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MANSOON

WELCOME
TO HIS

NIGHTMARE

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He's been a goth shock-rocker. He's been the Antichrist Superstar. He's even been an androgynous glamour boy. Now, Marilyn Manson is reinventing himself once again, but this time with the glamour, decadence, and fanfare of '30s Hollywood for the band's fifth studio album, *The Golden Age of Grottesque*, and this summer's live shows. As the band geared up for their third appearance on *Ozzfest*, we got some alone time with the always-evolving artist to talk about the new album, tour, and his art "happenings."

MARILYN MANSON WELCOME TO HIS NIGHTMARE

BY CARRIE BORZILLO-VRENN

Hit Parader: You've said that the new album, *The Golden Age of Grottesque*, is and I quote, "genius." Tell us why this is the best Marilyn Manson album ever.

Marilyn Manson: Because it is a rebirth and this feels like what it felt when I started the band.

HP: How did you get back to that feeling?

MM: Part of it is working with new people. [KMFDM alum Tim Skold—who co-produced the album with Manson—replaced Twiggy Ramirez after the last album, joining members John5, Pogo, and Ginger Fish.] Part of it is getting past a certain chapter of my life and writing this record with the careless abandon of a child and making it all about imagination and making it all about expression and all about art. The album is really about relationships, and I use metaphors and inspirations of

"The album is really about relationships."

'30s Hollywood and how there was an innocence in films and McCarthyism and censorship and Weimar Berlin decadence and then the fascists trying to destroy all that. I think it's very similar to right now with people trying to squash my ideas.

HP: Who do you feel has tried to hold you back or squash your ideas the most?

"I'm taking this action-art movement to the next level."

MM: I don't feel held back. I just have a different attitude about creating things. I don't draw lines anymore between music or art or performance. It's all about the "golden age of grotesque." It's an era for me. It's an age and I want everyone to be a part of it. It goes back to just the old-fashioned Marilyn Manson when we were in

Florida. It's vaudeville. It's making the audience a part of the show. It's taking the show into the crowd. But that doesn't mean looking and behaving like you're not a rock star. I'm here to entertain people. I'm not ashamed of it. I am an entertainer.

HP: When you mention the feel of '30s Hollywood, it immediately makes me think of your girlfriend Dita Von Teese, who personifies that era. She's really a nice fit with you and with what you want to do.

MM: That's why I was attracted to her.

HP: You two just seem to really mesh in many ways and I wonder if she was an influence on this album at all.

MM: I don't think she would like that because she doesn't like to think of that and she's very soft-spoken and very driven about what she does. She never gets involved in what I do. She's an inspiration in that I have a positive surrounding in my life, with my band and with her. My obsession with things like glamour of the '30s and the people that cared about decadence and Oscar Wilde and everything beyond that is what attracted me to her. And that really started with *Antichrist Superstar*. *The Beautiful People* really has a tinge of what this is and

in some ways it's more childish and in some ways it's more sophisticated.

HP: How are you going to translate this new music for the road this year?

MM: My tour and the events surrounding my tour can be viewed as installations, happenings, actions, movements and things that go beyond definition.

HP: You're gonna have to elaborate on that one a bit more.

MM: I'm taking this action-art movement to the next level. That's not neces-

"I don't draw lines anymore between music or art or performance."

sarily a pretentious level—you know people associate art with pretension—but making it entertainment and the *Grottesque Burlesque* will not just be our concerts. It will be other days where we have all this art exhibited and all this performance going on and all these people. It'll include my art and the collaboration I've done with Gottfried Helnwein. So people may get a chance to see Dita involved with that. But that's not the tour, that's a bigger thing not limited to Marilyn Manson. Everything is about a bigger picture right now.

HP: So, *Grottesque Burlesque* is part of



your tour in support of *The Golden Age of Grotesque*, as well as part of your *Ozzfest* dates?

MM: It's really whenever I feel like it. It's whenever I play, that's what it is. Things happen now in a way that is somewhat childish and somewhat changing to the environment. For example, setting a piano on fire in downtown L.A., and playing it and filming it [for the music video of the album's first single, *OBSCENE*]. That was something that we did. I also did some strange things with a woman and an old-style victrola.

These are happenings.

HP: Where did you do that?

MM: In downtown L.A., in public. Sometimes people see these things and sometimes people don't. They're just meant to change the environment. Maybe it makes people smile, maybe it makes people mad but it always gets their attention.

HP: So since we've talked about Dita so much, I must ask: Are you going to get married any time soon?

MM: I don't like to answer those questions,

"I just like to keep my relationship to myself now because it's only fair to both of us."

but I can say that I don't see us ever separating.

HP: Are you just more hesitant this time because of the very public relationship you had last time with Rose McGowan?

MM: I just like to keep my relationship to myself now because it's only fair to both of us.