

• NOW IN OUR 25TH YEAR •

Free

# SCENE<sup>TM</sup>

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

**Bad Religion**  
**Faith In The Future**



**Widespread Panic • Holiday Gift Ideas**  
**Raj Talks To Bob Hope (No Kidding)**

Bad Religion:

## faith in the future



Jay Bentley, Bobby Schayer, Greg Graffin, Greg Hetson and Brett Gurewitz (from left). Not pictured: Brian Baker.

by Kimberli Hagelberg

Bad Religion is to Green Day what the Melvins and Meat Puppets were to Nirvana. Outside the punk world few knew how popular the band was, and how many they would influence down the road. By the late '80s, Bad Religion's releases were selling 20-40,000 units. Today, the band's catalog has sold more than a million copies. Its label, Epitaph, has also spawned emerging acts like Offspring, L7 and Rancid.

Getting Bad Religion off Epitaph became a priority in 1993, when RECIPE FOR HATE sold 180,000 units in the U.S. The band had done so well that managing its catalog dominated the efforts of the label's small staff. Soon Epitaph owner/BR guitarist/vocalist Brett Gurewitz knew he could not continue to develop new acts and keep Bad Religion on his label.

As a result, STRANGER THAN FICTION is the first album to be released on Atlantic, and though seven songs on the record were written by Gurewitz, he will not accompany the band when they play the Agora Theatre this Friday, November 25. Vocalist Greg Graffin, bassist Jay Bentley, drummer Bobby Schayer and guitarist Greg Hetson have added guitarist Brian Baker (Dag Nasty, Minor Threat) to their lineup.

SCENE spoke with Hetson about Gurewitz' decision (so sudden that he still appears in the current press photos), the new record and Hetson's infamous side project the Circle Jerks.

SCENE: This must be a huge change for you — new label, new member?

Greg Hetson: The touring has been going really well. It was a real easy transition. We knew Brian, he auditioned, we asked him to join. It was pretty simple.

SCENE: What made Brett Gurewitz decide to leave? Did he not want to go on the road?

GH: I think he just got too busy with the label and had to make a decision.

SCENE: Your publicist said he's still writing with you and will record the next record.

GH: No, he's all the way out of the band.

SCENE: Was there ever a point in time when you all considered whether you wanted to continue as a band?

GH: Oh no.

SCENE: The new record is doing great. Is there a big difference in the way business is done on a major label?

GH: No, when we switched we wanted to make sure we could do what we wanted musically, and in terms of the way the record was going to be promoted. We still have total artistic control.

SCENE: Business as usual?

GH: There's a lot more interviews.

SCENE: More TV, too. You did "The Jon Stewart Show," "Late Night with Conan O'Brien" and hosted "120 Minutes." Before this, I only remember seeing Bad Religion on "Headbangers' Ball."

GH: He hosted that a few times. Mostly, we couldn't get arrested or get our videos played anywhere but on local or

public access stations up until about a year ago, except we did get some play off the AGAINST THE GRAIN and GENERATOR albums.

The radio programmers and people at cable TV have really changed their ways.

SCENE: What happened?  
GH: You're seeing people who started out in the early '80s punk scene are now in high positions at radio stations and the labels. I think that's why some of the music is getting played on the radio, and bands like us are getting booked on network shows.

SCENE: You had the kids to create the buzz, but the major commercial implications had to wait until they grew up?

GH: Exactly.

SCENE: It's funny how some of the bands on the Epitaph roster seem to echo your sound now. Lots of melodic punk out there in DIY-land.

GH: It seems to appeal to people because the music is still aggressive. Adding the vocal melodies, when we started, gave us a unique style.

SCENE: There's still some pretty strong opinions to play behind. Do you ever find yourself thinking, Hey, that's not how I feel about this?

GH: We get together to look at the lyrics and the music. If there's something we don't like or understand, we change it. There's only been one time we said, "No, we can't play this. I can't get behind this song." We pretty much think alike.

SCENE: Do you remember what the song was about?

GH: I wouldn't want to get into it. [Laughs]

SCENE: The reason I'm asking is that some of this record seems to take a strong stand racially.

GH: Which song?

SCENE: How about "The Handshake." In your meetings, what was the sentiment behind the *shun* the handshake line?

GH: I can't think of what it was, right off the top of my head. Read the line before and after, so I know where it's going and where it came from — then it'll come to me.

SCENE: Now I believe in unity/and I'm willing to compromise/but I'm not going to lie or sell my soul/Every time you shake someone's hand it determines where you stand/And if you won't hold up your side then it's better to ... /Fend for yourself and shun the handshake someone's got to give.

GH: We did have a discussion about that. I remember reading through that part. We knew the lyrics would either not make sense or be taken as a racial thing. Greg was just being pessimistic and sarcastic about deals in general. But I can see where the meaning might get confused. You're the first person who caught on to that.

SCENE: So I hear the Circle Jerks are working again?

GH: We reformed a few months ago and did some gigs around California. They went pretty well. People seemed to like them, and we're all getting along again. We'll do another record and see what happens.

SCENE: You've got someone in the band planning for a Ph.D?

GH: Greg [Graffin] is a candidate. He's still working on it. He hasn't been a teaching assistant in the last year, 'cause we've been too busy.

SCENE: You're planning a release with a side band, Brett left to run Epitaph and Greg is working on his Ph.D. That seems like a lot of people preparing for the end of Bad Religion.

GH: Well, it can't last forever. I'm surprised it's lasted this long.

SCENE: Really?

GH: Oh yeah. For a long time, nobody came to us, and nobody offered us anything. Believe it or not.

SCENE: Stranger than fiction?

GH: Yeah. [Laughs]

**HOT ROCK**  
CONCERT CLUB  
FOOD & SPIRITS  
LUNCH AND DINNER SUN-SAT  
TONITE - WED. 21  
THANKSGIVING EVE PARTY

**BURNT RIVER**  
WED. & THURS.  
DRINK SPECIALS!  
FRI. 25 **BOOTLEG**  
SAT. 26 **S.O.S.**  
SUN. & WED. 15¢ WINGS  
EVERY MON. **KARAOKE**  
EVERY TUES. - MUSICIANS' JAM NITE  
ZEVIOUS ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT  
SPAGHETTI 2-5 P.M. - ONLY \$1.99  
FRI. 2 **CASTLE BAND**  
SAT. 3 **SCAM**  
FEATURING GYROVIBE MEMBERS  
13955 BROOKPARK RD.  
267-3327

**O'Malleys**  
ROCKIN'  
SPORTS BAR  
16161 BROOKPARK ROAD  
Inside The Quality Inn  
267-6622

Come Check Out The New Look  
**10' BIG SCREEN T.V.**  
8-27" MONITORS  
Pool Tables • Air Hockey  
DARTS • FOOTBALL • BASKETBALL

**THIS WEDNESDAY  
THANKSGIVING  
EVE  
HOLIDAY BASH  
THURSDAY  
OPEN  
THANKSGIVING  
8 P.M.**

START BOOKING YOUR  
HOLIDAY PARTY NOW!  
21 & OVER  
PROPER DRESS & I.D. REQUIRED

**CORAL REEF**  
CORNER OF RIDGE & PLEASANT VALLEY IN PARMA

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT  
THANKSGIVING  
EVE PARTY**

EVERY THURSDAY • LADIES NIGHT  
COMPLEMENTARY DRINKS  
\*Sponsored by CJB-DJ Soudation

2 FLOORS OF FUN WITH THE WILDEST MUSIC AT  
THE BEST DANCE CLUB IN PARMA

**BREWSKY'S**  
NITE CLUB

451 E. EXCHANGE ST. (ON THE ZIP STRIP - AKRON) 762-4222 OR 434-8442

EVERY WED. **THE BEST IN LIVE MUSIC**

11:23..... **FIFTH WHEEL & TIME NO REASON**  
SUN. 11:27..... **DISCO PARTY (BURN BABY BURN)**  
11:30..... **JAVA BEAN w/MR. NICE GUY**  
12:7..... **CRACKHOUSE JAZZ QUARTET**  
12:14..... **THE WAYNES & ANAGRAM**

**HOTTEST CLUB ON THE ZIP STRIP!**

**Agora THEATRE**

**THIS FRI  
NOV  
25**  
**BAD RELIGION**  
IT'S A LARRY SHOW  
**SUPERSUCKERS & SAMIAM**

**THIS SUN  
NOV 27**  
**widespread  
p a n i c**  
w/ **FREDDY  
JONES  
BAND**  
THE TIMES

**THIS MON  
NOV 28**  
**TESTAMENT**  
**downset  
RED SQUARE  
BLACK**

**WED  
NOV  
30**  
**WNNV presents  
RICHARD ELLIOT  
and  
PETER WHITE**  
107.3

**WED  
DEC 7**  
**KIDS  
in the  
HALL**  
w/ **WMMB**  
ROCK & ROLL

**FRI 985 WNNV & slanjams sportsbar present**  
**DEC 9  
and  
SAT  
DEC 10**  
**THE ORIGINAL  
TOUGHMAN  
CONTEST**

**ALSO COMING**  
MC EHT..... **NOV 26**  
HOLE..... **SOLD OUT**  
PUNGTEN STENCH..... **DEC 20**

ALL SHOWS-ALL AGES CONCERT LINE 861-6911  
TICKETS AT TICKETMASTER CHARGE BY PHONE: 241-5555  
5000 EUCLID AVE. SECURED PARKING

**Hampton Inn**  
Westlake  
WEEKEND SPECIAL  
ANY FRIDAY OR  
SATURDAY NIGHT \$42.00 per room

- Complimentary Continental Breakfast
- Complimentary Passes to Scandinavian Health Spa
- FREE Showtime Movies
- Room Service, if desired, provided by Bob Evans

**Valid NOW Through April 29, 1995**  
(Excluding New Year's Eve)  
Advance Reservations Are Recommended  
**892-0333**  
NOTE: Must Present This Ad Upon Arrival

**HAMPTON INN WESTLAKE**  
29690 Detroit Road  
Westlake, OH 44145  
(At the Crocker Road Exit off I-90)