

JOHN RITTER: Why We'll Miss Him

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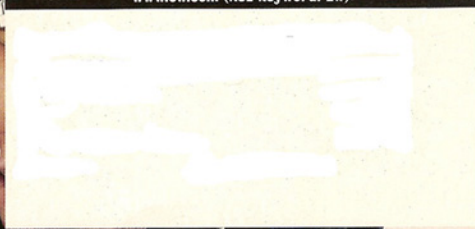
Jim Mullen's
Ben & J. Lo
Hot Sheet

FALL
MUSIC
PREVIEW

Pink & OutKast & Dave Matthews

One Hell-Raiser, Two
Funky Rappers, and a Jam
Band Superstar Mix It Up
In Our Exclusive Q&A

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SPEAK of the DEVIL

OR MAYBE JUST THE BEDEVILED. DAVE MATTHEWS, PINK, AND OUTKAST MULL THE MUSIC-BIZ CRISIS. WHO KNEW IT'D BE A LAUGHING MATTER? **BY CHRIS WILLMAN**

“WHAT THIS PICTURE NEEDS, AUDREY, IS FOR YOU TO GET RID OF THE WHITE GUY.” THAT’S OUR SELF-deprecating friend Dave Matthews, talking with ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY’s deputy photography director as he squeezes in between Pink, and Andre 3000 and Big Boi, the two members of OutKast. Dave’s simply trying to answer a musical question no one on the cover shoot has asked: What’s wrong with this peanut-butter-and-honky sandwich? • If you go by contemporary radio standards, everything’s amiss with our chosen cover combo: Matthews, Pink, and OutKast may have the most anticipated releases of the fall in rock, pop, and hip-hop, respectively, but it’s virtually inconceivable that a major-market commercial radio programmer would play all three on the same format. • But nowadays, every man is a drive-time DJ, if not king. Thanks to the “rip, mix, burn” revolution, every blank CD-R represents a new chance to create the perfect playlist (see page 41), free from the demographics and discriminations of the marketplace. So take a smidgen of *Some Devil*, Matthews’ just-released (and first) solo album, which sets the Dave Matthews Band’s signature sound aside for something both more contemplative and electric-guitar-oriented; add a pinch of Pink’s *Try This* (due Nov. 11), wherein the onetime R&B diva deigns to rock out, far more than on 2001’s multi-platinum *M!ssundaztood*; and sprinkle in some of OutKast’s new *Speakerboxx/The Love Below*,

the genre-busting double CD that trumps even their Grammy Album of the Year-nominated *Stankonia* (2000) by gluing together a pair of wildly accomplished Dre and Big Boi solo discs. Then stir, and stick it to Hot Ninety-Whatever!

Wait, did we say *take*? We didn’t intend it that way, kids, since after all these years, home taping finally is killing the music biz. One of our assignments for putting Andre, Dave, Big Boi, and Pink together for a roundtable Q&A was to find out, among other things, whether leading lights like these believe that the out-of-the-gate success of a legit download service like iTunes Music Store is a sign that the music industry can be saved. Or, failing that, maybe we could at least determine which member of this ensemble is most likely to alternate John Denver’s “Annie’s Song” and the extraterrestrial jazz of Sun Ra on a mix CD.

As we join them after the shoot, which took place in Manhattan on a hot, late-August day, Matthews is loosening himself up with a little Glenlivet, which could explain his forthrightness on the subject of radio and concert-promotion behemoth Clear Channel. While Pink indulges in cigarettes and a bit of wine, the OutKast guys are just getting high on Magic Marker fumes, using the time to sign hundreds of CD booklets their label has handed them, even as they vent about the state of hip-hop. A day of clowning for the camera has made friends of virtual strangers. How else to explain the questionable hygiene and child-care tips?

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY [To Pink] Have you told them what you did on your summer vacation?

PINK I went to Costa Rica, and went rappelling in the jungle.

ANDRE That’s rain forest, right?

PINK It was rainy and warm and awesome. I called my manager the day before my photo shoot: “I’m in the jungle, dude!”

ANDRE See any snakes?

PINK No, big spiders and lots of monkeys.

ANDRE It’s time to get out and do some of that good s—.

DAVE My wife went down there and left me with our twins. I was fine, they did fine, they behaved. Then she came back, and they started misbehaving directly—*waah!*—as soon as she walked in the door. They behave for me because I hang them upside down by their legs.

ANDRE You know what? If they ever do a movie, Tom Hanks is most definitely gonna have to play you.

DAVE Me? He’s old. Play me as *old*. [Laughter]

EW We have questions, but feel free to go off on tangents...

ANDRE What kind of toothpaste do you use?

DAVE I use that Tom’s [of Maine] because my wife does. It’s all natural!

ANDRE I don’t even brush my teeth.

DAVE Well, it seems to be working, because they’re shiny, lovely ivories. I find it hard to floss, although my dentist tells me...

ANDRE All right, we off on a tangent.

DAVE See, we did it for you! [Laughter]

EW Thanks a lot. Now then, you all have new albums that represent some sort of break with form, whether it’s embarking on solo projects, working with unusual collaborators, or coloring outside genre lines. Do you consider these things risks? Or, given how hard it is to capture consumers’ attention these days, is the greater risk putting out another quality album *without* reinventing yourself in some way?

ANDRE For us, it’s not really a choice, honestly. Every album is kind of like a time capsule. I just think you get to the point where you have to do something new. It’s not a conscious decision to say, “I’m gonna be different.”

DAVE I think it's more of a conscious decision to say, "I'm gonna be the *same* as I was on the last record."

ANDRE Rappers say, "I'm keepin' it real," but then four or five albums down the line they're keepin' it the *same* real. You can't be keepin' it real if you don't grow.

DAVE [To Dre and Big Boi] You guys are always changing, with every record. Every time it's like, Ooh! It's just so kicking.

EW Does getting to have your own way on a solo album, not having to accommodate your usual creative partners, spoil you?

DAVE I can't say enough how fun it was. But the other thing I can't say enough is how much it has inspired me to want to go back in the studio with the band. I think the next DMB record is gonna be the best one we ever made. It's consuming my mind, the event of it. But the inspiration for [*Some Devil*] was just a tangent, and I love tangents. Every once in a while, I love the freshness of having dinner with friends, as opposed to with my family.

EW Pink, some people will be shocked that your primary collaborator on *Try This* is punker Tim Armstrong of Rancid and not pop producer Linda Perry, who helped you sell 5 million copies of your last album but kicked in only a few tracks here.

PINK Tim said, "I want to work with you," and it takes a lot of balls for people to want to work with me. [*Laughs*] I don't attach myself to any one [genre], and when you're super-punk-rock or super-hip-hop or super-anything, it takes a lot of balls to go outside your circle and go for it. So I give him credit for that.

I get bored really easy—obviously. [*Laughs*] There's just too much to do to stay with one thing. I get claustrophobic. There's always a missing piece with each project I do, and I think Tim Armstrong was my missing piece [on this record]. I started with Linda because it was a safe place. But neither one of us was sure we were right for each other this time around. With Tim, we only really worked together for two weeks, and we came up with 10 of the 14 songs on the album.

ANDRE Damn! I want some of *that* y'all were doing.

PINK I went out on the road with [Rancid] and slept on their tour bus. We recorded on the back of the bus. If you [isolate] the vocals, all you'll hear is engine.

EW Do you concern yourself with how to bring old fans, who'll expect a certain pop thing from you, along for the ride?

PINK I don't know anybody who only listens to one kind of music. I don't think I'm alienating anyone; maybe I'll open some minds and eyes. I sang gospel in church and had a punk band. Music is music. I think about Madonna. Yeah, I loved her music, but it was *her* that turned me on. And she's just one example. It was about Janis Joplin's soul to me. She could sing *f---in* "Happy Birthday" and I'd still think she was the sexiest thing that ever walked off stage.

ANDRE Once you put titles on stuff, it kind of locks it in.

DAVE There you go.

ANDRE The program director at KROQ [L.A.'s influential modern-rock station] might say, "There's a new OutKast single, but we can't play it because they're hip-hop." So we sent them "Hey Ya"

with no name on it and they said, "Hey, I like that. Put it on the station." At the time songs like "Hey Ya" were made, I was listening to the Ramones and Buzzcocks, and the Hives is my favorite group.

BIG BOI Because we're on both sides of the fence with our first two singles [Andre's electro-bubbly, Beck-like "Hey Ya" and Big Boi's Earth, Wind & Fire-learn-to-rap "The Way You Move"], it's a plus at radio...

ANDRE And I think it's really good for us—and for hip-hop, period. We come from hip-hop. Right now, hip-hop is the most uninspired, deadiest s--- ever on the radio. Hip-hop and some rock music; I think metal is, like, super-dead.

DAVE Oh, good God, I mean, I'll tell you, listening to the radio, it's like... [*he mimes hitting buttons*] search... search... Then I end up on some public radio station playing Beethoven and I'm like, "Thank God." [*Laughter*]

ANDRE Exactly! You turn on talk radio and go, "Whatever you're talking about: 'UFOS? Are they real?' All right, let's listen!"

DAVE The monopoly always goes, "We got it *all* now." But Clear Channel can't last forever because it's too fat to hold itself up. Things will start popping up around it that are more fun. It can't last—I don't care how big it is. It can't hold itself up because it's too f---in' big. And it'll just fall into its own excrement. Well, I hope it does. [*Laughs*]

EW Um, isn't Clear Channel promoting your current tour?

DAVE Probably a bit of it. [*Laughs*] But not all of it. *Hell* no, they can't have the whole thing. They say, "Can we have the whole thing?" "F--- you! You can have some of it...you big, overfed a-hole!"

EW [To Dre and Big Boi] Even when *Stankonia* came out, you guys were not real high on the state of hip-hop. Three years later...

BIG BOI It's worse. The s---gates opened and just flooded the place.

ANDRE It's so formulated—you get your R&B singer in the middle of the hook, you get your

beat that sounds like the Neptunes, and say some club s---, and you on, easy as pop.

BIG BOI That's one of the reasons why the downloading thing has gotten so vast, because people are tired of getting tricked into spending their hard-earned money on an album where there's only one song they might like. They can check out the whole album on the Internet and go, "I'm not buyin' that s---!"

PINK I think as the industry gets worse [economically], record companies are afraid to take chances. They [don't] see that they're losing *because* they're afraid to take chances. So now is the time to take a f---in' chance, because there's not much longer to do it.

ANDRE It's Hail Mary time.

DAVE It makes you want to take off your mask and just play. People say, "Are you worried about this digital thing?" I make my living from playing live, so if the whole record industry went *pffft* and landed flat on its face, I'd still be able to go out

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there and [*he scats nonsensically*] sing like the Lollipop Guild and hope someone throws a dollar in my hat.

EW Will the industry cease to exist as we know it?

ANDRE I think they'll find a way where you'll be charged. Because, honestly, [file sharing] is straight thievery. I guess it's such a sweet thing to do, just to go on the computer and steal. It's not like they're putting on a mask when they come in to rob you.... But I think the Internet *is* good, because the songs that I look for, I can't find in the stores.

DAVE And it's already starting. They've made it easier to do—to pay two dollars to get a couple tunes—than it is to go walking through the Internet trying to find the music for free.... If you can get it just like that, *bang*, you've got everything you want.

EW So why isn't DMB music available on iTunes?

DAVE Well, it'll get there. One of the reasons we haven't gone with iTunes yet is because we want people to buy the whole record [and not just individual songs]. Also, we want to figure out a way to do it from home, so people can buy from us directly. [*Everyone laughs.*] "We'll give it to you for 40 cents! We'll give it to you for two dollars, the whole record!"

EW Are we looking at the death of the album as an art form if buyers can cherry-pick one or two songs at a time online?

PINK A lot of artists just look for hits, so if you just want one of their hits, they're like, "Go for it." But if you're like me, I like to tell a f---in' story. I write a book with my albums. You know how DVDs are, like, you want to see Scene 1, Scene 2, Scene 3? [Downloading a single] is like only getting Scene 1—or Scene 10.

DAVE Maybe when they're 15, they want one song. When they're 18 or 22, they're, "Well, what's the rest of the album like?" And when they're 26, they're too busy thinking about how to feed their kids to listen to the whole record. [*He affects a fuddy-duddy white voice.*] "I haven't listened to anything for a long time."

PINK I have a personal issue; it's nothing to do with money lost to the Internet. I'm a mystery-novel girl. I'm a mystery-movie girl. I like *artists* that are mysterious. And when the Internet has your songs before you've had a chance to tell your story, there's no more mystery. People can find out what kind of f---ing underwear I had on when I lost my virginity, if they want to...

DAVE [*Incredulous*] Really?

PINK I don't know. I've been on my own fansite and they're like, "Oh my God, did you hear this song?" And I haven't even decided if it'll be on my album yet!

ANDRE It's disrespectful. When *Stankonia* came out, [file sharers] had songs that weren't even finished, with verses and spaces missing.

DAVE We had a whole album, man—it was a great record, but we didn't want to put it out because of where we were at that time. [He's referring to the bootleg known as *The Lillywhite Sessions*, much of which the band later rerecorded for 2002's *Busted Stuff* album.] We probably would have gone back and done some work on it and finished it and put it out, but...

PINK It's already out!

DAVE Unfortunately, someone found it and, *bam*, the whole thing's out there, with no words [on some verses]—I'm going "Hickory dickory doodle dock." I'm glad people wanted to hear it. But I'm *not* glad, because I half-finished a painting, and I'm like, "Okay, I want to leave that because I don't have the mind right now to get it done." And then you go to a f---in' museum and it sits on the wall with a half-painted face and a price tag on it.

EW Moving on from theft to people who actually add to the music, you've all had great guest collaborators over the years. Any good stories to share?

ANDRE I can tell you one. On *Aquemini* [1998], we did this song called "Synthesizer." We were almost finished and said, "This sounds kind of creepy. Let's call up Vincent Price!" He was dead, and we didn't even know. So we called George Clinton. He came in the studio and after a while, dude, *wow*. The only thing I can say is: Say no to drugs! [*Laughter*]

BIG BOI He had a ball, man. He had scraps of paper everywhere. He was, like, buggety-buggety. He'd be bumping into somebody...

ANDRE You could tell there were a million things going on in his head. But what he came out with, it fit exactly what we were talking about. It was wild. He said, "Hold on for a second and let me get some inspiration." He did whatever he had to do and came back and *nailed* it.

BIG BOI Nailed it. That will always stick in my mind, man.

EW George Clinton's work is an obvious influence on OutKast. Can you all name a musical influence you feel confident the others will share—and one you're sure they won't?

DAVE Well, I'm guessing Bob Marley...

ANDRE Oh, yeah. [*Pink nods her assent.*]

DAVE If there is a God, Marley knows him well.

EW There's more than one correct answer; then, because Hendrix is one I've seen all of you cite.

ANDRE Definitely. I was gonna say him or Prince.

PINK I'm the only person I've ever met in my entire life who was never really into Prince.

ANDRE Are you *serious*? You have been deprived! But you was a Michael Jackson fan, huh?

PINK Uh-huh.

ANDRE Awwwww, man. Prince kicked Michael Jackson's ass!

PINK I know, but damn.... Well, I liked Prince's butt! [*Laughter*]

ANDRE We've gotta send you to a Prince class.

PINK People have tried. My favorite artist in the world, and I don't know if any of y'all like him, but I think that maybe you have to because he's so good.... [*To Dave*] Do you like Donny Hathaway?

DAVE [*Reluctantly*] I don't know him enough.

ANDRE Most definitely. He's so touching.

PINK I never heard a voice like that in my life. I would give my right arm to be able to sit in an audience and watch him. I've imagined it.... And then I guess the one that I would think y'all don't listen to would be Billy Joel.

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