



people

PUTTIN' ON THE BEARD

MEET VALIENT THORR, THE BEST LIVE ACT IN THE WORLD ACCORDING TO VAUGHAN DEAD

I am a hairless man. I hit puberty late, thus never scored the dense thickets of wirey black curls that seemed to form a protective canopy over the bodies of my footy playing mates. In our class photos these man-children looked like Werewolves while I resembled more a newborn marsupial – tiny, pink and covered in fine white bristles. When I did eventually reach that age where your voice starts to deepen and your body begins going through changes (32), I was distraught to find the hair on my head had long since thinned and the only new growth was limited strictly to nostrils and shoulders. In short the hair Gods had fucked me over big-time and I felt as though my faith in all things wild and woolly was lost forever – until I came across Valient Thorr.

Valient Thorr aren't just the hairiest motherfuckin rock band and rollers on earth, they might also be the best band getting around out there at the moment. Big call right? But before you start bitching like a little bitch who's just eaten a bowl-full of bitch flakes, let me ask you this – have you ever seen them live? Then reserve your judgment. I first came across Valient in San Francisco at a well known establishment called Slims. It's a big venue down in the Little Vietnam section of the city and though this night was cold enough turn a good fried-egg-sized nipple into a mere pea a solid crowd had lined the footpath well before 'doors open'. There was serious buzz about these guys and it boiled like lava in a stagnant volcano until the moment the band erupted onto the stage in an explosion of unbridled denim, sweat, sound and of course... hair. From the first chord till the last these modern

throwbacks to the glory days of rock and roll owned the packed out room. And for those who were there the journey didn't end until long after night had turned L.A.) and with the recent success of Wolfmother in Oz, it's not hard to imagine an instant impact should/when the band tour downunder. However where Wolfmother borrow more from the psychedelic side of 70's rock and roll, VT's influences can be directly linked to the power riffs and electrifying guitar work of early AC/DC. Hailing from Venus (hence the spelling of Valient) this five piece including Lucian, Oden and Eden Thorr, Professor Strangees (the lone humanoid) and Valient Himself are definitely worth getting in on early. Their first two albums, while limited releases, quickly sold out and their third, Total Universe Man is available through Volcom entertainment. Capturing the feel of their live shows in the studio is a formidable task but with a fourth album due out soon we're predicting big things from these heavily bearded heathens. Afterall they spell Thorr with two R's – rock and roll motherfuckers. Interview excerpt with Valient Himself, recorded March 9th, 2006.

"We love all types of sonic communication but true rock and roll is the least pretentious. If you go to a rock and roll show and you witness it and you see the band's live performances between songs by the band's charismatic frontman, Valient Himself, Solid backbeats and slowly building guitar solos accentuate his impassioned rants until they blend into the hard hitting intro of the next track and you can't help but find yourself throwing horned fists to the heavens and ready to tear apart "the man" whoever he may be and whatever he may stand for. It's this kind of energy that has attracted a solid fanbase to Valient Thorr right across the US (including a strange mix of celebrities from Dev0 and Prince