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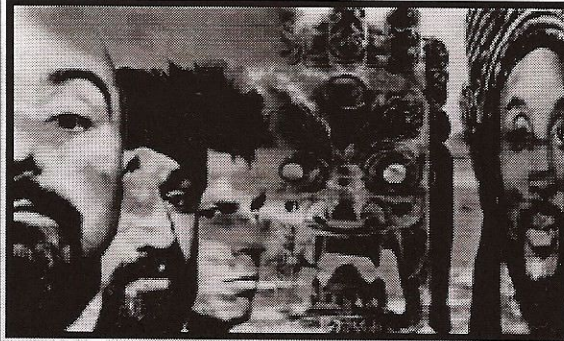
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PAGE:
12

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INTERVIEW

The London-based band TransGlobal Underground recently visited Grinnell's campus for a high energy performance in the Harris

Center. Before they played, Colin Guthrie got a chance to chat with core member and drummer Hammond Man2 about TransGlobal's impressions of the States, their new album and their unique sound.

CG: So is this your first time in Iowa?

HM: Yeah. This is our first trip to Iowa.

CG: What do you guys think of the Midwest?

HM: It's flat. But it's a nice town, though. Is this whole town geared towards the college?

CG: Yeah, it's basically the only thing here.

HM: Well, this is our first experience coming anywhere in the Midwest.

CG: Could you talk a little about who or what you would consider your influences?

HM: We've always had a love, over the last twenty years or so, for other forms of music, whether it be soul, jazz, blues, or whatever. And then the whole world music thing. It's a big world out there and there are lots of different types of music from all over the world that we just became interested in. And it was a natural thing to want to try to incorporate that in to the type of music that we wanted to make. I think we have a great love for Arabic music, possibly because of Natasha and her roots. She sings in Arabic and she has her own solo deal with a record company (which is under her name Natasha Atlas). TransGlobal will record with her as well, we produce her, but the music is really focused on the Arabic side of things. We've learned a hell of a lot from her. It gets confusing because TransGlobal Underground features Natasha Atlas (she's always been a full time member of our group), she has her own solo deal with somebody else. Two members of TransGlobal produce and play live with her and they're playing a completely different type of music. TransGlobal is more focused on anything: rap and hip-hop and techno and all those different styles of music. But Natasha she is more focused on the Egyptian Arabic side of things.

CG: What was your worst or best gig?

HM: We played in Bosnia recently and we couldn't hear anything on stage. It was really poorly put together, the stage management and all. But it was such a brilliant vibe because it was Bosnia; it was a bridge concert [in memorium of a bridge blown up by the Croats]. It was a concert partly for that [the bridge] and partly to generate some interest of artists coming back into to Bosnia to play. It's a fairly strong mixture of different cultures [there]. We're privileged to get asked to play in interesting places, since you pick up influences wherever you go. It was a great gig from one point of view, but from another the sound was not right for us. When you're touring, you do those certain gigs and you can't expect them to be absolutely brilliant every time. Even though we've been playing for small audiences over here, they have been really really receptive. I'm trying to think about a really bad gig but it's hard because I probably put it out of my mind. But you've got to have the rough with the smooth really.

CG: With your new album, how has your sound changed and what are you doing differently?

HM: The first album we did was just the core three of us. The last album was out two years ago, so we had to come back. This album still sounds like TransGlobal but it's a bit more