

STREET SCENE

Family tradition: Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
STAFF WRITER

Within the last couple years, Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers have done the House of Blues Smokin' Grooves Tour, Lollapalooza, and a Canadian multi-band tour. After hanging around with so many rock bands, Sharon Marley is feeling a little differently about her music.

"It's interesting the people they (booking agents) hook us up with. It's good for our mental capacity because we get to socialize with people from totally different backgrounds. But there's so many different rock groups that we've sung with that I feel like a rock group," she said with a laugh.

Marley explained, however, that she prefers to play for crowds who aren't primarily rock fans.

"Smokin' Grooves was a nice mix because it had rappers, rock, and of course, it had reggae. You get a cross section of the whole thing. When it's only, like, rock, the crowd is wilder. They do that



Follow the beat: Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers — from left, Sharon Marley, Stephen Marley, Cedella Marley, Ziggy Marley — perform songs off its latest album "Fallen Is Babylon" Tuesday, Aug. 26, at Pine Knob.

body surfing thing when everybody's going crazy."

Once again, however, Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers

is paired up with a rock band. Big Head Todd and the Monsters. The tour comes to Pine Knob Music Theatre in Indepen-

dence Township at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 26.

The Melody Makers are touring in support of its latest album, "Fallen Is Babylon," which highlights the band's version of Curtis Mayfield's "People Got Ready" and "Everybody Wants to Be" featuring Wyckle of the Fugees. Marley is looking forward to performing songs off the album.

"I was getting kind of bored with our last show because we were on the road for a year and a half. I kept asking, 'When are we going to change the format?' Finally we have this new album. I can't wait to get out there. It's very exciting," she explained.

"I have this feeling that Ziggy is getting very experimental. He's going to be doing some a capella stuff. There's conga drums, big bass drums so there's more like a chanting feeling to some of the songs. It's becoming more spiritual in the performance itself."

The children of Bob Marley, Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers grew up listening to a

variety of music.

"We weren't really focused on reggae. We listened to a lot of gospel stuff, Stevie Wonder stuff. There was a lot of Al Green around, and Putti LaBelle and The Blue Belles. We had a lot of different backgrounds in music."

"We used to listen to some classical music. On Sundays in Jamaica, classical music is the only thing they play on the radio. I think by listening to all that music we appreciate the different feelings you get from different music. It's a vibe thing really. With some music, you can really dance to it, and it's really fun. With other music you sit down and really listen to appreciate what's going on."

At home in Kingston, Jamaica, the Melody Makers keep busy recording and distributing their own music, while running Tuff Gong, Bob Marley's record company. The group also designs its own clothes and choreography.

Apart from the music, we all have children to look after. We have the Bob Marley Museum, that also falls under our own

responsibility. We have to make sure everything is in proper order and represents what our father was about."

Sharon Marley explained that she doesn't feel any pressure to live up to her father's reputation.

"I feel pressure to live up to my own expectations. If I sing a wrong note, I'll never forgive myself and I can't sleep. The worst thing is to go on stage and make a mistake. I think I am my own worst critic. I live up to my own expectations because, you see, while our father was around he didn't live up to anybody's expectations. He was an individual in himself. We're all individuals. We all have our different personalities."

Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers, along with Big Head Todd and the Monsters co-headline an all-ages show at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 26, at Pine Knob Music Theatre, 1-75 and Sawdust Road, Independence Township. Tickets are \$22.50 pavilion and \$12.50 lawn. For more information, call (248) 377-0100.

"OK Computer" downloads singer's discomfort with technology



CHRISTINA FUOCO

Radiohead's latest album "OK Computer" (Capitol) is a download's list. The first single "Paranoid Android" is a 6 1/2-minute winding road of complex time changes and enraged lyrics ("You don't remember, why don't you remember my name? Off with his head. Off with his head, man"), and Thom Yorke's roller-coaster vocals that soar at one moment and dissolve into a mumble at others.

In "Exit Music (For A Film)" Yorke is accompanied intermittently by acoustic guitars, and fuzzy guitars and bass. Chiming guitars sparkle throughout "Let Down" surrounding Yorke's lyrics "Hysterical and let alone and hanging around. Crashed like a bug in the ground." Shivering guitars cradle Yorke's unease as he sings "Phew, for a minute there I lost myself. I lost myself until it drifts into a pile of distortion on 'Karma Police'."

A musically rollicking "Electioneer" follows the grim, computer-animated tale "Filter Hacker."

Twelve different songs for 12 different moods.

"It was nerve wracking at first," guitarist/vocalist Ed O'Brien admits about the initial

release of "OK Computer."

"A lot of people have said it's an amazing album after a couple listens. I asked if people now-days give albums a couple listens and the answer's been yes. Generally, albums these days have got to be accessible immediately but some of my favorite albums are the ones that have grown on me."

Calling from San Francisco, Calif., O'Brien explains that "OK Computer" has apparently grown on fans as well. Nearly all the shows on its headlining tour, including the Friday, Aug. 15, show at the State Theatre in Detroit, have sold out.

"We've done the first two dates in Los Angeles and San Francisco and it was pretty good; not bad for the first few dates of any tour. When you start touring properly it can be a bit precarious, but the crowds have been brilliant."

The English band recorded "OK Computer" at various points from September 1995 through Christmas 1996 taking time in between to "play in" the new material.

"We worked on it off and on for a year. We did a lot of touring in that time. We did European festivals. We did our own tour of the United States. We also opened for Alanis Morissette for three or four weeks. We find touring is a very creative time for us. We play in new material during soundchecks and incorporate

them into the sets."

On Radiohead's first two albums, "Pablo Honey" and "The Bends" the eccentric Yorke worked through some inner demons. "OK Computer," with its running theme of maladjustment in a modern world, offers a whole new viewpoint. O'Brien explained.

"Lyrically, it comes from Thom so he had an agenda. The main thing that's different from 'The Bends' in that 'The Bends' was a lot more introspective. 'OK Computer' is more from the outside

in and reporting on it and documenting things. I think Thom deliberately did what he had to do on 'The Bends' and he didn't want to have to do it again."

One thing that remains constant with Radiohead is its affinity for off-beat videos. "Paranoid Android" is in effect an episode of "Robin," a twisted Swedish cartoon that makes Beavis and Butt-head look like Dennis the Menace.

"If we'd done a video with us in it, with the three sections of the song, it would seem to need

something. You could do so much more with animation. It set the right mood for the song. It's a bit weird. There's a lot of black humor in it, but it's just right."

Opening for Radiohead is the Scottish pop band Teenage Fanclub who is supporting its fifth album "Songs from Northern Britain," its first for Creation/Columbia Records which hit stores Tuesday, July 29.

Being on a new label, bassist/vocalist Gorard Love explained, changed the band's

feelings about promoting a record.

Radiohead and Teenage Fanclub perform Friday, Aug. 15, at the State Theatre, 1-75 and Woodward Ave., Detroit. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for the all-ages show. For more information, call (313) 961-5451.

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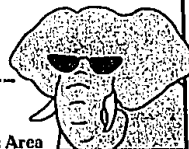
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