape-shifting reptiles, David Icke (pronounced "Ike") writes books and makes documentaries on "alternative news" topics around the world. "One of our Earth friends went crazy from reading a David Icke book," says Valient Himself. "He was totally committed." [JB]

Not content to reference mere Earth bands as influences on their extraterrestrial rock 'n' roll whirlwind, Valient Thorr find inspiration in a handful of outstanding non-musical individuals. Take it from Valient Himself: "Anyone who doesn't know about these four dudes should Google them."