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AC/DC

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AC/DC

Thunder And Lightning

Angus And The Boys Prove They've Still Got What It Takes
On Latest LP.

by Andy Secher

AC/DC are at it again; they're playing that unique brand of blues/metal as only they can. In this era of mousse-abuse hair styles and Max Factor makeup jobs, this band of Australian ruffians stand for everything rock and roll is supposed to be. Angus Young, Brian Johnson, Malcolm Young, Cliff Williams and Simon Wright are loud and lewd; true hedonists in the finest sense of the word. On their latest LP, *Blow Up Your Video*, the Thunder From Down Under has returned to the rough 'n' ready sound that made such albums as *Highway To Hell* and *Back In Black* true metal classics. Recently we discussed AC/DC's latest accomplishments and their plans for the future with Johnson and the always-hyperactive Angus.

Hit Parader: On the new album you've returned to using the production team of Harry Vanda and George Young — the guys who worked on all of AC/DC's early albums. Why?

Brian Johnson: It's not like we just returned to them because they helped us with *Who Made Who* last year. They did such a great job on that album we felt that we had to work with them again. They have such a good attitude towards recording that they really made this project fun.

Angus Young: Anyway, George is my brother, and it's nice to get the family together every once in a while. We always had a great time on the early albums we did, and the only reason we ever broke away was because we wanted to see what other producers could do with us. We had great success working with someone like Mutt Lange, but it is nice to be back working with Harry and George.

HP: Brian, before you said that you had a lot of fun working on this album. What exactly made it so enjoyable?

BJ: The whole atmosphere that surrounded the album was really good. The priority this time was on having fun. The music almost was a secondary thing. But I think we had to have that attitude to overcome the conditions we were recording under. We recorded this album in Miraul Studios in France, and it's a place right out of the 12th Century. We were working most of last summer, and there was no air conditioning in the place. Hell, there wasn't even a fan that worked. On top of that Cliff and I had to stay in this little shack that actually was part of a church. It was an old stone building, and there were bats and spiders all over the place — very spooky. All we had in our rooms was a bare light bulb sticking out of the wall and a mattress

on the floor. I felt like I had been thrown in a dungeon.

AY: Yeah, poor Brian and Cliff were put up there for some reason while the rest of us had it a little easier. But they didn't stay there very long.

BJ: Yeah, the second night we slept there, the proprietor came up to us and said, "Did the White Lady bother you last night?" I didn't know what he meant until he explained that the White Lady was the ghost of the house. It didn't take us long to get out of there after that.

HP: But despite all those distractions, you seem to have created a great album.

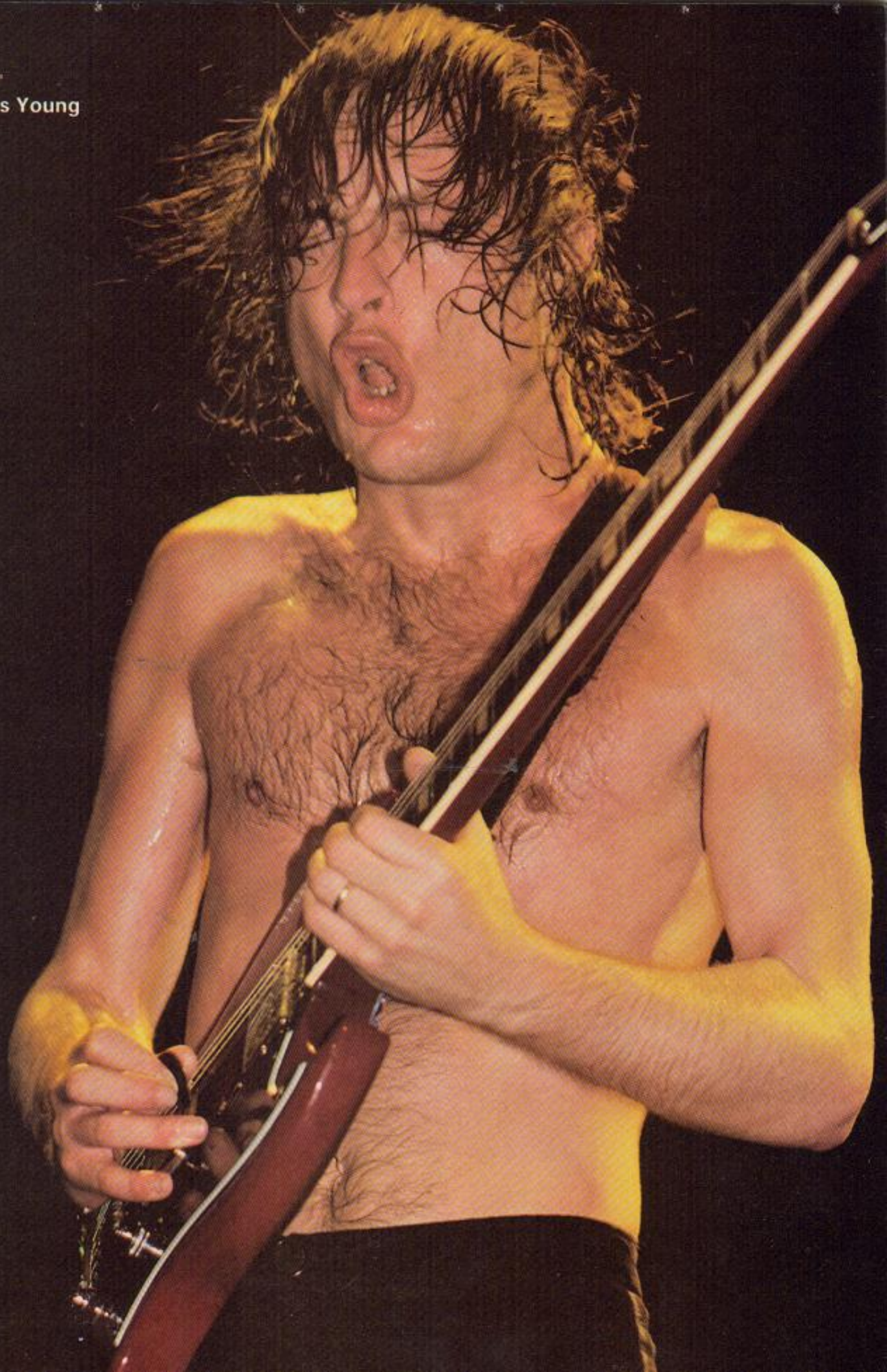
Jeffrey Mayer



Brian and Angus: "This album returns to the bluesy sound of our first albums."

Jeffrey Mayer

Angus Young



AY: We like to think so. To me it's just an AC/DC album, which really says it all. The songs are good this time, and the sound is very strong. One of the best things is that we were able to record 16 tracks, which is a lot for us. Now we'll be able to put some special songs on the "B" sides of singles if we want. It's just a nice feeling to know that you've recorded that many good songs.

BJ: In my very humble opinion there are at least five potential singles on this album. *Heat Seeker* is the first one, which is your typical AC/DC tale of love and lust. But songs like *Mean Streak* and *This Means War* are some of my favorite tracks we've ever recorded. I gave the album its big test a few weeks ago when I let my 12-year-old nephew play it. He's a big AC/DC fan, and when he came out from playing the new record with a big smile on his face I knew we had a winner.

HP: It seems that AC/DC has updated its sound a little bit on this album.

BJ: That may be true, but I actually think it's a return to the bluesy roots the band originally had. All the songs have a good, dirty, driving beat, and Angus has come up with some incredible guitar work for this album. But I can understand it when people think the sound is more "modern." Bluesy rock has made a comeback over the last few years thanks to

bands like Whitesnake. The world has finally gotten away from that pretty-boy hard rock that bands like Motley Crue and Bon Jovi have been playing. Now I'm certainly not putting them down in any way because I respect everyone in this business. But I think it's time to get back to low-down, dirty music rather than music played by guys who just act dirty.

AY: I don't think we actually considered changing anything about AC/DC this time. But every time you go into the studio you take what you've always had and see what new elements you can add to it. To me this sounds very much like all our albums — only it may be a bit better.

HP: What is it about AC/DC that makes the band so popular a dozen years after you released your first album?

AY: I think it's our integrity. The fans know what they're going to get with us. They know that if they pay their money for an album or a ticket to one of our shows they're not going to be disappointed. To me that's the most important thing. We stay on a proven course and we really have no interest to change that much.

BJ: I don't think we've ever sold out of beliefs. You'll never see AC/DC as part of one of those "Golden Hits" TV packages — though the lads have been offered a lot of money to do that.

Another example of that occurred a few years ago when the Rolling Stones offered us a million dollars to open a show for them in one of the huge, outdoor arenas. Angus didn't want any part of it. He said, "Hey, we're not an opening act, and we're better than the Stones anyway." I know my jaw dropped when he said that, but I understood what he meant. There's no reason for AC/DC to ever open a show for anyone.

HP: Speaking of playing live, do you have any new tricks lined up for this year's stage show?

BJ: I certainly hope not (laughs.) Theatrics are not for us. I really hope that we never reach the point where we have to shoot off fireworks and have projection screens just to sell a few concert tickets. The trouble with all that is every stage show looks the same to me. It's not the bands' faults; the same guys design the stage sets for every group. They come up with one good idea and then sell it to every band. Our goal is to stay as far away from that as possible.

AY: We'll probably still have our cannons, which we use during *For Those About To Rock*, and we may have a few other things going on, but we never believed we needed too many tricks to get by on stage. We want the focus to be on us and on the music. With AC/DC that's the way it's always going to be. □

Neil Zlozower



AC/DC (l. to r.): Cliff Williams, Simon Wright, Angus Young, Brian Johnson, Malcolm Young.

Neil Zlozower

Brian Johnson



AC/DC

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