

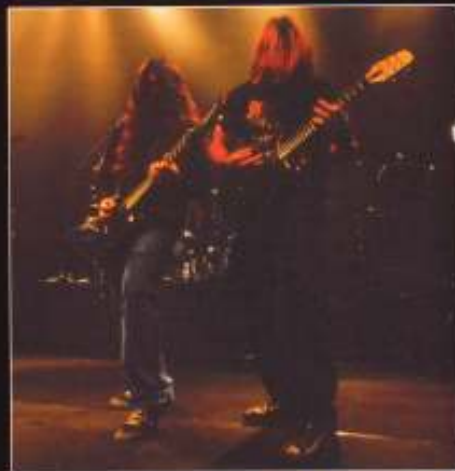
At the age of 17, one year early, Andrew graduated from high school. Rather than attend the Chicago Institute of Art, to which he's accepted, he decides to move to New York City and work on the music. He is now 18 years old. The music that comes to him at this time lays the groundwork for all that is to follow. Andrew focuses all his energies on making the most immense, thrilling songs he can. His goal is simple. Make the most exciting song he has ever heard. Then, make another one... even more exciting. Using a broken four-track and a re-assembled PC computer, he painstakingly builds the songs, stacking track upon track upon track, recording every instrument one at a time. The songs slowly become soaring cathedrals of sound, a series of spiraling platinum towers, each more glorious and beautiful than the one preceding it. And still he is not satisfied. He wants better equipment to record the songs. And he wants a band to play them. But he had to keep working, in order to support the vision.

Andrew sells gumball machines at a hard-edged Manhattan vending company and hocks Opera-tickets out of mid-town box offices. At the same time he's making flyers and handing out his songs to strangers on the street - trying to find other people to play in his then non-existent backing band. He plays concerts wherever and whenever he has the chance, and he plays coffee shops, basements and a fluke art festival in Brussels. At the same time he plays at dozens of scarce clubs, up and down the east coast. He records two solo EPs: "Girls Own Juice" and "Party Til You Puke." He still has no band. When he plays live it's with a drum machine, a keyboard, a microphone, and sometimes backing tapes and a guitar. It's not the ideal performing situation, but it was all he had to work with. Andrew decides that he absolutely needs to form a live band and simultaneously decides to say 'yes' to everything. Given the choice between doing 'something' or 'nothing', Andrew chooses 'something.' This is important.

Andrew sends a letter and his songs to his favorite drummer in the world, Donald "D.T." Tardy. He does not expect a reply. Donald phones and shocks Andrew when he says he'd love to play drums in the band. A group begins to take shape. The initial line-up includes guitarists E. Payne, Frank Werner, Jimmy Coup, bassist Gregg Roberts, keyboardist Jeff Victor as well as Donald and Andrew. Finally, the time comes for Andrew to begin making the music of his dreams.

The process is time-consuming and intensive and exacting and laborious. All in all, from start to finish, it takes nearly two years. The album is recorded in studios in New York, Los Angeles, Michigan, Colorado, Minnesota and Florida. Armies of engineers are involved. Most of the songs contain more than one hundred tracks. Each melody line is composed of dozens of sounds, all combined and then mixed with even more sounds. Every second of every song is microscopically engineered, yet the feeling the songs convey is one of immediacy, a feeling of full-bore ballistic bliss that belies the meticulousness of their construction.

Andrew sustains many injuries while under the influence of the music. During his first concert in England, he receives a serious head trauma and is rushed to a hospital from which he later goes missing. At another concert he kicks himself in the face, accidentally breaking his nose. And then, a slippery, birthday cake-induced spill off a high stage in Mexico city results in almost breaking his legs on a wooden



slab 15 feet below. A guitar cord mishap on a stage in L.A. breaks Andrew's foot and he finishes the night signing autographs from an ambulance. He continues the tour from crutches and a wheelchair. These and countless other scrapes, cuts, bashes and bruises did not slow him down. Andrew and the band played more than 600 shows from 2000 to 2004. Whether incidental, accidental or deliberate - nothing can stop the music. It must be played, and it must be heard.

City after city, country after country, tour after tour - the music spreads and gathers friends, one by one, person by person. Groups of rabble-rousers begin to appear at shows holding banners, throwing confetti, wearing homemade t-shirts and masks and distributing sweets. Magic is created. Insane alchemy. Concerts become parties, and parties become explosive celebrations of life, and these, in turn, become revelatory, life-altering moments of pure joy. Fan conventions are organized and attended by dedicated super-fans. They raise the standard of fun, and proudly march under it. A family is forming. Two new guitarists: Kendall Andrews and John Sutton are added to the live band when Jimmy Coup leaves the group. The band also adds a second live drummer, Rich Russo, which helps enlarge the sound to even more expansive proportions. Stage manager and Andrew W.K. mascot, Big Daddy becomes a concert tradition in his own right. Golden-throated Brian "Archie Angel" Benson also takes up additional back-up vocals. People with everything, something, and nothing in common are united in their excitement and belief in this music.

The music is a result of these exchanging energies. The songs are inspired by and a tribute to the people who love it without doubt or condition. The music is already a part of what we are. The songs are already part of us - they are made of us. We have lent them our faith, our energy and our fire. They are manifestations of the new world gestating inside us. They are forged from that insane electricity the music gives to us and calls from us. It's like a group yell, emitting from an endless array of instruments, all played in unison, by one hand, and then reflected into a hall of mirrors. Proof positive that yesterday doesn't matter, and that nothing in the past can harm us, hurt us, limit us, or touch us in any way. The past is only an idea - a thought. Now is what matters - now, and every moment after now, which will be now in the future. Every second that passes is a new beginning. Every day is made up of 86,400 new chances to change ourselves and everything around us. We shouldn't waste even one of them.

Music is pleasure. It is concentrated, compressed, condensed, coagulated joy. It is the harnessing of divine energies. It is the channeling of celestial ecstasies. We are lucky. Andrew is doing the work for us. He is building the vessels to carry that sound back to us. He is digging a network of trenches from the earth to the heavens. It is his work that brings the boiling sonic magma to our ears - that sound of impossible magisterial glory.

Are we like small row-boats, moored at the edge of a great stormy sea? Quaking and shaking at the thought of that immense roiling ocean? Or are we like helium balloons, tethered to the earth by wrought iron cables, straining for the sky, yet held back by our fear of the unknown and the uncertainty of freedom? Are we willing to dance into that black hole?... Who Knows? By H.S. 2004