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VALIENT THORR

Hailing From Venus, Sticking Out Like a Sore Penis
By Brian O'Neill

Not many bands in the relatively long history of the Warped Tour have had shaggy manes that's length was dwarfed only by the voluminous beards that sprout from their chins. That alone makes Valient Thorr an anomaly among a sea of clean-shaven, neatly shorn boys with a propensity for wearing girl's jeans.

Of course, the list of bands who claim Venus as their home is even shorter.

Even though Valient Thorr spent last summer playing the festival, there are still disbelievers. "It's up to the patron whether they believe where we're from or not," sighs leader Valient Himself. "The main point of our message is that it doesn't matter where you're from. You're here right now."

Nevertheless, the band is supporting its second disc, *Legend of the World*... third if you count a release that only saw distribution in, um, Venus, apparently. The album will remind you of bands like Thin Lizzy, AC/DC, and Motörhead; bands whose t-shirts are now retro and dot the landscape at any good show.

"*Legend of the World* came about when we said, 'OK, we've told people this story that they could believe in or not believe in,'" explains the vocalist. "There's a bunch of joke metal bands out there doing things that we could get

confused with, as if we're not serious about what we do. So, we took it back a little bit. Instead of saying, 'Ooh, we're a fucking space band from Venus,' we're saying what Earth is all about."

What Earth is all about is politics as usual, according to Valient.

"There is definitely scathing finger-pointing on this album," he agrees. "There's a whole lot of pointing at the Bush regime. I like to call it 'regime,' rather than administration. If you've ever had a shitty job and you fuck up, you don't get to have that job very long. But the president has fucked up so many times, it's beyond belief. It's ridiculous."

Raging against the machine is a tried-and-true Warped Tour ideal. But how about retro-metal, shit-kicking guitar riffs, and those aforementioned burly beards?

"It's sure not about putting Manic Panic in your hair and shaving the sides of your head," he says. "The truest punks have nothing to do with pierced clits and mohawks. That was the '77 punks who were making their dads mad because they wanted to dress like homos." Valient Himself concludes, "We never claimed to be punk rock. We never claimed to be anything but rock 'n' roll. But we stick out like a sore dick at the Warped Tour. That seems pretty punk rock to me."