





SEX MACHINE

**JONATHAN DAVIS
GETS HIS DREAM GIRL,
AND KORN TAKES OFF
IN A NEW DIRECTION.**

story DAN EPSTEIN photography CLAY PATRICK MCBRIDE

**The silver-skinned lady stands tall and slender,
her waist so tiny you can encircle it with your
hands.**



She arches her back seductively, tongue flickering from her mouth, but her armor-plated spine and bullet-like nipples present an intimidating contrast to her come-hither stance. Conventionally pretty she is not: The top half of her face is missing, replaced by two sensory coils that stretch from the bridge of her nose to the back of her eyeless head. Jutting from either side of her torso, where her arms should be, are studded sockets; her legs, shapely but clearly bio-mechanical, are entwined in serpentine fashion, curving downward into a single foot that appears to be the result of some ghastly experiment involving human and amphibian DNA.

A nightmare creature from an H.P. Lovecraft novel? An alien princess from a second-rate sci-fi thriller? Your prom date? Nope, it's a cyber-erotic sculpture designed for Korn frontman Jonathan Davis by legendary Swiss artist H.R. Giger, an eye-popping piece of functional art that also doubles as a microphone stand. Relaxing in his home studio on a gray Los Angeles afternoon, Davis proudly introduces *Revolver* to the new lady in his life.

"She's the finest bitch ever!" he exults, running his hand admiringly down her aluminum frame. "It's pretty fuckin' crazy, isn't it? I don't know what to call her yet; I still haven't given her a name."

Even in the exceptionally self-indulgent world of rock stardom, a custom-designed mic stand is something of a rarity. Custom guitars are about as common as tribal tattoos, yet vocalists rarely personalize the tools of their trade. But for Davis, a man who's never been shy about self-expression, his new Giger stand provides just another way to, well, stand out from the current pack of hard rock howlers.

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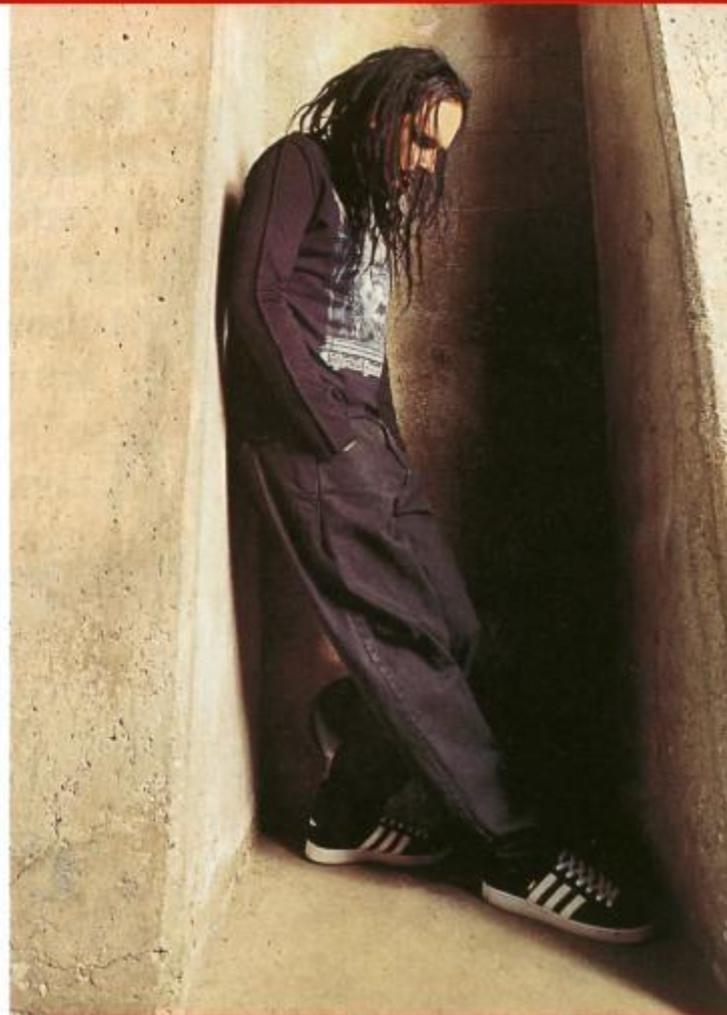
"When I'm onstage, I don't get to hold anything. My instrument's a mic, you know what I'm sayin'? The other guys in the band can fuck with their instruments and do all that shit, and I'm basically stuck with a mic stand and a mic, and whatever I'm wearing. Axl Rose had his steering-wheel mic stand, and Steven Tyler has his bandana mic stand. I just wanted to have something onstage with me that would be cool, that would be an extension of me and what I like."

An ardent fan of what your mother would call dark and twisted art, Davis first became familiar with H.R. Giger — best known (in this country, at least) for creating the disturbing monsters that populated such sci-fi flicks *as Alien* and *Species* — in 1998, when his sister's boyfriend showed him a book of the artist's surreal paintings and illustrations. "I was like, 'Oh shit!' " Davis remembers. "Then we went down to this place on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles called Morpheus, and I bought a couple of his erotic prints. I like his erotic work a lot, because I'm a big pervert!" He laughs wickedly. "My favorite is his blow-job — it's just a big airbrushed illustration of a pair of lips around a dick. It's fuckin' great!"

It was Jonathan Pavesi, Davis' assistant, who initially suggested that the singer approach Giger about designing a mic stand. Giger is no stranger to rock and roll, having created cover art for albums by Emerson, Lake & Palmer (*Brain Salad Surgery*), Debbie Harry (*KooKoo*), and Steve Stevens (*Steve Stevens' Atomic Playboys*). But as Davis realized while paying a visit to Giger's home in Switzerland, a sculpture-cum-microphone stand posed a much different sort of challenge to the artist.

"He originally designed the base so that I could throw her forward and she'd come back to me, like a Weeble kind of thing," says Davis. "But the base would've just been too heavy, and it would've been too easy for the thing to come back and knock me in the fuckin' head! And he originally had this huge part extending from the back of the head, which would have covered the whole microphone. But I couldn't use it; it had big points stickin' out, and I would have cut my head off if I'd run into it."

Though Giger's final design for the stand is undeniably trippy, it seems almost tame compared to the ideas originally hatched by the artist and his patron. "I wanted it to be more nasty," Davis admits. "I wanted it to be all these dicks and pussies, a massive big ball of sex. But Giger didn't want to do that. A lot of kids come to my shows, and he didn't want to get scrutinized for making something like that. So I just let him run



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with it. He came up with all kinds of crazy ideas, like a mic stand that would hang down like a vine, or a big old fuckin'snake thing that I could ride. But I really just wanted a more traditional mic stand, and this is what he eventually came up with. He only made five. I have the first two, and he's got the other three."

Even if the mic stand project hadn't worked out, Davis says, getting to kick it with Giger was more than worth the price of admission. "It was a trip!" he remembers. "Munky [Korn guitarist] went with me, and he was like, 'I gotta get out of here!' He couldn't take it," Davis snickers. "Giger's just a weird old guy, man, but I really dig him. He took me on this train that he designed from a nightmare he'd had. It goes all around his backyard, and you pass by all these fuckin' *Alien* faces, and then the thing drives up into his house. It's really a short ride, but it's fuckin' cool!"

"His girlfriend lives in the house next to his. To get into her room from his house, he has to go upstairs and crawl through this little hole that goes into her room. It's really creepy. I was like, 'Damn, I'd like to do that with my old lady!'"

Davis' interest in bizarre home improvement ideas these days is due in part to the fact that he recently moved into a sprawling compound in the foothills of L.A.'s

San Fernando Valley. The property used to be owned by Patrick "Dallas/Man From Atlantis" Duffy, but Davis plans to put his own distinctive stamp on the place. "I'm just building my own little fantasy world," he says, graciously taking *Revolver* on a tour of the grounds, which boast three houses, a gazebo, his home studio, and a fully-stocked koi pond. "I'm gonna put all these crazy-ass rocks on the outside walls, so it looks like a castle."

Though Davis has a reputation for seeming tense or distracted during interviews, he appears loose and relaxed, showing off his new digs with the giddy enthusiasm of a kid who got what he wanted for Christmas — and then some. Though many of the rooms are still empty, others are filled to bursting with Davis' "cool shit," his catch-all phrase for a collection that includes framed prints by Giger and Salvador Dali, antique prop molds from the early days of MGM Studios, videocassettes of Japanese avant-garde films, memorabilia from Clive Barker's *Hellraiser* and Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, and a 100-year-old shrunken head from the jungles of South America.

"I don't ever leave here," he says at the entrance to his "get freaky room," a glassed-in Jacuzzi cave with speakers on the wall and faux stalactites on the ceiling. "I just hole up in this place, and it's awesome! I don't have to deal with fuckin' people; I just work here, and I go down to Long

◉ Weebles wobble but they don't fall down.

Beach to work with the band."

Korn is currently preparing the as-yet-untitled follow-up to *Issues*, the band's multi-Platinum 1999 release, with producer Michael Beinhorn (Marilyn Manson, Soundgarden, Hole). Though the album is still in its nascent stages — delayed, in part, by drummer David Silvera's nagging hand problems — Davis predicts that it will represent as much of a change from *Issues* as that album was from 1997's *Follow the Leader*.

"All the shit we're working on is just fucking *psycho*," he enthuses. "It's like nothing we've ever done before." To some extent, the band's current burst of creativity is an outgrowth of Silvera's medical problems. "They found out what was wrong with David's hand," Davis explains. "It turns out he has an extra rib in his body, and it was pinching off nerves and blood vessels in his arm so he couldn't play. He's going in for surgery, so we're going to lose him for six weeks."

"So we're experimenting with different ways of writing together. We can't do the fucking album without him, so we've been pairing off. We're doing some heavy, ass-kicking southern rock shit; we're taking all these disco loops, all this stuff, and bastardizing it into something we do."

"I'm excited — I think it's going to be something special."

Davis believes Korn must keep evolving to survive. "If we don't open up another musical door, Korn has had its day," he says. "So many bands have come out and copied our shit, it's become not special anymore. So we've just gotta break through and do what we've always done, which is keep a step ahead. Us and the Deftones, we were the bands that started all this shit, but now you've got your Stains, your Disturbeds, your Godsmacks — you can't even keep up with all them." He laughs, then adds, "It pisses me off. I mean, we had to work so hard; nobody understands how hard we had to work to fucking get accepted, and now all these people can just kind of follow right through. Now radio stations will play it — 'Oh, this new heavy shit? Put it on!' — but people were originally scared as shit to play our records."

While he has yet to begin writing lyrics for the record — "I'm not even in that mode yet," he says — Davis promises that the new album "is definitely gonna be more pissed off than *Issues*, probably the most pissed off thing we've ever done. I've been through a lot of shit in the past few years — divorce, a lot of personal fucking shit that drives me crazy, stuff I shouldn't have to deal with. A lot of guilt about my son, all kinds of shit."

"When the time comes, I'll have plenty to write about. It's gonna be a heavy-fucking-angry record!"

Davis has also been spending much of his time composing the score for *Queen of the Damned*, the forthcoming Anne Rice vampire flick. "Scoring is my outlet," he explains. "It's either that or do solo albums, and I don't wanna fuckin' do solo albums; that would take away from the band. Fieldy's doing a solo album, but it's a hip-hop album — he's got a whole lot of different artists on it, and he's going to rap on it. That won't take away from Korn; that's just him doing his own thing. But

if I was to go out and do a solo album, I think it would kind of fuck with Korn."

Should Korn ever decide to pack it in, however, Davis says he would turn scoring films into a full-time gig. "I love orchestrating shit," he says, "and I could do it 'til I'm 80. But I'll always wanna rock, too. I could be an old man onstage, I don't fucking care." He laughs, imagining the scene. "My whole *audience* would be old, so what the fuck?"

For now, though, Davis can't wait to unveil his new mic stand onstage, and to see the kind of reaction his new "iron maiden" inspires.

"My bass player's like, 'You're gay! That's stupid. That's fucking *dumb*,' " he laughs. "He just likes to bust my balls, but everybody else who's seen it has been really taken aback. It's like, 'Whoa! I've never seen anything like that before!'"

"But I have to find shit to do that no one has done. It's hard, but it can be done. And yeah, there's plenty of stuff I can do that would just be stupid-ass. The trick is to do something cool." 🌸