

Ivory Tower

The Official Newsletter of the Fates Warning Fan Club
P.O. Box 231190, Hartford, CT 06123-1190

Vol. II, No. 4

Latest News from Fates Warning

A Grand Tour

Fates Warning just wrapped up a U.S. tour with Savatage that was their most successful to date. As always seems to happen, things got off to a rough start on the organizational end, with major changes and reschedulings, but once they hit the stage, the results were unbelievable! The only tighter acts on the road today play Memorex, and night after night, Fates showed they could play as richly and as tightly live as on their albums.

The success of the shows actually caught the band by surprise. Not only did they pack some of the largest places that they have ever played, everyone knew their songs (ed. note: I know this for a fact; there was some guy behind me wailing the lyrics into my left ear through the whole show). All the years of hard work are finally paying off, and no one deserves it more than these guys.

Every stop provided chances to renew old acquaintances and meet new friends, and despite some tough shows and a couple of genuine scares, the guys have never come off of a tour happier than this one. Judging by the mail that started coming in after the very first show, and hasn't stopped yet, you seem to agree. We hope that on the next U.S. tour, Fates can cover some of the places they couldn't get to this time around.

News Notes

The word is that FW will begin their European tour June 6th. As soon as we get the details, we will pass them on to you.

Rock critics have taken notice of **Parallels**, with a great review in "Foundations" magazine and the album "Choice of the Month" in the "Guitar for the Practicing Musician" March issue. We certainly give it two thumbs up!

Be sure to check out our NEW merchandise on page 4.

New Release Action

"Eye to Eye," the second release from **Parallels** is out, and with it, a video that the band taped during a brief break at the start of its U.S. tour. If you have seen the video on MTV, you know that its look is a far cry from the old guy in the factory of two years ago!

We want to thank everyone for calling MTV's request line. With the new "Head-bangers' Ball" format, it is now very difficult for anything new to get air time, and its presence is a tribute to your efforts.

We've been hearing more Fates on the radio, too. For the first time, major AOR format stations have put a FW single into rotation. If your favorite station isn't playing "Eye to Eye" yet, contact the Program Director (not the deejay), and make your feelings known. You might get some "Blah-blah-blah" answer, but you might also remind him (or her) that a station that doesn't play what people want to hear loses either market shares or Program Directors. (Hmmm...)

The third single from **Parallels**, "We Only Say Goodbye" is scheduled for release April 20th. We hope to see that tune get loads of airplay. Warner Bros. has enlisted the aid of Jim Barton to produce a killer remix for radio airplay -- you'll have to hear it to believe it.

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To Our Members

For those of you who keep track, our tour predictions in the last edition of the *Ivory Tower* proved just how quickly things can change in this business. Our newsletter is changing, too. In this issue, we are beginning a new members-only drawing -- every current member will be eligible for this random drawing each issue of the newsletter. There is a new contest and new merchandise, too (At last!).

As if that weren't enough upheaval for our already half-crazed staff, why not go all the way and start a new and confusing way to give discounts to our members? Over the next several weeks, we will be issuing *Ivory Cards* to members by seniority. When you make purchases using your *Ivory Card* ID number, you will be issued bonus points that can be redeemed for merchandise. Check page 4 for details.

We are pleased to feature an extensive interview in this issue, Michael Moses, a reporter and staff member of the industry trade journal "Foundations", spoke with Jim and Frank shortly after the release of *Parallels*. We have never seen a more in-depth discussion of the band's aims and music, and we think it illustrates the respect that many industry insiders have for this band.

There's no denying that the theme for this political season is "...it's time to make a change," and that the outsiders are certainly giving the insiders a run for their money. We hope to see the same in the music industry. Fates has had a long struggle for recognition -- not from critics and fans, but from an industry dominated by fewer than five huge multi-media companies. This is the year of grass-roots action. It's about personal empowerment, and not letting some middle-aged executive decide what you're going to listen to. Get out there and make your voice heard -- help turn over the status quo. And think about doing the same in the voting booth.

Access: All Areas — Your Questions

- Q. R.C. from New York asks **Fates Warning** "...could I get a bio on each of you, please? Thanks a million!"
- A. Now how could we turn down a request like that? In the next issue of the newsletter, we will continue our "Spotlight On..." series of band member biographies. We covered Ray in an earlier issue of the newsletter, and reprints are always available to members.

A Winner

Congratulations go out to **Michael Timko**, of Costa Mesa, CA. As our first Members Drawing winner, he will be receiving a **Fates Warning Parallels** poster.

Correction

Oops! Thanks to a combination of haste and sloppy editing, the contest answers in the last issue of the newsletter named Fates' first video as "Silent Crises," when in fact, the correct name is "Silent Cries."

Albums Stuck on Pause

The terrible rumors are true: the recent demise of Enigma records has meant disaster for artists on that and subsidiary labels, including Metalblade records. According to our contact at the record company, the entire **Fates Warning** back catalog, including **Perfect Symmetry**, is caught in legal limbo while Enigma and various creditors have their day in court. Until a variety of legal issues have been resolved, even existing copies of the earlier recordings cannot be distributed through domestic channels.

While this does not affect the sale of **Parallels** (which is distributed by Warner Bros.), old albums already in stores, or import editions, if you can't find it now, you may be in for a long wait.

Metalblade has promised to keep us apprised of the situation, and as soon as they have some good news for us, we will pass it on to you. We hope to get our hands on some European imports, if enough of you express interest (remember, imports are significantly more expensive). In the mean time, our advice is simple: if you stumble across an old Fates album, snatch it up -- it's a collectors' item now.

The International Metal Line

Share your enthusiasm with other fans from across the country and around the world. These *IT* members have told us that they would like to receive letters from other *Fates* fans. Feel free to write, and if you want to join this network, just drop us a line so that we can include you, too.

Ethan M. Tompkins/ 52 Bancroft Avenue/ Milford, MA 01757
Duane Johnson/ 3050 West Ball #91/ Anaheim, CA 92804
Cheech Carriero/ 65 Glen Avenue/ Port Chester, NY 10573
Scott Carney/ 70 Corey Avenue/ Blue Point, NY 11715
John Belias/ Mykinon 17/ 17235 Athens/ Greece
Debbie Seeger/ 2925 South Stigler Road/ New Berlin, WI 53146
Pat Verebely/ 1643 Moffet Road/ Ceres, CA 95307
Henk van Delden/ Bavinckstr. 19/ 8266 CS Kampen/ The Netherlands
Troy Nesval/ P.O. Box 1095/ Chelan, WI 98816
John Utjsenovicz/ Route 1, Box 82/ Waynsville, MO 65583
Chris DeMarco/ 9405 Sherman Lane/ North Royalton, OH 44133
Milan Maltk/ Savatovskaz/ 90901 Skalica/ Czechoslovakia

Our Latest Contest

This contest requires a different type of skill. Lately we have received letters from fans who have requested that we send club information to their friends as well. This got us to thinking about a contest that we'll call "Tell 'Em Joe Sent Ya".

All you have to do is to get some of your friends involved with the fan club. When one of your friends joins the *Ivory Tower* or purchases some merchandise from us, make sure that they include your name on the contest side of the order form. The member whose name appears on the most membership/order forms will receive a tee-shirt autographed by all of the band members. You have to be a member before your friends can use your name on their order forms, and you will have to act fast; the deadline is July 25. Good luck!

Space Reserved for Contest Entries

Using Bonus Points

Ivory Tower members are issued one bonus point for each dollar they spend on club merchandise. The total number of bonus points you have accumulated is listed in the lower left corner of this order form, and you may redeem some or all of these points for merchandise. [For example: you have 15 points. You can redeem them all for an earring or for three picks, or maybe just two picks, saving 5 points for the future.] In order to get an item with bonus points, you must: 1) have an Ivory Card number (all current members will be receiving one), 2) make a regular purchase in the same order, and 3) write the item or items you will be purchasing with bonus points on the back of the order form. Bonus point purchases will be shipped with your regular order.

Fates Warning Merchandise

- #0002 Fates Warning Logo Bandana -- black bandana with a pattern featuring the new Logo (designed by Hugh Syme). Your price: \$6.50. Bonus point value: 30 points.
- #0003 Fates Warning Logo Cap -- black baseball style cap featuring the new Fates Warning Logo. One size (adjustable). Your price: \$8.00. Bonus point value: 35 points.
- #0004 Fates Warning "No Exit" Tee-shirt -- rare "transitional" logo featuring old style lettering on a new triangle on front, album cover on back. Very limited quantity. Sizes: S, M, L, XL. Include second choice for size when ordering, in case preferred choice is out of stock. Your price: \$15.00. Bonus point value: 60 points.
- #0005 Fates Warning "Perfect Symmetry" Tee-shirt -- gray with album graphics on front and back. Sizes: M, L, XL. Your price: \$15.00. Bonus point value: 60 points.
- #0006 NEW ITEM! Fates Warning "Parallels" Tour Tee-shirt -- album cover on front, "parallels 1992" on back. Sizes: M, L, XL. Your price: \$15.00. Bonus point value: 60 points.
- #0007 NEW ITEM! Fates Warning Signature Guitar Picks -- the same picks that the band uses, with the Fates Warning Logo on one side and Jim Matheos or Frank Aresti signature on the other side. When ordering, specify "Jim", "Frank", or "both". Your price: \$0.75 each. Bonus point value: 5 points each.
- #0008 NEW ITEM! Fates Warning Signature Pick Earrings -- a unique fashion statement and an excellent way to display your good taste in music. Wearable signature picks, sold individually -- you can mix or match. Hypo-allergenic gold French hook (pierced). When ordering, specify "Jim", "Frank", or "both". Your price: \$3.50 each. Bonus point value: 15 points each.

A Special Interview

The Musicians' Corner has gone on hiatus to make room for an interview with Jim and Frank, conducted by Mike Moses. It is reprinted from "Foundations", by kind permission of the author.

if one wanted to dig deep into **fates warning's** collective psyche, one could say that the reason that their past sound was somewhat 'entangled,' full of different parts and pieces, tangents and time changes, was the result of the five different personalities in the band, each totally different from the next, yet somehow synchronously blending towards a common goal.

(pause.) well, one could say that.

"oh yeah," muses **fates warning** guitarist jim matheos, "one could say that...it's totally untrue...but it does sound good."

oh well.

after spending the eighties relatively underground, submerged beneath the weight of five albums of lyrically brooding, excessively divergent progressive metal, **fates warning** have come up for AOR...uh, I mean air. their new album, **parallels**, is the first to be worked to AOR, the first to be distributed through warner bros., and the first to actually have hooks. produced by famed rush producer terry brown, this is the most melodic and focused album the band has ever made...but don't think it's a case of 'pop goes the warning' -- that's not the case here. the band recognized the need for movement. the need for change. like the philosopher named pert once said, "...rolling bones gather no dust..." I spoke to both guitarists matheos and aresti about **parallels'** parts and possibilities. (YOU may be confused as to why everything has been written in non-caps except I and YOU. it's a reference to the band's lyrics. read on. it'll come up sooner...or later.)

"...it's time to make a change..."
(leave the past behind)

obviously, the first thing on the agenda was to discuss the change in the band's sound. it's a more mature one, and a sure sign that...(sigh) our boys are growing up.

mm: do YOU think that there is a market for progressive metal, or is it a case of just not being marketed properly?

jm: to tell YOU the unfortunate, depressing truth, I don't think that there is a big market for it. but it

depends on what YOU call progressive metal. if YOU're talking about queensryche progressive metal, the obviously there is a market for it...

mm: well, they've changed their sound to one that's much more mainstream. I'm talking awaken the guardian, no exit, the spectre within.

jm: no, I don't think that there is a huge market for it. that may sound negative on us, but I think the time for that music is past. people don't really want to hear that long-winded experimental, instrumental stuff...which doesn't mean I'm slagging it, 'cause I love it, but I don't think that there's a huge market for it.

mm: parallels should open YOU guys up to a much broader market. it's much more melodic and much catchier than anything YOU've done to date.

jm: well, we brought all the long epics and songs with no structure as far as we could. when we were writing this album, I came up with riffs that were kind of post-perfect symmetry-sounding, but we all looked at each other and said, 'we've already done this before, why do it again?' it's pointless and just doesn't do anything for me. then we'd play something new, like "eye to eye," or "life in still water," which are a lot simpler in structure, and we really got off on it.

fa: it's definitely a matter of maturing. let me put it this way: whenever I've been into a band and they've put out a new album where they've changed a little, the first thing I've always said was, 'I can't believe they did this, how could they do this?' but one thing that I've noticed since we've done the same thing, that I didn't notice before, is that as musicians, as artists, we grow and our tastes change, which means our music is gonna change...because our perspectives have changed. when I listen to one album, I don't want to hear the same thing on the following album. I want to hear growth. that's what we've been doing. that's what the fans have to understand. as much as we might lose some older fans, we'll gain a lot more newer things, because we have a lot more things to offer. we've done all we needed to prove ourselves musician-wise. we decided that this time, we'd concentrate on writing great songs. they didn't have to be amazing technique-wise...just songs that people can sit down and listen to, close their eyes and forget about life for a while, without having to work to listen.

mm: I think the first and most noticeable change is ray. his vocal lines are a lot more even. there's some great mid-range stuff on there.

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jm: oh yeah. when we sat down to discuss what we were going to do for this album, one of the key points was to have the vocals a lot more focused, which meant less screaming and more set melody lines. it was definitely more of a challenge to do this album and maintain the **fates warning** sound. hopefully, that's what we've done.

fa: the bottom line is that people who weren't into us before might see something in us now that they can accept.

mm: YOU've come a long way from the color by numbers-looking cover of (first album) **night on broken**. who's the old guy that YOU've used on this one and the last one?

jm: (laughs) I don't know, I've never met him. his name is charlie and he seems to be making quite the hit in the metal market now. (laughs) he's gonna be a star. since we used him on **perfect symmetry**, we just thought it was kind of a cool idea to carry the theme over to this one, in which he's killed off, actually.

mm: hugh syme, along with terry brown is another part of the rush connection. do YOU tell him what YOU want for a cover — how does that work?

jm: I don't feel the need to point him in the right direction. he's such a great artist and has such a creative mind that, with hugh, we just gave him the title, explaining what the lyrics were about and let him go off for a week or two, giving him time to think.

mm: does he get to hear the music at all?

jm: not this time 'cause these things have to be done so far in advance and we didn't have anything on tape. I did send him a couple of rough drafts of lyrics, though.

mm: what's the cover supposed to symbolize?

jm: (laughs) well, these things always get a little convoluted when YOU write them down on paper. the whole thing is a little obtuse even for me to understand. what we wanted to get across was parallels being opposites, running in the same direction, but never crossing, and we thought the most emotional and impressive way to do that would be to use the parallels of life and death. so the young girl and old man is death passing into life. I can't take credit for it. it was all hugh's idea.

"...words of cunning. shining, stunning..."
("the arena")

one of **fates warning's** calling cards has also been the somewhat somber lyrics of **matheos**. never expect the superficial meaning to be what he's trying to say. there's always something rooted beneath, festering... on **parallels**, **matheos** makes reference to the music business, the fans, the band themselves, and the parallels between...

mm: the lyrics seem more...straightforward. at least as the surface meaning goes.

jm: absolutely. that was definitely a conscious decision. to make the words less cumbersome and weighty.

mm: but the concepts underneath are still pretty involved.

jm: right. there's one theme that runs through the album, basically trying to juxtapose the feelings the band members have for each other and for the audience. it can be similar and comparably to feelings that YOU have towards people in certain relationships... he said long windedly. (laughs) the relationship between the fan and the band can be very intense even if both sides don't know each other personally.

mm: in every single song except the first and the last, the word "YOU" is capitalized. who's the "YOU" YOU're referring to?

jm: a long time ago, the band decided we wanted our lyrics to be non-capitalized, just as an artistic thing, but we still capitalized "I," since it obviously referred to me in the first person. and since I'm talking to another person or a group of people, we figured that the people I'm talking to should be just as important as the first person, therefore YOU capitalize all of the "I's" and the "YOU's."

mm: the first four lines of the album are "...and here we are again, the door is closed behind us, and the long road lies ahead, where do we go from here..."

jm: right. the first four are me kind of sitting down and saying 'okay, it's time to write another album, what the hell are we going to do?'. for me, writing is a very frightening and emotional experience. I really get caught up in it.

mm: especially with this one since YOU wrote everything, music and lyrics, all by YOURself.

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jm: oh, absolutely. I'm always on edge about what people are gonna think about every little detail. it's very important to me to know what people think of it.

mm: in "eye to eye," YOU talk about the "miles that divide." are YOU talking about the detachment between band members or between players and their audience?

jm: this song specifically addresses the band speaking to its audience.

mm: so what is the "shared coldness" YOU talk about in the song?

jm: it's a reference to the emotional relationship between the band and fans. You can see it in some of the letters that we get, people are very intense about the band, very moved by the band. I can see it live when I see people really getting into it...and that can move me as well. it's a personal relationship on one level, but on another level, we don't even know them, and they don't know us. yet, they're privileged to a whole lot of my personal feelings, and we're privileged to a whole lot of their personal feelings, but there's a great distance between us and a great coldness because we don't know each other personally. I had met someone I was very influenced by recently, someone who I had grown up listening to over the years and someone whom I thought I had a lot in common with, but when I finally met that person, I found that there wasn't a whole lot in common between the two of us, other than the music that we shared over the years. through the music the relationship (between fan and band) is very strong, but there is nothing else the two sides can talk about.

mm: in "point of view" YOU talk about "...parallel lives running parallel with YOU..."

jm: we, the band, are parallel lines, running towards the same goal, but we never cross, we never quite see things the exact same way.

mm: how hard is it to keep everybody happy when YOU've got five different people with such different wants?

jm: oh man, it's crazy. I don't know if it's this way with every band, but in this band, everyone's got such diverse and opposing opinions... but it comes down to a democratic vote. luckily we have five guys in the band, so it works out well. that's what "point of view" is about. if the five of us are looking at a white wall, each person is gonna say they see something different... it's amazing. it's good, it keeps everyone on their toes.

mm: the line that really got to me in "life in still water" was "...YOU get tired of screaming when YOU're not reaching anyone...". are YOU talking about the band's past frustrations...

jm: that's definitely it. this is more of a band situation song or a music business thing, and how a lot of the business can stagnate YOUR creativity.

mm: do YOU find that type of situation getting worse as the band gets more successful?

jm: yeah, slowly as you become more successful, other people have more control over what YOU do.

mm: that's kind of ironic. YOU'd think it'd be the other way around.

jm: yeah, well maybe when you get to a certain point of success YOU can start calling the shots again. but right now we're in a position where, and I'm not saying it's bad, a position where people don't so much tell us what to do, but rather give us their strong opinions, let's put it that way. we've been lucky though that we've got a record company and now a management company that believes in our decisions.

mm: "we only say goodbye" is the most accessible cut on the album. on the surface it seems like a love song, but it's really about death.

jm: it's a song basically about separation, whether it's emotional or physical or both. when YOU've been together with someone, YOU don't focus on the things that need to be said, or that need to be done, until YOU're separated for good, or a temporary amount of time, and then YOU realize all of the things that YOU should have said, and then sometimes YOU realize that it's just too late. YOU should always let things be known, before it's too late.

mm: "don't follow me" is next. now from the title, I would say that, if this is directed to the fans, YOU're saying, 'don't look to me for some sort of answer, I'm just a songwriter.' am I close?

jm: YOU're very close. but more specifically rather than the fans, it has to do with what we're doing right now.

mm: shoot.

jm: interviews, basically. I have a hard time doing them, describing feelings, or the way I wrote songs in 60 second sound bytes or whatever. not so much this particular

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interview or most of the stateside interviews, but a lot of the european ones, which tend to get very personal. they want to know a lot of things that have nothing to do with music, or the music business, or the band. questions such as 'what is life,' or 'how do YOU describe love,' or 'what do you think of the situation in the middle east.' now, I have a very strong opinion on all of these things, but I don't feel an interview is the place to discuss these things for a couple of reasons. number one, I'm not an expert on any one of those things, they're just my personal opinions. number two, there are people out there who look up to the band, and I don't think that I have any right to influence them on those sorts of things. they can just hear what I say on one subject and kind of take that for the truth, and adopt that opinion for their own view without thinking it out in their own head first. I think that's dangerous. so don't follow me! (chuckles)

mm: the last three lines of the album are "...and here we are again, the doors close behind us, and the road goes on and on...". it's kind of like YOU're saying, 'well, even though I've been kind of bitching for the past 60 minutes, I'll be back next year. see ya.'

jm: exactly. it's kind of an apology for the rest of the songs. (laughs) that's basically it. this whole business, especially for a band on our level that's been doing it this long, is really hard, extremely hard. it's a day to day struggle and all of the rest of that bullshit. but the bottom line is that we're still here, I still enjoy it, and I still have the same drive and goals as when we first started. pardon the bitching.

"...year after year with renewed ambition, we scale the walls to find there's nothing there, still, idle hands clutch the empty page with the passion of a desperate prayer, sometimes I lose sight of where I'm going, fanned by a flame I can't remember, but distant lights still burn bright, and the road goes on forever..."

and fates warning keep to that road.

Fates Warning Discography

- 1984 Metal Massacre V "Soldier Boy" MB 1079
- 1984 Night on Brocken ST 71103
- 1985 The Spectre Within ST 72088
- 1986 Best of Metal Blade, Vol. I
"The Apparition" ST 72117
- 1986 Awaken the Guardian ST 73224
- 1986 River's Edge (Soundtrack) "Kyrie Eleison"
ST 73242
- 1987 Best of Metal Blade, Vol. II "Prelude to
Ruin" ST 73255
- 1988 Best of Metal Blade, Vol. III "Ivory
Tower" ST 73319
- 1988 No Exit ST 73330
- 1989 Perfect Symmetry ST 73408
- 1991 Parallels 9 26698-2

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One stop on the tour had special significance: New Haven, Connecticut. Other places have wonderful fans and warm greetings to offer, but for Jim, Joe and Frank, Connecticut means home, and all of their families were there to see them. Former **Fates Warning** vocalist and founding member, John Arch, payed a surprise visit, too.

Besides eating lots of home-made food, catching up on news and relating their various misadventures, Fates managed to pull off one of the best shows of the tour, combining intensity and fluidity, power and sophistication in an amazing performance. After so many changes, Fates has grown from five great musicians into one truly great band, and it showed on stage. To get everyone in the right mood, the crowd at the sold out show was also treated to the world premier of the "Eye to Eye" video before the band took to the stage.

Our thanks go to every *Ivory Tower* member who got to the shows and helped make this such a memorable tour. Your support has kept Fates going through six albums and thousands of miles, and we hope that "...the road goes on forever..."