

JULY 92

flash

charlie's angels

The young rebel with the killer blue eyes is fooling around on a piano at the Austin Rehearsal Complex in Texas. "I left home when I was 12," he says. "Moved to the city, got a job, went to school, and played in a band. How often do you see a 13-year-old kid having a nervous breakdown?"

Charlie Sexton began his musical career at the tender age of 11, and his partner in crime, Doyle Bramhall II, had a similar experience, being rocked to sleep at the clubs his dad jammed at during the '70s. Sexton and Bramhall cut their teeth on punk and the blues. "I'd go to punk shows to get aggression out," explains Sexton.

"I used to play these blues jams, with my head shaved on the sides," adds Bramhall. "I had a mohawk and a zoot suit."

These two 23-year-old guitar dudes make up half of the sweaty roots-rock band the Arc Angels. Completing the circle on bass and drums are, respectively, Tommy Shannon and Chris Layton, both of whom used to be in Stevie Ray Vaughan's *Double Trouble*. When the four crossed paths at this Austin, Texas, rehearsal space in summer 1990—the initials of which inspired the band's name—they decided to hook up and play a local club. The reception was hot, and soon the band's debut album—the recently released *Arc Angels*, produced by Little Steven—was in the making.

At a time when rock'n'roll is returning to basics, there's nothing better than watching the Arc Angels onstage in their home-base of Austin. With the band's stunning stage

presence, the clubs it plays often resemble the rowdy barroom scene from *Thelma & Louise*—in which Charlie Sexton actually appeared. Dancing, drinking, and delicious delirium.

LAUREN SPENCER



Austin's Arc Angels,
from left:
Charlie Sexton,
Chris Layton,
Tommy Shannon, and
Doyle Bramhall II.



▲ **Sister Double Happiness**

"People don't really know what to expect when they see us," says Gary Floyd, the charismatic singer and lyricist for Sister Double Happiness, "because the name doesn't give any indication of what kind of music we do. We have hard-rock blues songs and ballad-country acoustic songs."

"And that seems perfectly natural to us," adds drummer Lynn Perko.

Sister Double inflicts its powerful brand of rock'n'roll on happy crowds in the Bay Area with a lineup that includes guitarist Ben Cohen and recently added bassist Jeff Palmer. But since the band's birth in 1986, there have been some speed

bumps on the road to major label success.

"We put out an album on SST in 1988," says Gary. "Then I left the band for a year and went into a Hindu monastery. But I discovered I'm not a monk, I'm a rock'n'roll singer. Then we had to replace the bass player. Basically, it's just been some bad timing."

The band is being courted by Warner Bros. "With independent labels you have the freedom to do what you want," says Gary. "But if you're really serious about doing music, and you don't want to work at the pizza parlor on the side, you have to look toward a major label."

"So far, we all still have day jobs," offers Lynn.

LAUREN SPENCER

Masters of Reality ►

In 1988, soon after Masters of Reality's first self-titled release for Rick Rubin's Def American label, the Syracuse-based band split in half, leaving only singer/guitarist Chris Goss and bassist Googe to carry on.

Even though Masters of Reality's music drew favorable comparisons to rock supergroups such as AC/DC and Zeppelin, the disc made only slight inroads on the charts. It did, however, garner the band quite a few serious fans—most notably Delicious Vinyl's Matt Dike and Michael Ross, who in 1990 decided the album deserved another chance to be heard. Dike and Ross bought the master tapes and, along with Chris and Googe, added a couple of new tracks, then remastered and resequenced it. "We tried to make it flow more," says Chris, laughing, "the first three songs in particular, because by then we've really suckered you in."

Daniel Rey (formerly guitarist for Dick Manitoba and producer of Circus of Power and Raging Slab) was brought on board. "Matt asked me to come down to the studio," says Daniel. "I just went in and did it because, for me, the Masters album was the best thing I'd heard in years."

Then, Ginger Baker, the infamous drummer from Cream, arrived on the scene. "I met the band at a party and got on quite well with them," says Baker. "At first I thought it was going to be really loud and heavy metal. I was pleasantly surprised. I think we've already got a double album."

"I'd like to do this next record on the spur of the moment," says Chris, "because a lot of times the original takes of songs have a vibe that can't be replaced once you've rehearsed them 500 times. I don't see why a record should be any less in your face than a live show."

LAUREN SPENCER

