

effort on the band's part? The reason I ask is because more and more you're seeing bands and artists sell their tracks individually as well as one complete CD.

Our publicist advised us to stop selling our music through Snowcap (the company that links music sales to bands' MySpace sites) but we're still selling strong through iTunes and other companies. Fans can still buy individual tracks, though I always think its best to get the whole album so that you can get the whole feel of what we're doing.

Recently you teamed up with clothing designer Tina Richard for a custom line of clothes. How has it been working with her?

It's been great! Tina's very innovative and has brought a lot of unique, creative merchandise pieces to our lineup. She's also designed some personal stage wear for Aron and Jen Cho. We're all looking forward to what she comes up with next!

Almost immediately the band started getting a lot of attention, playing a lot of shows, and also finding a niche in anime conventions. What do you credit that success too?

I think it's a combination of things...there aren't many synth-pop bands out there right now, certainly not many that are inherently Asian, so I think that's been getting us some attention. The Asian community has been especially supportive, writing about our band and encouraging us to continue what we do. We also have an amazing publicist helping us get press, as well as a very enthusiastic fan base willing to share our music with others.

I was reading on your blog about a write-up you got in Music Spectator magazine which said (sic) "The Slants are a self parody, a tongue-in-cheek mocking finger pointing at themselves. This is an American band using their ethnicity as fodder for their own brand of humor, which carries over to their marketing and even their sound to a degree". When I think of a "self parody" I think The Notorious MSG, not really The Slants. What do you think of the description, and then how do you think fans see you?

I don't really see ourselves as a self parody, but we do take on Asian stereotypes with a certain sense of humor. We don't wear wigs of awkward "Asian" hairstyles and we certainly don't speak with fake Asian accents or anything. However, we do incorporate a lot Asian themes in our merchandise, image, and songs. It isn't necessarily aimed to be humorous, most of the time its because its something we enjoy (such as Asian artwork, cinematic themes, or food). I think our fans understand that we maintain this theme because of we're proud of who we are (just look at the name of our band). They understand that we do have a certain sense of humor, but we're certainly not mocking ourselves nor the cultures that we stand for.

Right now you're doing a lot of touring and promoting the album which also just got re-mastered. How long do you plan on promoting this album before starting on your second album? Is there a timetable for a release?

We've already started writing songs for the next album, which should be released in early 2009. In the meantime, we'll probably continue touring and promoting Slanted Eyes, Slanted Hearts into late fall. It will always be our debut album so I'm sure it will always have a special place in our hearts.

So I gotta ask - what's up with Gaijin only getting to show his belt buckle and having to wear shades? Is there no love for the white guys?

It's his personal preference; maybe he's a bit camera shy. We don't force him to wear a mask on stage or anything :)

I had talked with April Baer about a NPR story she was looking to do on The Slants and one of the things I had mentioned was that while I think in the world of hip hop and spoken word there's more talk about race and racism and ethnicity - there's an awareness there - in the genre of techno/synth/dance there isn't that awareness out there, and that's where I think The Slants are different - you bring that awareness about race and ethnicity and being Asian American to a genre that hasn't typically had that. While I know it's about the music, it's also about the message too and I was wondering about the reaction so far from your fans about that message and being Asian American.

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