

buzz



FILTER

AVENGING ANGELS

by Cathy A. Campagna

Metallica did it. Pearl Jam did it. Most recently the Deftones did it, too. Now Filter has certainly followed suit. What is "it"? That is, make a record that not only utterly satisfies, but stokes the embers of the original love affair that fans had with the band in the first place.

Richard Patrick called *The Aquarian Weekly* with the wherewithal of an astute road scholar while traversing from a sold out Bowery Ballroom show on Aug. 21 to his California show at the Roxy. He explained the stimulating element of his fifth studio offering, *The Trouble With Angels* a record that salutes the industrial tinge of *Short Bus* while intermingling with an exciting sense of experimentation, luxurious melodies and an infectious fervor of execution.

Richard also talked about the new members in this incarnation of Filter. "This band with Phil Buckman [bass] and Rob Patterson [guitar] is a little more of what we needed," he said. And they did put a bit of their stamp on the record, "Only on one song, because I just hired Phil and Rob in these last two months. When we were on the bonus track, they co-wrote it with Bob [Marlette, producer] and I. That was the bonus track, the 'One Shot From the Sun'. There's a lot of cool stuff going on there."

The man has shown the naysayers, who did not believe he had another riveting record in him, to be totally wrong.

***Trouble With Angels* is just so exciting.**

I am very happy to have finally kind of

figured it out. I needed to kind of go back and give them everything they wanted, plus making sure that every song had a payoff. I owe it to Bob Marlette. He came in and shook the house a little bit. He said, "We have to give them what they want, we have to retain your sound, but we have to hinge it completely 2010." I said, to Bob, "What I've learned is that the heavy fans are pissed. They want some good old-fashion ass beating." He said, "We're going to do that." I said we got to do something that sounds like it could have been on *Short Bus* and that was the "Inevitable Relapse." Then we did "Absentee Father," something that I wrote almost completely by myself like the *Short Bus* days. Then of course "Drug Boy," was a riff that I had literally [written] 10 years ago, and just never used it. I wrote the lyrics. I write all the lyrics that's for damn sure, but there's always this big collaboration between Bob and I.

That's the key to the record. He said, "You're the holder of the originality card and I hold the bar of quality, and when I say it's done, it's done." I am like, "Okay." Then when it's done, he was like, "That was bad ass, let's record the basic tracks." It was just this incredible collaboration all the time. It was funny, and it was just so much goofing off. It was joyous, and the lyrics just came out of me. Nothing was fought over, and it was like, "Well, that's bad-ass, that's great." The next thing you know, here we are.

I think that's why people are digging it. I think they hear the joy in it. Even if

it's angry and sad, we still had a blast singing it. You can still get that energy maybe, I don't know.

It's the kind of record you can leave on repeat. "No Reentry" is one of my favorite songs from you, not just on this record, but throughout your catalog.

To touch base on that real quick, [singing] "You put the pages back in your bruised book, you put the pages back with rusty hooks," it was so high. That was the highest I've ever had to scream—the highest notes I've ever done, because it's in A. A goes down, but it still makes everything super high. I was like, "I don't know if I can do that bro." Bob was like, "No, you're going to do it."

Then the lyrics, I didn't know what I was talking about until I started working on the chorus, and then it kind of dawned on me—I'm a recovering alcoholic. My mind works against me. It's a disease and like any disease, it's trying to kill its host. It's trying to kill me, so in my program of recovery, I have to deal with suicide. I have to deal with it all the time. "No Reentry," once you leave there's no reentry, once you leave it's so permanent. I remember just going to these clubs and hearing, "Hey, no reentry." I try to take like phrases that people say all the time and just put a whole amazingly serious twist on it. Not amazingly, but just a massive weight on the words. "Hey Man Nice Shot," "Take A Picture," they're just sentences, but they mean so much more.

So, "No Reentry," and probably some of the best lyrics, "they put the pages back

in your bruised book, they put the pages back with rusty hooks," because there's always like a diary that they find. There's always a suicide note, and I am sure these guys—when they wrote it, they were trying to talk to themselves. After you're gone they just go through your stuff, they learn about you.

The other day I was thinking about how profound the lyrics in "Take A Picture" are, especially "Can anyone agree that no one should be left alone."

It was so wild, because as rich and as famous, and all that stuff that you get—when you're a bad person and no one is around, you're just like, "How did I end up here?" That was the drinking and the drugs and the crazy. Now it's funny, because we're a hard working band, and my voice was cracking a little bit last night, and I was like, "this is like the voice of the recession. This is the voice of a hard working band and a hard working voice. We don't give a fuck; we are going to make it work. We are going to make it work for you guys, we love the fact that you came to our show and you're hanging with us and you're so amazing." Last night's show was off the hook. It was a mosh pit and everyone was just freaking out, going crazy, it was fun.

Last time we spoke, you said that one of the things that makes Filter Filter is that it's constantly morphing. How has it morphed for you this time around?

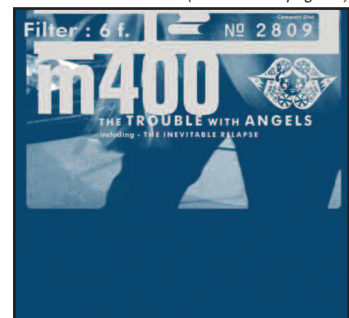
Well it's funny, because we actually adopted a lot of the same policies that we used to be criticized for. Audiences now

are way more eclectic. Going back in history, when I did *Title Of Record*, my record company was like, "You did 'Hey Man Nice Shot,' and now you're going to do 'Take A Picture,' you're going to do that stuff? Our A&R guy was amazing. He was like, "Okay, we're an artist label, you do what you want to do." So we did it, and then I got criticized by some people that replaced him.

"Your music is schizophrenic, one day you're this heavy guy, and you're a rock band and then you're doing songs like 'The Only Way Is (The Wrong Way)'. Do what our heavy metal band does, be the same guy, wear the same black, and do ten songs exactly same on every record." In my world, I come from a punk ethic—Clash punk, not this recycled shit that happened in the '90s, not this Broadway Play. Nothing wrong with musicals, I saw *Wicked*. I see plays all the time, I love Broadway.

I'm not picking on bands on Broadway. I think Blink-182 was cute. The punk rock that I remember was Sid Vicious; he cut

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FILTER'S LATEST ALBUM, *THE TROUBLE WITH ANGELS*, IS AVAILABLE NOW THROUGH ROCKET SCIENCE RECORDS. MORE INFORMATION AT OFFICIALFILTER.COM.



happier but they were saying something. When they did *War*, they wanted to branch out. That's what true punk is. So I always thought it was real punk to do the opposite of what people expected. Like a five year-old will do what you said not to do.

So I did "Hey Man Nice Shot," went way further and did "Take A Picture," and it alienated a lot of the "Hey Man Nice Shot" fans, because they were like, "What are all these pop fans and middle aged housewives doing at my concert?" The fans that are showing up to Filter concerts you're going to see some Pantera shirts, you're going to see some Radiohead, you're going to see some Cher. I think that in the last ten years people are just buying singles and they're not making categories. They are just putting singles into one playlist, and they can handle a band like Filter.

I get it. When U2 comes out with a U2 record, I want it to sound like U2, so I understand that, too. Even U2 has grown and developed and changed, it's like Neil Young. Neil Young did this electronic record, and he got so criticized for it. It's like when Bob Dylan went electric, like me with autotune on my vocals for this first single. The controversy that has followed that decision... Like, "Now, you're breaking the rules. Why?" For the purpose of that song, "The Inevitable Relpase." I wanted it to start off like it sounded like people were at a club, because the drug binges that I went on started at the club. I got my goods and the relapse was the "drinking, drinking, snort and smoke"—that's the chaos of a binge and the excitement level in your mind.

But people are like, "How dare you do hip-hop automation? Autotune in my puritanical rock age?" I can't believe how people are polarized. What is the big deal? Rich used a drum machine on his first record. The whole first record is a drum machine

through a computer that we programmed. That's hip-hop, I took from hip-hop back then, because they used electronics. I just took an effect that you can get as a plugin on any computer in the world and just did it, because I just wanted to set that mood in that verse.

I am not mad at anybody. I just want to let them know, I've been breaking the rules from the very first fucking note you've ever heard. I've been programming drums, we have 17 tracks of symbols on "Hey Man Nice Shot."

When we were programming those it wasn't about making it sound real; you can make it sound real feeling. We're allowed to break the rules, if we are going to use a drum machine, let's really break the rules and do it. We're going to make our drummer sound like he's got 10 arms. And somewhere in there, I went too far on our last record, because it was a tribute record, it had to be remorseful, but still stay

positive.

[*Title of Record*] was criticized because it was so heavy up front and then it got beautiful. And now I give them *Trouble With Angels*, and it's heavy up front and then blends into something beautiful and more mellow at the end, now that's what my audience wants. Like okay, don't go too far in any direction. Give us a record like *Title Of Record* or *Amalgamut*. I'm like, "I can do that." That's what happened. That's a very long answer, but there's a history of experimentation and then learning from history. What's too far yet not too far?

That was a great explanation.

I don't know. Another thing that really bothered me was that I read Steve Irwin's review on iTunes, because they grab all the music dot-coms, and he said I was mellowing with age on the last record. The funny thing is that I really only love the heavy stuff. Like I love "Take A Picture"—don't get me wrong, but to perform—I love the heavy stuff. I mean, I just have more fun running around the stage and screaming. It's just fun, it really fun.

So I read his new

Nice Shot," and it was great. So after all these years, I believe that they can handle it. They don't need to be spoon-fed metal the whole time, they don't need to be spoon-fed pop, they just need to be a Filter fan to understand that we're going to take you places.

You also put out a greatest hits record. Did that really take stock of all you accomplished thus far?

Well it's one of those things where Rhino has the rights, they're a company of Warner Brothers, and they called us up and were like, "Do you guys want to put a greatest hits record out? Do you want to be apart of it?" We were like, "Absolutely!" So we got Deborah Norcross and we got her to do the artwork, she did that, and then I sequenced the song orders so it felt like a Filter record. I do have a special recipe for sequencing the order and it was really fun. But some people, when they see greatest hits records, they think, "Oh they're done." So I always saw it as a placeholder, because you want to keep something in the marketplace. They don't keep records on the shelf that long. One day, there's not going to be any CDs, it's going to sadly disappear like vinyl. So we make all different kinds of CDs, and that brings me to the artwork on *Trouble With Angels*.

Deborah Norcross had always wanted to do like a digi-pack so there is a philosophical argument that's been going on for millions of years between science and reality and superposition. Two or three-hundred years ago, we were absolutely convinced that astrology was just as important as science, now one is considered a pseudo-science and almost fraudulent because you can make something so vague. So the philosophical discussion on *Trouble With Angels* is religion: a good thing or bad thing?

Galileo was imprisoned exactly 400 years ago so when you look there's a M400, that means minus 400. Galileo invented the telescope, discovered Jupiter, discovered Saturn and he noticed that these stars are moving across the sky, everything else is stationary. He realized that they have a trajectory, but they don't follow us, they revolve around the sun. Now the church said everything was going round the earth. Then that makes the sun all important, the sun is God, so the church imprisoned him. So, in my opinion, religion is something that has set us back. I didn't want to overtly say it, I just wanted to bring up the discussion, a platform for discussion. So we have the traditional Filter artwork, but let's put an angel in there somehow and when you open up the CD, there is literally this angel stepping on the notation of Galileo. So, is the angel drowning in science or is the angel stepping on science? As much as scientists don't want to admit it, they are letting us know that it's okay to let go of the superstitions.

Well, again I can't say enough about this record, I think it's probably the best you've put out.

That's kind of the vibe I'm getting. It's just really great. I got to feed my audience, they have been waiting for ten years since *Amalgamut*, really. I have done everything I can to piss them off, apparently. I thought *Army Of Anyone* was going to be meaner, and have more teeth. It became this happy, beautiful record. I don't know, and I think my audience was waiting for that, too. Like, "Dude, can't we be pissed and young and drunk again?" I am like, "I hear you, and I love you and that's exactly what I am going to do." Even Bob Marlette, he's like, "Before you even write lyrics to this song, what was going through your mind in the early '90s when you were this crazy man?" We started talking about it, and probably the greatest line that I have ever written, "Tonight, these chemicals are God. Tonight these chemicals are golden sunlight." My life was so bad that drugs and alcohol became the only happiness that I could find. It became everything. I just think that's how we felt in the early '90s because things were good. We didn't know bad yet. We didn't know 9-11 and people losing their jobs, and having to scrimp and save.

review, and it was like, "He's definitely not mellowing with age." He totally ate his shit. Everyone says, 'don't read the comments,' but I just do. I'm just like, "Why would someone say that about me? Don't tell me I'm mellowing with age, didn't they listen to the last half of the record." It's kind of sad, that I am a little bit reactive, but I definitely am not mellow. It's not time to get the walker.

Especially live, there's nothing mellow about a Filter show.

I mean last night I tweaked my neck, because I was head banging so hard and I really stretched my neck out. It's called rock neck—we all have names for our injuries. It was really nice, because for the first time in ten years it wasn't the "Hey Man Nice Shot" kids with the "Take A Picture" kids, for the first time it really feels like it's the Filter audience.

They all like everything, they mosh to "Drug Boy," then they stop for "Take A Picture," and then we all cried for a little bit, then we went back into "Hey Man

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