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MUSIC ON THE MENU: The NEPA debut of Days before Tomorrow



by **Alan K. Stout**
Music Columnist

For well more than a decade, vocalist Eric Klein has been a welcome presence on the NEPA music scene. A gifted frontman and singer, he's entertained thousands over the years. This week, Days Before Tomorrow, his ambitious all-original project, has released a new CD, "The Sky Is Falling," to all Gallery of Sound stores. It's a brash concept album with huge production and also features Scott Kahn on guitar, Jason Gianni joined on drums, Derek Davodowich on guitar and Ron "Zeek" Makiekien on bass.



The Weekender recently caught up with Klein — who has also fronted bands such as UUU, Liquid A and popShop — and quizzed him about the new project.

Weekender: Days Before Tomorrow is a departure from what some of NEPA might expect from you. It's somewhat of a heavy band, yet very modern and with a great sense of melody. There's even a touch of progressive rock. How did the group find its sound, which is pretty explosive?

Klein: The band went through an evolution of a kind. It started with Scott, Jason Buchwald — our former keyboard player who contributed to the CD — and I. When Jason Gianni joined on drums, the sound started to become more progressive. It inspired Scott and I to approach our songwriting differently. We then met Derek and added him as a second guitarist, which gave us more flexibility and depth. Zeek came last and he solidified our vision. It has been a really gratifying process.

Weekender: Besides being the band's vocalist and front man, what's your role in the group? How did you contribute to the songs the album?

Klein: I wrote both music and lyrics for "The Sky Is Falling," as well as being the author of the story behind the concept album.

Weekender: Your genuine excitement and enthusiasm for this project is obvious, and you're singing better than ever on this record. What makes this project so special to you?

Klein: Thanks, man! There are a lot of reasons, but I guess it comes down to this: I am just so happy with the way the CD turned out in every sense. I am proud of the songs, the story, the musicality, the production and mix, the 24-page color booklet with graphic illustrations. ... Everything is really great. I am very excited to see what happens next.

Weekender: The CD is a concept album, much in the way of The Who's "Tommy" and "Quadrophenia" and Pink Floyd's "The Wall." Can you give us the overview of the storyline?

Klein: The Earth is in crisis. The planetary ecosystem is being threatened by an unknown menace. There is eminent war with aliens on the horizon but the Lighters have hit the underground talking about a new Tomorrow. Change! [chuckles] There is love, death, war, politics, sex and aliens. ... What else do you need!

Weekender: Are you personally a sci-fi fan?

Klein: Yes. I am also a major Trekkie/Trekker. I love it. My wife Karen and I even renewed our vows on the actual set of The Enterprise.

Weekender: What was it like to work with the legendary Ron Nevison? He's produced some very big records, including stuff with Ozzy Osbourne, KISS and Heart, and he also worked with Led Zeppelin. That's a pretty serious guy to have producing your album.

Klein: It was amazing. For me personally, it was a huge opportunity since he has produced so many exceptional singers. He figured out very quickly how to coax the best vocal performance from me that was possible, on any given day. It was a great experience.

Weekender: Did he share any funny stories about some of the people he's worked with? Is it true that Gene Simmons' "reputation" with the ladies is indeed quite true?

Klein: He told so many crazy stories I would not know where to start. It was flippin' hysterical. As for Gene Simmons, I have a double answer: A) Yes. Very true.

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[laughs] and B) Ron didn't do too badly himself.

Tomorrow
8. Hludzik's solo album — finally

* in past 7 days

Weekender: Though you're originally from New Jersey, I'd imagine NEPA is like a second home to you. You fronted UUU for many years, as well as Liquid A, and popShop. What is it about this region that still appeals to you as a musician?

Klein: I have always been treated really well here, and I did live in Wilkes-Barre for a few years. I am simply comfortable here. Some of my favorite people live here. Also, musically, the scene has always been very open to, yet honest about, everything I have tried, so as soon as I have a band together, I love to bring it to NEPA as a litmus test.

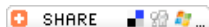
Weekender: In two weeks, Days Before Tomorrow will make its local live debut at "Concert For a Cause 7: A Concert For Karen." You've been a part of this event since the very beginning and have always made it clear that it means a lot to you. What can fans expect to see from you and the band at the concert? Tell us about the live show.

Klein: This particular show is all about "The Cause." Every 10 minutes, another child or adult is expected to die from leukemia or a blood-related cancer. This statistic represents nearly 145 people each day or six people every hour. As for the band, we expect to bring you on the rollercoaster of dynamics of driving neo-progressive rock — great musicians, big vocals and harmonies, and some really solid hooks to take home with you.

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Days Before Tomorrow at Concert For A Cause 7, The Woodlands Inn & Resort, Route 315, Plains Twp., Wednesday, April 22. Info:
www.daysbeforetomorrow.com

0 COMMENTS



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