

the Karl Hendricks Trio

King Bix interviewed the Karl Hendricks Trio for me, when they played the Khyber Pass in Philly. The Trio have a ton of releases out including a track from their Baseball Cards single on the "Shreds: The Best of American Underground Rock 1993" compilation. The Trio is Karl (guitars, vocals), Tim (bass), Tom (drums) and John (the sarcastic roadie).

FOE When and how did you become a band?

KARL In my early years of college I spent a lot of time recording songs just by myself on a 4 track and I sort of started releasing them as cassettes in limited numbers. Tim (bass) and Tom (drums) were going to Carnegie Melon at the time and they worked at the radio station there. They heard the first couple of cassettes and were fans of them. So I sort of started talking to them that way.

TOM Karl was in Sledgehammer (not the Lehigh Valley metal band, but the Pittsburgh band) and Tim and I were in this band called Thumper. Both bands kind of started at the same time and kind of had a parallel. We initially met at the Sonic Temple, which is a club that some friends of ours ran in Pittsburgh, in an old Masonic Meeting Hall. That's where the Pittsburgh scene which exists today kind of coalesced.

JOHN It was the Post-punk Pittsburgh scene.

TOM That's where everyone hung out and worked together, like the people in Don Caballero.

FOE When you write songs, is it a shared task or does Karl write all the songs?

KARL Yes.

JOHN Even the drum parts?

TOM To a degree.

TIM You ad lib too.

TOM Well, Karl will often like, make me play something simpler. (much snickering) Then again sometimes he asks me to do stuff that I can't do, and other times he makes me do things that are even simpler than I would do on my own.

FOE I noticed that on all your releases, the art is done by Wayno and I think he is a great artist.

What is with the cat in all of the art?

JOHN Karl did you ask for him to draw the cat?

KARL Of course! I just like continuity... and cats.

FOE Do you feel that any other bands influenced you? Your sound is extremely unique.

KARL I think that we're influenced by a very wide spectrum of things. It starts out with what I or we get really excited about. You know, what excited us about music. Def Leppard in my case. When I hear something now that I really feel is wonderful, it's going to make me want to go in that direction. I'm not trying to invent something that's never been heard before. I would say that my influences are AC/DC, Leonard Cohen, and the American Music Club.

JOHN (whispering) Rolling Stones.

TOM It's less Rolling Stones now than before.

KARL There are some things that I can really appreciate and like a lot.

TIM I've found five.

JOHN Five things that you can directly imply that are Rolling Stones influenced.

KARL I'm not going to answer any more questions. Just ask John the questions...

JOHN Alright, I'll shut up now.

FOE I heard about a new disc, is it a new one or just a re-issue of older material?

KARL It's a re-issue of our first record which I basically put out myself about 2 and a half years ago. We had a 10" after that, which I consider our second album and then we had another one after that. Our brand new record will be coming out in January 95.

FOE Do you play many all age shows?

KARL It's hard in Pittsburgh. There aren't a lot of great places to play. Especially all ages places. I



personally like to play them as often as possible. I hate playing in places where people go to drink and talk.

FOE Have you ever been approached by a major label?

KARL Many times.

TOM We've been approached but never pursued.

FOE Would you ever consider signing with a major?

KARL I've always done my very best to discourage everybody. So, basically not tomorrow but maybe someday.

TOM I think it's clear that in the very short run that it wouldn't be a good idea. You have to have a base to build on when you sign to a major label.

TOM Say if you get 200 people at Maxwells (in Hoboken NJ).

KARL Yeah, at least. You have to prove that you can do it on your own before. There were bands that signed to major labels pretty much at the time at which it first seemed like we could do it. And they don't seem better off than we are, at least touring wise.

FOE Time for some personal stuff, are any of you married?

JOHN Everybody except Tim.

TIM I am currently single.

TOM Yeah, and he was working on that tonight.

TIM Could we not talk about that.

KARL I am not married, but my girlfriend is going to have a baby in April.

TOM I have a very serious live in relationship.

FOE What are your near future plans?

KARL My plans for next year are to do some light touring in late February and early March, then maybe some more light touring in early summer. Then maybe re-release our 10" in the fall or something...

FOE What's your favorite movie?

KARL My favorite Woody Allen movies are Stardust Memories and Husbands and Wives.

FOE These next few questions were suggested to me by John, so if they're kind of out there...

What was your favorite show you played on tour?

KARL My favorite show was in Pittsburgh. At this coffee shop called Luciano's, which is actually an all ages place but they also have a downstairs bar, it's kind of the best of both. I thought we played good tonight too.

FOE Are there different spaces for large cars verses compact cars at the Carnegie Museum?

TOM Indeed there are! I'm very familiar with the parking lot at the Carnegie, because four times a week when I'm in Pittsburgh I patrol the garage and make sure there's no mayhem or mishaps. No one has ever explained to me what a compact car is. But it doesn't really matter, I just let anyone park where ever the hell they want.

FOE What is the largest audience you have ever played in front of?

KARL Probably at Lollapalooza, in Pittsburgh, for about 2,500 people.

FOE Tell us about your brief but prolific street hockey career. Weren't you the Gretzky of your block?

KARL Here's the painful story. Well, it's not entirely painful. When I was in seventh grade, a bunch of kids who I went to school with in Port Vue organized a street hockey team called the Port Vue Scorpions. I didn't know that much about hockey at the time, but my friends got me to buy a stick. So anyway, we were making Jersey's for the team at some sports shop and they suggested that I be #99, not knowing that was Wayne Gretzky's number. After we got the Jerseys, I soon realized that they suggested I be #99 only so they could mock me.

FOE Do you plan on doing any videos with a 70s TV show as the theme?

KARL Only if it is C.H.I.P.S.

TOM No, only if it is MASH.

KARL We're gonna have a computer generated swamp in which Tim and I are going to hang out in computer generated bathrobes.

TIM With a computer generated gin mill.

KARL We'd have very dry martinis.

FOE Any closing comments?

KARL My advice to young rockers is: Don't play rock n roll for money, girls or hipness, play it because you have to.

