



BEARDED GODS
The Thorr boys,
Valient centre

Thrash From Another World

Valient Thorr blend intense hard rock with a genuine love of the Viking lifestyle

By Matt Coyte

A WWW CRAP, OUR BASS player's being arrested by Italian border police. I'll have to call you back," growls Valient Himself, front-man for epic thrash-punkers Valient Thorr.

So begins my chat with an amiable, hirsute self-proclaimed Viking alien. When he calls back, it

UNDER THE RADAR

turns out that VT's bassist, Nite-wolf, is okay, and it's just been a misunderstanding with the Italian border police (when he said, "You're under arrest" he meant, "Please show me your passport"). The denim-clad Valient Thorr are elbows deep in a European tour and Valient is struggling to maintain a mobile phone signal as their tour bus goes through tunnels bored straight through snow capped mountains – I feel a little like I'm having a phone conversation with the dwarf Gimli from *Lord of the Rings* as he navigates the mines of Moria.

If this sounds particularly nerdy, then VT would approve. Their music fuses Bay Area thrash with the street-fighting swagger of

AC/DC and feeds it through a funnel of Nordic mythology, sci-fi and fantasy. Their most recent effort, *Immortalizer*, was the greatest unsung hard rock album of 2008, an unrelenting, uncompromising display of musicianship and attitude. The band are also a relentless touring machine, playing a staggering 272 shows in 2006. "We were trying to figure out exactly how many was the most we did in one year. Basically we had to go look and count them up on

"We rented a truck, made a stage out of it, and played driving through town, stopping at four different bars," says Valient Himself.

the Myspace," says Valient. He sounds tired just talking about it.

It's a bit hard to feel too sorry for the band though – they're obviously enjoying themselves. Take this description of a commando gig in France for instance: "We played this unbelievable celebration that happens in France called Fat Du Musica," says Valient. "Bands can pretty much play anywhere they

want, so we rented a truck and made a stage out of it, and played while driving through Hossegor, stopping at four different bars that were totally full of people on the patios – we jammed in their faces. After every stop, people were running along behind us, so a sort of parade effect happened, and when we got to the coast, we kept playing an hour long jam driving down the beach, with motorcycles and dudes skating and cars all yelling and honking behind us until we got to the venue on the beach. Right when we got there, another band was on a different, slightly bigger stage about to play. They had keyboards, and gelled hair, and smoke machines going off, and right before they could start, we drove up, parked our stage beside theirs and hijacked their gig. It was some corporate event with like 300 older folks in suits, but this whole rally following us came up with trash cans full of beer and started partying like it was some Eighties movie come to life."

Mobile stages aside, Valient has actually had to take it easy of late – he recently donated a kidney to his "Earth father". So does he party half as much now that he only has one organ to process the hard living? "I get drunk twice as fast, I piss twice as much and my hangovers last twice as long." **CS**

INDIE CHARTS DANCE/ELECTRO

1 The Presets

Apocalypso – Modular

2 Pendulum

Hold Your Colour –

Break Beat Chaos

Pendulum first debuted this drum and bass album in 2005. Two years later, it was re-released with a new single, "Blood Sugar/Axle Grinder" and collaborations with Jasmine Yee, the Freestylers, and Fats & TC, helped the album into the ARIA Top 40 back in 2008.

3 Van She

Ze Vemixes – Modular

4 Sneaky Sound System

2 – Whack!

This month sees Sneaky Sound System once again chart with both their studio albums. After the tear away success of their self-titled debut, last year's 2 has continued the trio's good times, and neither record looks like going away anytime soon. Fellow Sydney kids the Presets also chart twice this month, with their *Apocalypso* juggernaut unstoppable at the top of the list.

5 tyDi

Look Closer – Generationnext

6 The Presets

Beams – Modular

7 Cut Copy

In Ghost Colours – Modular

8 Sneaky Sound System

Sneaky Sound System – Whack!

9 Pnau

Pnau – ETC ETC

While Nick Littlemore is enjoying global success with his other project, Empire of the Sun, Pnau continue to impress, with their 2007 self-titled album hanging in the Top Ten almost two years on. Littlemore won't be part of the coming EOTS live shows – apparently his role in the band was always "studio only" – so maybe Pnau fans might get his attention again for a while.

10 The Potbelleez

The Potbelleez – Vicious

Charts Copyright
AIR 2009. Reprinted
by kind permission

AIR Jagermeister