

Artists can always get what they want

Radical requests and diva demands give performers more than what they need

The lifestyles of the rich and famous can get pretty demanding. See just how picky your favorite musicians can be.



COURTESY OF VAN-HALEN.COM

No brown M&Ms! Van Halen started the trend of wacky demands in the 1980s.

Melts in your mouth, not in your hand

Van Halen started the trend. It began in the early '80s with the hard rock band's infamous article 126 in its contract, which called for a bowl of M&Ms with the brown ones removed.



COURTESY OF M-MS.COM

The band members created article 126 not because of personal taste but to test venues' scrutiny of the rider. A rider is a legal contract between the venue and the performer that defines such things as dressing room accommodations, equipment specifications and catering.

Van Halen was the first band to be publicized for using the rider to make personal demands, and the practice soon became standard. Now many celebrity musicians use riders to make equally absurd food demands. These and other riders of famous musicians are documented on thesmokinggun.com.

Part of a not-so-balanced breakfast

Food is too important to Queen Latifah for her to rely on the venue to meet her lofty stipulations. Instead, she travels with her own personal chef when on tour. But in the event that the venue must provide the meal, Queen Latifah makes one thing clear: No pork allowed. Her rider reads, "There is to be no pork in the food or vicinity of Queen Latifah."

Metallica probably wouldn't get along well with her majesty. The band wants bacon at every meal. The hard rockers' 2004 rider states, "Bacon: very important that bacon be available at every meal and during the day."

Vegetarian Shania Twain dislikes pork too, but her rider focuses more on juicing ingredients. Twain requests, among other fruits and vegetables, six lemons, 18 apples and 10 pounds of carrots.

Curiously, Twain enjoys both healthful foods and those that are less than nutritious. For dinner, it's angel hair pasta and desserts such as cake, one dozen homemade cookies and one dozen muffins. But every piece of food must be egg-free.

A good beer buzz early in the morning

Many musicians request alcoholic beverages, but Sheryl Crow goes to the extreme. In 2002 her rider included a drinking schedule. For each day of the week, Crow required a different liquor. Monday: Maker's Mark bourbon, Tuesday: Bombay gin and Schweppes tonic, Wednesday: Courvoisier brandy, Thursday: champagne, Friday: Silver tequila, margarita mix, and orange juice, and Saturday: Absolut vodka and orange juice. Sunday: Silver tequila, margarita mix and orange juice.



COURTESY OF MAKERSMARK.COM

On the other hand, Hank Williams Jr.



COURTESY OF A&M RECORDS

If a day-by-day alcohol schedule makes Sheryl Crow happy, it can't be that bad.

demands only one case of Budweiser. The beer must be in "cans only," and the cans must be put on stage. So much for water breaks.

Hanson also requests just one case of beer, but they want a mix of dark and pale ale. The brothers also ask for "one double-pack of colored (not clear) 16 oz. Solo cups."

Colored cups can conceal the contents, whereas clear cups cannot. This rider is from 2004; Zac Hanson was only 20 years old at the time, but he was old enough to plan ahead.

Choosy boy bands choose ...

The Backstreet Boys confirm their youthful status through their 24 peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches requirement. The boys must have skipped math class, however, because the demand doesn't add up. Twenty-four peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches divided by five Backstreet Boys equals one irate Boy with one less sandwich.

If bands continue to make these crazy demands, don't be surprised to hear a request for fresh-squeezed, nonpasteurized, not-from-a-carton orange juice. Wait, Def Leppard already requests this.

If it's outrageous, it's probably been done in the world of the pampered celebrity musician, a world in which anything you want is within your grasp.

— NISA KORTE



MIX TAPE

Songs that make you go "Mmmm!"

These tasty tunes will have you singing along as you run to the fridge or the drive-through.

1. "Strawberry Fields Forever" — The Beatles
2. "Cheeseburger in Paradise" — Jimmy Buffet
3. "I Want Candy" — Bow Wow Wow
4. "Peaches" — Presidents of the United States
5. "Ice Cream" — Sarah McLachlan
6. "Cherry Pie" — Warrant
7. "Sweet Potato Pie" — James Taylor
8. "Eggs and Sausage" — Tom Waits
9. "Hot Dogs and Hamburgers" — John Mellencamp
10. "Rock Lobster" — the B-52s

SOUND ADVICE

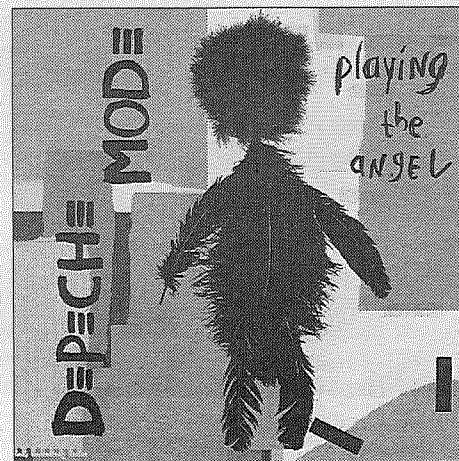
Playing the Angel — Depeche Mode

Playing the Angel, Depeche Mode's first album since 2001's *Exciter*, opens with an urgent, harsh siren, like one that might be heard in the moments leading up to a nuclear meltdown.

This sound, with melodic textures similar to those of industrial rockers Nine Inch Nails and Ministry, is consistent throughout *Playing the Angel*. It is the thirteenth LP from this English quartet since the band members began playing together more than 30 years ago.

Depeche Mode exploded out of the London club scene with the 1980s British invasion and became one of the quintessential electronic pop bands of the era. A dark tone with moody and intelligent lyrics quickly became the band's signature sound. *Angel* follows this same pattern.

Like 1990's *Violator*, a critical and commercial success, *Angel* tackles the issues of religion, life and how the two come together. In such songs as "John the Revelator," "The Sinner is Me" and "Precious" the band looks



COURTESY OF REPRISERECORDS

at how human beings and God interact. In "John the Revelator," the focus is on those who crusade in the name of God, such as fundamentalists and other extremists who are "stealing a god/From the Israelites/Stealing a god/From the Muslims too."

The subject matter is familiar territory. The band explored the theme on *Violator* and dived in headfirst for 1993's *Songs of Faith and Devotion*. The theme carries into *Angel*, with social norms and personal ideology being questioned. It seems Depeche Mode wants to tread in the same safe waters

the band has been swimming in for most of its career.

The album is worth a listen for Depeche Mode fans or anyone who likes new wave. For a contemporary audience, the rhythmic movements are sporadic and catchy, but the melody is stale like a three-week-old English muffin.

Like most Depeche Mode albums, *Playing the Angel* is a dark, textured and moody look at self-discovery. The formula works; however, it does nothing to excite old fans or entice and encourage new listeners to pick up the album.

For those who despise the highly mechanized sound of new wave, leave this one alone. Although the concepts are new, the sound might send those who hate '80s pop radio out a third-story window.

Repackaging *Violator* works if the listener wants *Violator*, but *Playing the Angel* fails to come across as anything more than secondhand, like borrowing the glow from a dying flame.

— ERIC DURBORAW

Burn a friend's copy



For an additional Sound Advice of *Up With the Sun* from local band The Follow, visit voxmagazine.com.