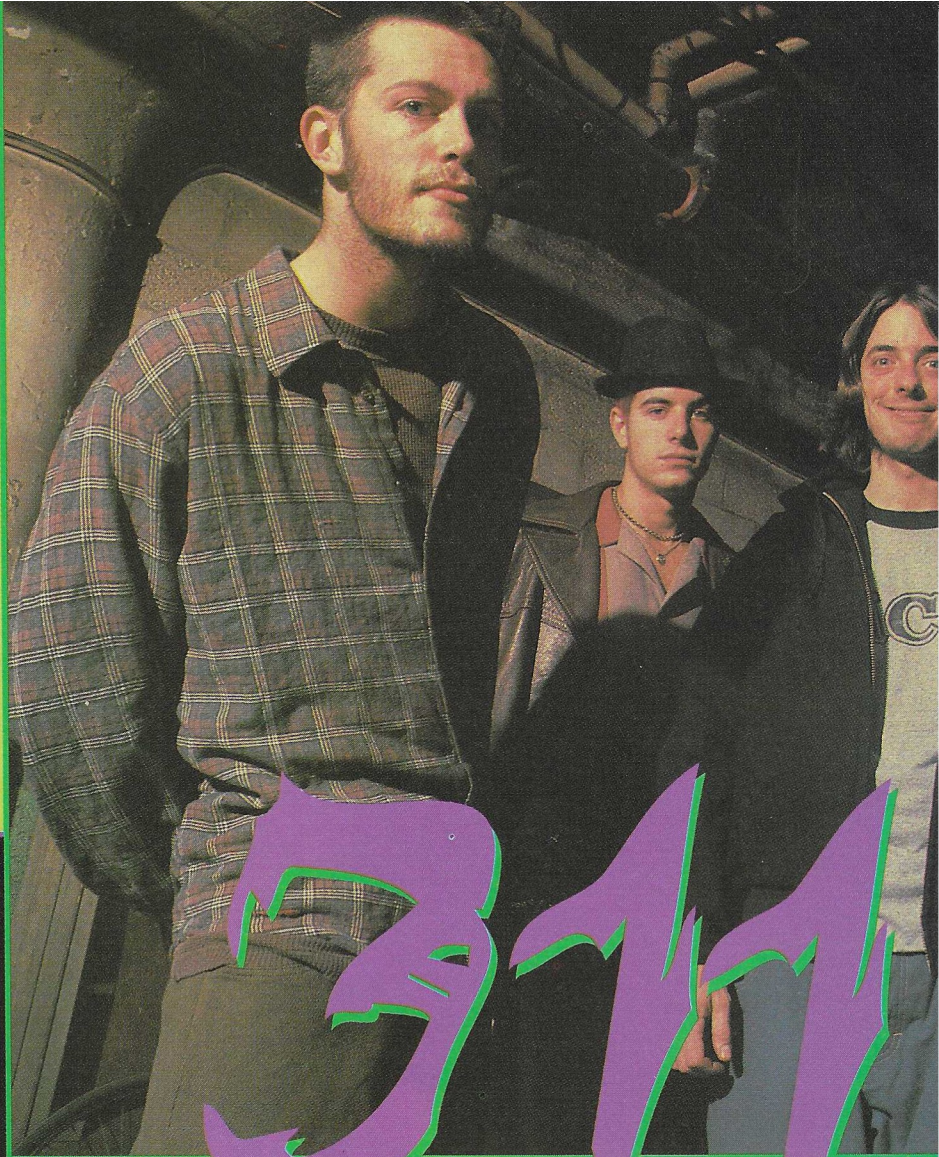


BY MAX HUNTER

The members of 311 are modest. The members of 311 are unassuming. The members of 311 are up-beat. Wait a minute...can it be that these decidedly positive, unequivocally down-to-earth musicians are actually big-time rock stars in the late '90s? Clearly in attitude and approach, vocalist/guitarist Nick Hexum, vocalist SA Martinez, guitarist Tim Mahoney, bassist P-Nut and drummer Chad Sexton seem a little out of touch with the prevailing down-'n-dirty sentiments that pervade this era's most prominent rock standards. But that doesn't bother these guys one bit. After all, 311 have been going a little against-the-grain, proudly doing things their way, ever since they began their rock and roll career all the way back in 1990.

But despite their defiantly non-conformist style, the 311 guys quickly admit that they're as surprised as anyone by their recent spate of run-away success. Who in their right mind could have honestly imagined that this admittedly off-center, proudly up-beat, and decidedly different quintet from that renowned rock "capitol" Omaha, Nebraska, would emerge as one of the most successful hard rock bands of



311 BEATMASTERS

the late '90s? Even the group members themselves shake their heads in amazement when a partial list of 311's recent accomplishments is presented; a self-titled 1995 disc that has now sold over three million copies internationally, a 1996 home video, *Enlarged To Show Detail*, which has emerged as one of the best-selling rock vids of the decade, and a year-long world tour that saw the band appear in front of over 500,000 fans from London to Los Angeles. And a 1997 release, **Transistor**, which further solidified this unit's position as one of the most entertaining and influential bands around.

Now with the appearance of their latest album, **311 Live**, these kings of rap-funk-

"We believe in the positive energy that music can produce."

PHOTO: EDDIE MALLUK



311: "The fans have been waiting for a live album from us."

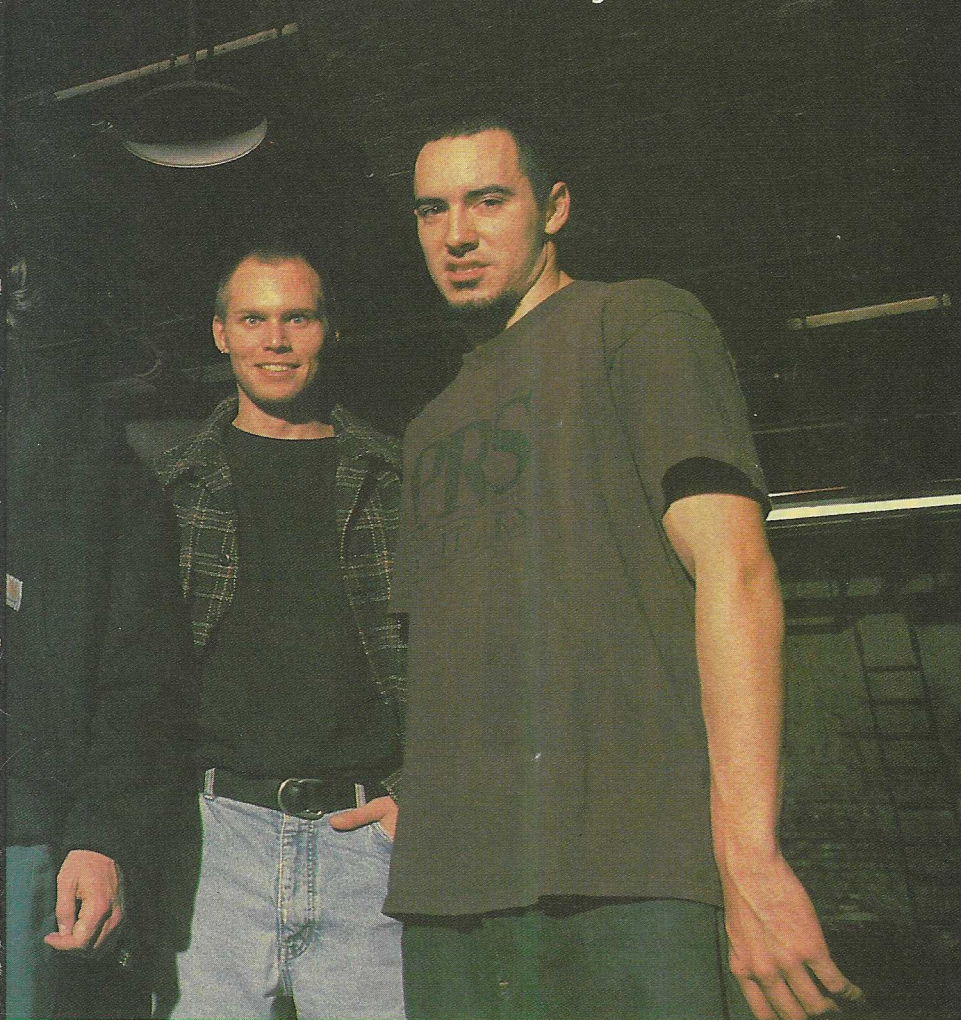


PHOTO: EDDIE MALLUK

things like that. Underneath everything that we superficially notice we're all the same, and we've got to accept that fact—no matter how hard it may seem to be. 311 has always had the same message of respecting other people, because in some ways those other people are you."

Certainly 311's positively up-beat lyrical message comes across like a breath of fresh air in the often stagnant and angst-filled late-'90s rock and roll world. At a time when the music scene is still under the all-consuming control of negativist musicians who seem intent on continually dumping the world's problems at their listeners' feet, along come 311 to help offer a remedy for that problem. But instead of coming across as some preachy, goody-two-shoes unit whose artistic blinders prevent them from confronting the harsh realities of life, 311 manage to look at those problems head-on while offering their own unique solutions to those delicate situations.

"From the moment we started this band way back in 1990, we believed that we had the power to make something good happen both for ourselves and for the people who listened to us," Sexton said. "It's been one of the principles that's motivated us ever since. I think we've worked really hard to try and make that happen. We've never seen the benefit of presenting a negative approach towards life. Who benefits from that? Nobody wants to hear your problems or be reminded of theirs. We're not trying to be escapists, but we honestly believe that there's so much good in the world that it's time to focus a little light on that."

Now with the release of **311 Live**, it seems

**"We want to be huge—
but on our own terms."**

metal fusion have set their sights on even bigger targets. While they're far too modest to ever come right out and admit it, these corn-fed Midwesterners are well aware that with a little luck—and the cooperative touch of often-feisty radio programmers and MTV video execs—by year's end they could well emerge as one of the most important and successful bands on the contemporary music scene. But despite all of their inherent modesty, don't for one second think that 311 aren't aware of their overwhelming commercial potential...and that they don't covet big-time success with every ounce of strength in their collective souls.

"Yeah, we want to be *huge*," Sexton said with a smile. "But we only want to be that big if we can do it on our own terms. We're not gonna sit down and write some crappy radio-friendly single just because we think it might be a hit. Our goal is to do everything the 311 way—which is to please our fans and ourselves. That's why we worked to make the live album something that the fans would really like. The fans have been waiting for a live album from us, especially since there have been so many bootlegs around, and we wanted to give them something really special."

True to their mercurial nature—and the

ever-high expectations of their fast-growing fan base—there's an amazing array of musical styles displayed throughout the material that comprises the **311 Live** disc. Each track—from the rapped-up rhythms of *Omaha Stylee* to the power groove of *Homebrew*—shows off another exciting side of this group's unique rock and roll personality. The funk-riddled riffs of *Freak Out* mix with the rock power of *Down* and the positive-vibe feel of *Beautiful Disaster* to give every listener a true indicator of both the breadth and scope of 311's musical attack. But somewhat amazingly, all this variety, and all these apparently conflicting rock styles blend into a seamless whole when placed in the hands of this talented fivesome.

"The album has a strong unifying theme, and that helps bring everything—all the different musical styles—together," Hexum said. "The concept behind the live album—as it is with all of our albums—is very positive. Our songs talk about brotherhood and having everyone get along. Sometimes we forget that we truly are all brothers. We all need to forget about color, religion and

as if this platinum-covered band will have ample opportunity to focus their positive musical light in all corners of Planet Earth. Already radio and the various video nets have jumped on the disc's good time vibe, helping to catapult it to the very top of the sales charts. And with their in-concert collection buying them a little extra time in terms of working on new music, 311 are promising everyone, everywhere that there will be even bigger things coming their way in the months and years ahead.

"We're looking forward to making the next album, and then getting back on the road," Sexton said. "We all still get along as well as we ever have in the eight years we've been together, and it's just a great experience to make new music and then hop on a bus and travel throughout the world with your best friends. We get to share so many incredible experiences together, and that makes everything even better! We hope that some of the excitement we've felt on the road—and some of the love that we feel towards our fans—comes across on this live album."