

Message From The Directors

To those of you who were a part of Forum '88 and Forum '89, welcome back. To those of you who are just joining us, you've come aboard at an interesting time. It is, in a sense, the best of times and the worst of times.

The music? The music is better than ever. And, it might be argued, more successful than ever: hard rock and heavy metal count for increasingly substantial shares of chart and sales activity.

The climate? Well, the climate is weird. There are those who would dictate the form in which an artist's work can reach the public. There are those who would bring artists to trial on the bizarre premise that their work may contain imperceptible messages.

The theme of Foundations Forum '88 was the credibility and respectability of our music within the industry. Forum '89 focused on the importance and development of new artists. While there will be emphasis on both of these topics at Forum '90, this year we're also offering panel discussions in some areas which have become increasingly important issues: censorship, stickering and sexism and racism in metal, for example. If this year's convention has a theme, it is a combination of all of the above. If this theme had to be summed up in a word, that word would be 'responsibility'. Responsibility on the part of the industry to nurture new talent, the responsibility of the metal community to cultivate our increasing credibility within the industry, and the responsibility of us all to react to charges that our music is potentially or intrinsically dangerous with something other than mere hostility. The origins of the current climate are wide-ranging and complex. They demand a considered response, one born of a genuine attempt at understanding.

Each of us attending Foundations Forum '90 is, in a very real sense, a diplomat for heavy metal. The world will be watching what we say and do over the next few days. And in this case, 'the world will be watching' isn't just an expression. There will be major news coverage of the Forum as well as broadcasts directly from the convention by MTV, KNAC, Z-Rock, Westwood One and others.

You should also be aware that if you've come to the convention only to see one or two major acts perform, you're here for the wrong reason and may be disappointed. None of the bands showcasing are being paid nor are they contractually obligated to perform. The performance line-up could, therefore, change at any moment. Also, space limitations will prevent all of us from being in the actual room of the performances... but everyone will be able to see everything on the big screen closed-circuit video monitors throughout the convention area.

And... having said all of that... there's only one thing more: have a ball! There are panel discussions and workshops going on all day long. There'll be 18 unsigned bands playing up on the third level all day every day-- and 18 signed acts playing at night. The third level is also full of exhibit rooms; way cool equipment, products and services. Check out the art show and the silent auction-- and look for announcements of special events.

Again, thanks for being here.

Bob Chiappardi
Patti Tateo
Roberta Whiting
Kevin Keenan

