

# Teddy Richards makes his own way



Having purposely missed INXS's 1994 shows at the Pontiac Silverdome, Teddy Richards had no desire to travel to Grand Valley State University to see the Australian band's performance the following day.

But a good friend persuaded him to go, and it has proved to be a turning point in the Southfield pop singer's career.

Hanging out backstage with INXS, Richards slipped a copy of his six-song EP to Andrew Farriss, the band's songwriter/key-boardist.

"I thought it would end up in the garbage. This is a guy who has written 20 to 30 No. 1 hits, like he has time to listen to my tape," Richards said.

Not only did Farriss listen to the tape, he called Richards and suggested that they collaborate on a few songs.

"I couldn't believe he was making it available, somebody of that stature. He thought he might be instrumental in helping me get this to the right people."

Farriss and Richards inked a deal through Farriss' publishing company to write two songs. By early 1995, Richards was on a plane to England, where Farriss resides. The two wrote the rock song "Naked" and the funk tune "Hangin'," "both of which fell together quickly and easily." The two-song publishing deal evolved



Showcasing material: **Teddy Richards performs Friday at The Magic Bag in Ferndale.**

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On his demo tape, which is not available for purchase, Richards shows his affinity for ballads while dabbling in Motown-flavored funk and ethereal pop.

He performed the material when he opened for INXS in California where he was reintroduced to Nina Blackwood, a VJ for MTV during the 1980s. The two met at the opening of the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio.

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Since his demo tape was finished, Richards played a showcase in England with his U.K. band that includes Depeche Mode's drummer. While rehearsing for the show, Richards was visited by Elvis Costello, who was practicing for a BBC special with the Bronsky Quartet.

On this side of the ocean, Richards will hit the Magic Bag's stage Friday, Jan. 30, to perform for the public and record company executives. His U.S. band includes singer/bassist Joe Hayden, keyboardist Randy Sly of the swing band Atomic Fireballs and formerly of BOP (harvey), guitarist John Antone, background vocalist Susan Calloway, and drummer Jerome Day of the Howling Dribbles.

A musician all of his life, Richards also wrote songs with Oliver Leiber, who has penned songs for Paula Abdul and who is the son of Leiber and Stoller's Jerry Leiber, and also wrote with Gary Clark of the Interscope Records band Transistor.

Among the songs written with Clark is the ballad "Brand New Day" which Richards calls "the song that's getting my phone calls returned." If everything

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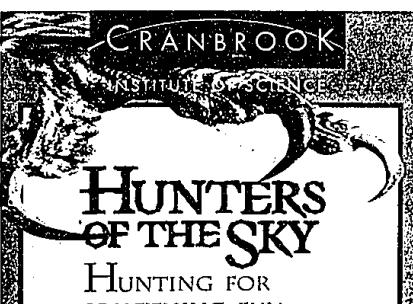
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