



Photograph by George Sakkestad

Hectic Sausage band members are (from left) Elric, Justin Sane and Ron Fulton. Hidden from view is drummer Alex Friedrich.

Heavy Mettle

By Zack Stentz

Hectic Sausage. It's not a Cajun recipe or surrealist painting, but a rock group formed by four Los Gatos High School graduates. But while their title may be whimsical, the band's meteoric rise on the Santa Clara Valley club scene suggests a steely discipline and desire to succeed.

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get our name out there," Elric says. "Some magazines like BAM want us to take out ads, but we can't afford that, so we're guerrilla marketing instead."

"Oh, yeah, I've read all of [Jay] Levinson's books," Elric adds. "He's really right on, especially on the importance of sending out mailings. I saw him speak at the Toll House last month and was a little embarrassed because out of the 100 guerrilla-marketing weapons he listed, we're only using 20 or 25."

One of Levinson's weapons that Hectic Sausage does use successfully is cross marketing with other businesses. In a coup many bands would sell their souls to Beelzebub for, the band recently received an endorsement from the Santa Clara-based Dean Markley guitar-and

bass-string company. Dean Markley is widely regarded as the Rolls-Royce of instrument-string manufacturers.

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On the origins of the band, Elric is more loquacious. "We all grew up in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and went to Los Gatos High School together." Elric says of himself and the three members—singer Justin Sane, nee Justin IIIges, bassist Ron Fulton and drummer Alex Friederich. "Justin and I jammed together in high school in a band called Bad Neighbor. We got pretty big locally before the group broke up."

"What's really good about Hetic Sausage is that we all have different musical styles and influences that we combine in this band," Elricke adds. "Everyone is an equal partner in the band in terms of songwriting and performing."

The diverse tastes of Hetic Sausage's members are apparent in the band's sound, a musical mélange in which pieces of punk, heavy metal, southern rock and jazz can all be discerned.

Singer Sane's lyrics and vocals provide the missing link between Ronnie van Zandt and Jello Biafra. "I grew up on Southern rock, with bands like Lynryd Skynryd and the Allman Brothers," Sane says.

As a teen, Sane became enamored with Los Angeles punk bands like the Circle Jerks and Bad Religion, and he is still trying to reconcile the

styles. "Before Hetic Sausage, I was in a band that played mostly cover songs, and I'm just now finding my own style."

"I like to write about the things I see in my life," Sane adds, which, judging from his lyric choices, range from racism to substance abuse to love and happiness.

And more happiness seems on the way for the Sausages, who continue to play regularly at local clubs like Waves and the Cactus Club while courting record labels and preparing to tour farther afield. "We really have to strike a balance," Elric says, "We don't want to start playing other areas before we're ready or have built up our local base, but we don't want to play so often that we burn out our local crowd."

The four also have to be wary of burning out themselves. Besides holding day jobs—Sane as a lab technician, Elric as a customer-service representative for a Los Gatos music company, Fulton as a bartender and Friederich as a carpenter—the four maintain a grueling schedule of rehearsals and performances. "We take our music very seriously. We practice about three hours a day, four times a week," Sane says.

Hetic Sausage please Oct. 29th at the Cactus Club, 417 S. 1st St., San Jose.

THE PROWLER

The Prowler has two bowls of Halloween goodies for trick-or-treaters this Sunday: one for kids who put a decent effort into their costumes and one for the bogus soccer players, babies and Baby Bops. Come to the doorstep fully equipped, or suck wax soda bottles. Special concessions will be made to upgrade Barney to the A-candy list, as his saccharine sweetness is bound to spook spirits from here to Albuquerque.

Good fun to be had this weekend: Tangelo Productions will culminate its production of Michael Norman Mann's *Beast In The Night and Witches & Warlocks*. The playwright penned these two one-acts to pay tribute to the months of brisk winds and hot toddies. *Beast* is a blood-shivering story about a man convinced he's a werewolf. *Witches* is a wickedly funny story of a master witch's struggle to play high post when faced with the coming reincarnation of a rival witch. Final performances run through Oct. 29-30, and the curtain rises at 8 p.m. at the Los Gatos Cinema. Call Tangelo for more info at 399-5577.

Take a trip to a real Dead Man's Party over the hill. Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park will celebrate October's end with an explanation of *Dia De Los Muertos*. For directions, call the park at 425-5849.

Later that night, the Loudon Nelson Center in Santa Cruz will present a *Dia De Los Muertos* Concert. The evening of traditional Guatemalan and Mexican highland music, dedicated to the memory of César Chávez, will benefit *Arte Latino* and *El Coro Hispano*. Tickets are \$15, and more information is at your fingertips by calling 459-6944.

A Prowler addendum about the phrase "pouring milk on the curb" that was mentioned two weeks ago. The milk evaporates and goes up to kitty-cat heaven for all the felines that have passed away—a subtle yet symbolic gesture.

THE ONTOWN

Arts
Dining
Calendar
Events

COVERING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 27–NOVEMBER 2, 1993



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PLAYWRIGHT MICHAEL NORMAN MANN GETS 'BREAK HE'S BEEN WAITING FOR'

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Los Gatos may not spring into many people's minds as a breeding ground for playwrighting talent. It's difficult to imagine Tennessee Williams cruising N. Santa Cruz Avenue on a Friday night, or David Mamet passed out under a table at the Los Gatos Brewery. But don't tell that to Michael Norman Mann.

The prolific local playwright cut his teeth on the Los Gatos Cinema Stage and has just inked a deal to take his *Box 27* play to a major San Francisco theater. "I'm really excited," said Mann. "This is really the break I've been waiting for."

Mann signed an agreement with independent producer Joseph De Alejandro to open *Box 27*, a taut and topical drama dealing with gays in the military, at the 130-seat New Conservatory Theater. "Joseph had seen the play here when Tangelo put it on," Mann said.

"It's opening January 6," said Mann, "so I really have to work to polish the play and fix the things that didn't work in the Los Gatos version."

Mann relishes the San Francisco chance to further polish the play. "It's a chance for still-bigger things," he says. "And if it does moderately well, they'll take it to L.A. next."

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