

By CHRISTOPHER P. AUMAN

Geographically, God And Texas is an Illinois-based band that was formed in Ohio by a couple of guys from New Jersey. Musically, God And Texas comes straight from the gut: no excursions, no excuses. With the classic punk-rock union of heavy bass, hard drums, and mean, angry guitar (and the recent addition of a saxophone player), God And Texas create a sound befitting of the name.

While Texans may find the band's name redundant, unable to distinguish between the two entities, it can be as equally difficult to distinguish between the sound of God And Texas and the men who create it. Both are big and mean-looking and not beyond confrontation. Their objective, it would seem, is to pound you musically in some capacity — and they have a good time doing it.

Singer/guitarist John Humphrey and drummer Mick Brennan have been the nucleus of God And Texas since its inception six years ago in the college town of Athens, Ohio. Two bass players have come and gone prior to Matt Fields joining the group in '92, and the recent addition of longtime friend and touring buddy Steve Golub to the one-man horn section has made God And Texas a four-piece driving force.

Migrating to Chicago was a well-planned move. Though some transplanted musicians, used to a more supportive local fan base, find this town downright

discouraging, God And Texas had the necessary tools to build their own following. "If you don't know what you're doing," according to Humphrey, "this is not a good place to start a rock band."

God And Texas slid into town just prior to the spotlight's new focus on the Midwest, with no pretenses of Chicago becoming a musical mecca. "In Seattle," says Humphrey, "everybody has this real

For The Love Of



(l to r) Steven Golub, Mick Brennan, John Humphrey, and Matt Fields

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work ethic where they're all unified and they all want to do shit together and all be friends. In Chicago, you have so much cultural diversity going on, if you want that support you have to create it yourself."

"These bands that made a name for

themselves [here] have done it completely on their own terms and with their own sound," Brennan adds. "Smashing Pumpkins did not beget Urge Overkill."

Double Shot, the band's fourth full length release (and second for Restless), was recorded at the now-legendary Idlul Studios with the now-legendary Brad Wood and Casey Rice behind the knobs. Packaged in a style reminiscent of a '60s jazz record, *Double Shot* is a stripped-

down, no-bullshit affair. From the determined stomp of "Code Name: Sole Albino" to the debasing sounds of "Goodbye Black Sheep," *Double Shot* is bass-heavy and propulsive. What it didn't get enough of, however, is good promotion, and the band was unable to tour to support it. "Bottom line is that neither our label or our booking agency can get us what we need financially to be able to go on a nationwide tour for a month and a half and not have our lives ruined."

complains Humphrey.

Having your life ruined is just one part of the music business, a reality that God And Texas have accepted. As a result of the commercialization of alternative music, you can pay your dues on the road, or on MTV.

Doing it on the road, however, leaves more scars, like the one on Humphrey's forehead from a show in Lincoln, NE with a band called The Melcees. After Humphrey tried to discourage one of the Melcees from throwing explosives on stage during God And Texas' set, another Melce broke a beer bottle over Humphrey's head, causing an injury that required eight stitches and \$400.

"The idea that there's some sort of feud between us and them is kind of a joke," explains Humphrey. "There's no feud. It's a vendetta that we have against them and someday we're gonna cash it in."

God And Texas hate the Melcees to pieces.

The two bands are not likely to meet on the road again just yet, as God And Texas are on tour hiatus for the time being. Since they're still under contract with Restless for a couple more records, you can look for them to add to their discography and also play locally in the coming months. But don't get in their way and don't piss them off, because whatever road lies ahead of God And Texas, you probably don't want to get in their way.

GOD AND TEXAS