

"You're looking at a satisfied man." Introducing Doc Neeson, the man who fronts for the Angels. A sense of humour and a sense of drama characterize his stage performance. Our own ever-modest Brent Eccles (Street Talk, Citizen Band) recently joined the band. A very cool and distant Rick Brewster, with a reputation as photographer extraordinaire, plays lead guitar in sunglasses. In contrast, his brother John, and Chris Bailey on bass jump up and down, and nip across the floor to and from one another.

From Dirty Pool's bag of tricks, the Angels follow Cold Chisel, and the Flowers. Still, appetites here don't seem to be getting tired of forking out extra dollars to see the shows.

Watching from beside the Mainstreet stage, you are witness to detailed flickers of expression, and interactions between the band. And the crowd reaction is not as Doc feared — "nothing, nothing, nothing 'No Secrets! Nothing, nothing, nothing 'Face the Day!'"

In Sydney, the Angels have been keeping a low profile, spending the last 5 months in rehearsal.

They've got "stacks of tracks" for what will be their fifth album, scheduled for recording in September. (That's excluding a greatest hits put out by Alberts at the time the Angels split and went to CBS, with whom they now have an international contract.) The 4-track EP *Into the Heat* has also been released for the New Zealand market.

Doc Neeson may be satisfied, but that won't stop the roadwork. The band will tour the States again next year with their new album, and possibly Europe, although this isn't definite. Outside of Australia and the US, France is

NO SECRETS!



probably the Angels' biggest market.

The band completed 2 tours through the States last year. "It was pretty gruelling in lots of ways," Doc says. So how did the band manage to sustain 2 tours in rapid succession?

"Irish spirit," he says, but the pace did lead to casualty. "The last tour was almost entirely by coach. We'd drive to the venues, sleep on the coach, but it meant we were living in each others' pockets, and that was a difficulty: the personal space. I think it was one of the things which helped make our drummer's (Buzz Bidstrup) decision to leave. After four months it became quite strenuous, but you have to tour, and he didn't want to be in that situation any more."

The Angels so impressed US audiences they were dropped from a support stint with the Kinks. "The tour went very well for us, and we got encores, so they freaked out and kicked us off. To me, it was a back-handed compliment. They tried to cut our production, and it still went well for us. It was really paranoia as far as some of the guys in the Kinks were concerned. They weren't blown off stage. The impression given, and which in some cases I've read, is that the Kinks were dying and we were just cleaning up, but it wasn't like that at all. They've got great songs, and a great show, but for some reason they got worried."

"It was a pity, because as an over all show for an audience, it was value for money. They were getting 2

strong bands both wanting to put on a good show. But the Kinks would rather have a dud as an opener it seems. They've got Cold Chisel now. I think they're going from the frying pan into the fire, myself."

Playing live is the Angels reason to be.

"We originally formed the band because we were writing songs, and we needed a band to play them in, so that's possibly why we've gone more towards being a live band than a studio band."

Doc and the Brewster brothers write most of the songs. "In a general sense, the Brewsters do the guitar arrangements, and I do a lot of the lyrics, but there's no one person responsible for all the lyrics, or all the guitar. Usually someone comes up with an idea. They might have the bulk of it, and someone else works with it."

The "heavy metal" image is undoubtedly associated with the band, but read the lyrics and there are unexpectedly stark images of things you are expected to cope with, especially in 'Darkroom'. 'Face the Day' captures that sick-in-the-stomach, not wanting to go to work/school/whatever feeling perfectly.

Says Doc: "We get accused of taking a pessimistic view of things, but I don't think we do. Quite a lot of the songs go through a little story, or mini drama, and it's one of the aspects I like about them."

Brent Eccles is feeling pretty close to being settled in. "It's been good, we haven't been working too much live lately. The studio's an intimate environment so it's a lot easier to get into what's happening."

"And it's interesting talking about the band going to America and Europe. It really means so little to me. I'm still discovering Australia. We went to Melbourne for the first time recently, and it was a whole new thing for me, whereas the guys have been doing it for 5 years. What was the original question?"

"Are you happy being an Australian?" Doc is quick on the draw.

Brent: "I like living there."

Doc: "Folks, Australia's just received the Brent Eccles seal of approval."

Brent: "Since I've been with the band I go to the studio, I go home, do the housework, make the bed, vacuum the floor, do the dishes. I don't go out much, seriously."

Doc: "You do all that housework? Really? I'm impressed."

Brent: "That's why I'm always late for rehearsal. But it's a great climate, and a great climate for rock and roll, perhaps a little better than here."

Doc maintains Brent's signing up has given the band a new lease of life. A lot of old expectations and habits have been shaken up. There is discussion on the Australian sound, — that certain edge — Australian mainstream rock. Do the Angels see themselves in that channel?

Doc comments: "Well, since we virtually created it single-handed, I guess we do."

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