

FOUNDATIONS FORUM '89

METAL MOGULS CONVENE

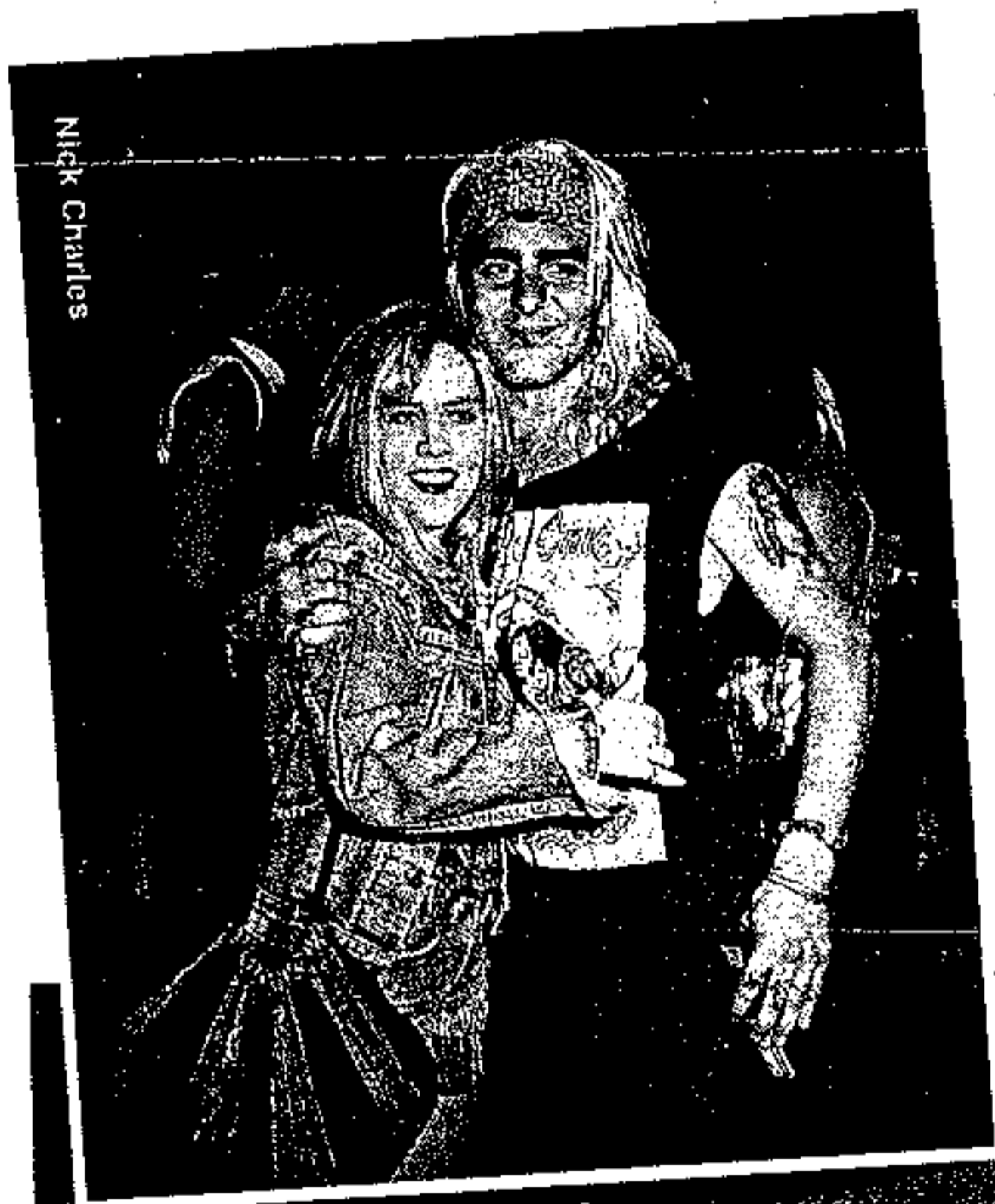
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Generously presenting enough concerts and festivities to satisfy even the most savage of party animals, this year's Foundations Forum convention combined pure, unadulterated fun with an ideal balance of "street" issues and nuts-and-bolts business concerns. Held at the Sheraton Universal Hotel in Universal City, California, Foundations Forum '89 focused on nurturing artists and the tremendous growth the metal market continues to enjoy. Attracting pros from all branches of the industry, the convention also brought out people with career aspirations in the field and bands of unsigned, up-and-coming and established artists. Musicians made up approximately one quarter of the over 2,500 in attendance. For those who took advantage of the 22 panels jam-packed with information on absolutely every phase of the business, the convention was "the college of metal knowledge." For those who came to hang out, schmooze, network, be inspired or be entertained, it was a metalhead's paradise.



The outrageous, outspoken outlaw of rock, Gene Simmons of Kiss, gave the keynote address. Although Gene opened with, "I have no idea what I'm gonna be talking about," he was his typical irrepressible self. He noted that this was the "only convention in the world where you can say f!k, shit and bullshit," and after knocking over his water more than once, Gene made the comment, "Wherever I go, moisture follows!" But his wit was liberally laced with wisdom, as he discussed the realities of the artist in the business: How (and how fast) the money goes, how "you gotta be nice

by **Laurel Fishman**



and talk to people and meet people you don't wanna meet," how "the hours really suck," how there are so many bands out that have "a great haircut, big balls, a big dick and play guitar real fast," but we're all in it together. "Everyone deserves a shot," he said. "Everyone deserves kindness."

If there was one theme throughout his address, it was brotherhood. "To all those people on the outside, it's the same crap, whether it be Poison or Metallica," said Gene, "so we all have to stick together." Gene admitted it's "tough as nails for girls to do it," and his advice to women was to "stop mimicking men and grow their own balls." He said, "After all is said and done, it's the time you put in. Learn to play. Have passion."

Gearing his remarks to the dozens of bands who inundated him with demo tapes during his speech, Gene observed, "The vast majority of people in America are working their asses off and barely paying their rent. Most people are scared to gamble. Later, when you're 70, with long hair and no teeth in a wheelchair, you can at least say, 'I gave it a shot.' I believe in new bands. The future's always gonna belong to new bands. A band is like an army," Gene concluded. "Fight the good fight!"

As popular as Gene's keynote address, the Artists Panel drew some 1,000 people. In introducing the panel, Foundations Executive Director Walter O'Brien jested, "We're all tired of hearing it's all Ozzy's fault for everything that goes wrong. . . . We all know it's King Diamond's fault!" In filed King, followed by Robert Sweet of Stryper, Robin McAuley of MSG, Steve Jones, Lita Ford, Vicki Peterson of the Bangles, Scott Ian of Anthrax, Taimie Downe of Faster Pussycat and Anthony Kiedes of the Red Hot Chili Peppers. As the artists took their places around moderator Lonny Friend, Anthony jumped up on the table and mooned the audience in true Peppers' style, and Robert made devil horns with his fingers above King's head. Aside from the hearty laughs Robert received when he was asked, "What are Satan and Jesus like as people?" and he answered, "Satan pitches; Jesus catches," Lita and Anthony stole the show.

Lita asked Anthony, "Did you show everybody your butt when you first came up here? That's disgusting." Anthony invited Lita to join him in a repeat performance, but Lita said, "You gotta ask Chris Holmes first." Anthony didn't. . . ask Chris or moon everyone again, that is.

Chris entered the act, standing on his chair in the crowd to ask, "Don't you get tired of assholes at the PMRC telling you what you can sing about and what you can't?"

Anthony recommended not paying attention to them and thereby giving them power.

Foundations Forum '89 had enough exciting moments to electrify the entire metal microcosm—at least until next year's meeting of the metal minds. . . and maniacs. †

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