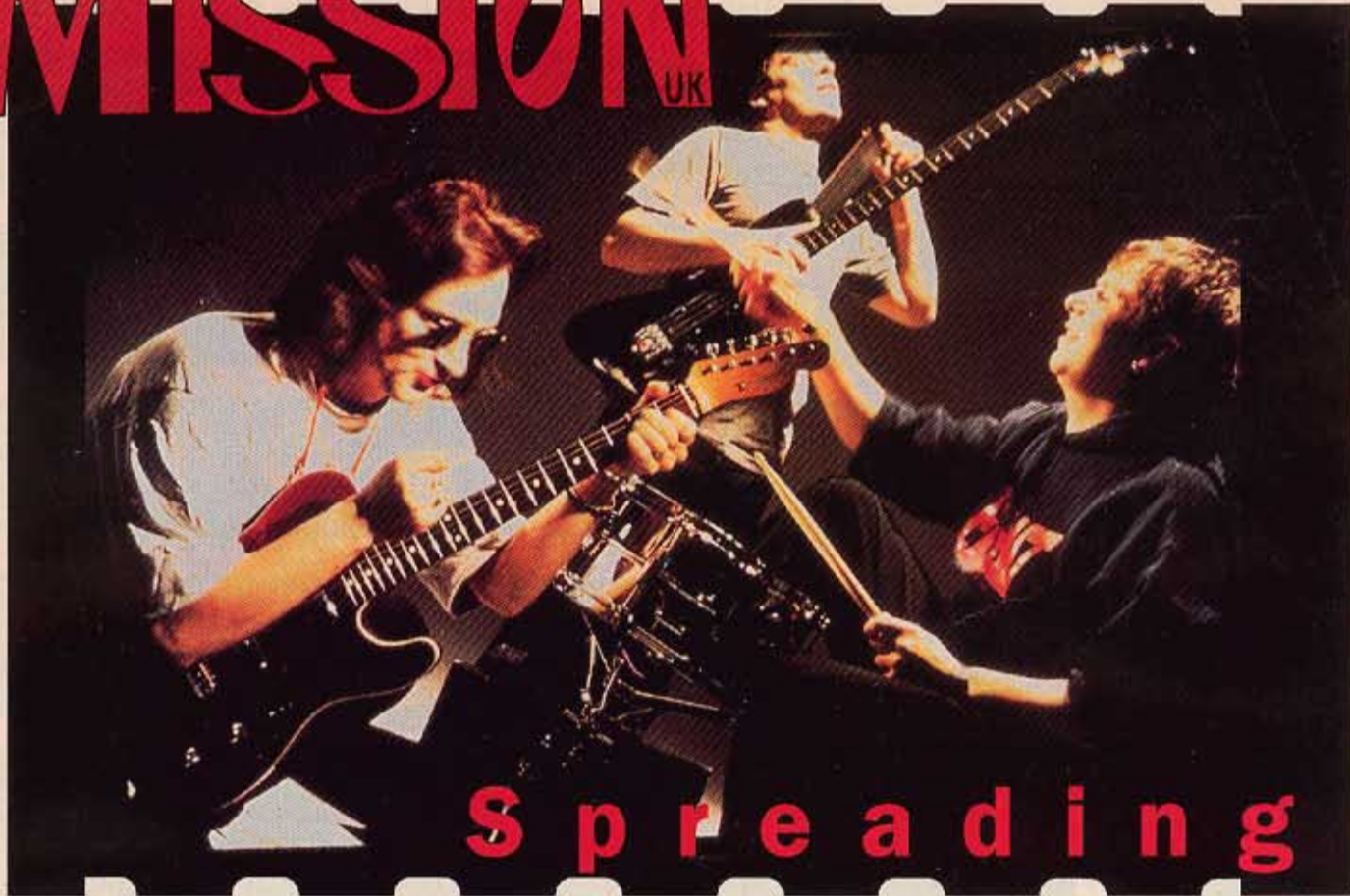


THE MISSION UK



Spreading The Word

by HP

Newquist

The Mission UK has unfairly—to my mind—been tossed into the Goth-rock category from Day One, and thus dismissed by people who never thought to give their extremely strong and diverse rock albums a spin. Of course, you don't have to take my word for it: This is the British band that had John Paul Jones produce their second album, and the one band that Robert Plant said really understands the roots of where Led Zeppelin came from, what Zep was all about—"the only ones to get it right," according to Plant. But because of the Goth tag, The Mission UK has been overlooked by a lot of guitarists. I've got news for you—with a new Mission CD and tour in process, it's time to take a look.

The Mission has always built its sound on the light/heavy tradition defined by Zeppelin. The latest Mission offering, *Masque*, contains a large number of Middle Eastern and Celtic acoustic references (ala "Kashmir" and "Black Country Woman"), in addition to some pulsing electric guitar work. The band's last major studio release, *Carved In Sand*, a heavier guitar fest than the new CD, featured searing guest solo work by Tin Machine axeman and *GUITAR* columnist

Reeves Gabrels. With the departure of original Mission guitarist Simon Hinkler, the band now relies almost entirely on bass player Craig Adams, drummer Mick Brown and the guitar talents of lead singer Wayne Hussey.

Hussey, who has always written the band's songs for two guitarists in the past, now handles all the guitar chores, using strong Arabic modes as an integral part of his rock songs. The band also has a lighter, acoustic side which is much more intricate and complex than the basic ballad styles that many bands now think they have to write because it's a federal law or something. Forget those wimp ballads that all sound alike and claim to be based on Paganini or John Coltrane; the Mission puts its own British roots to use through chord progressions that are distinctly Celtic and Gaelic. You won't hear this kind of originality from poseur bands.

The Mission does have a surprise in store this year for those who see them on tour. To free up Hussey from axe duties to concentrate on his frontman role, the band has new guitarist Paul Inder on

board with them. Inder may not have a name familiar to most readers, but his father sure has a long history of creating metal memories—Inder's dad is Lemmy Kilmister, the founder and grizzled driving force of Motorhead. Surely, any of Dad's influences will make for a striking addition to the Mission.

Though still labelled as an alternative band (wearing something other than leather and keeping your sunglasses on indoors will do that to you), Mission songs like "Shades of Green," "Child's Play," and "Deliverance" will prove the band's commitment to strong rock grooves. "I actually did more with the six-string electric this time, and gave the acoustic a bit of rest," admits Hussey about returning to the comfort of his Les Paul and Telecaster. "It's been nice to go back to being the main guitar player. I almost forgot how good it felt, doing all the guitar parts." In his able fretting and picking hands, it is more than apparent that Hussey's Mission is accomplished. ☐