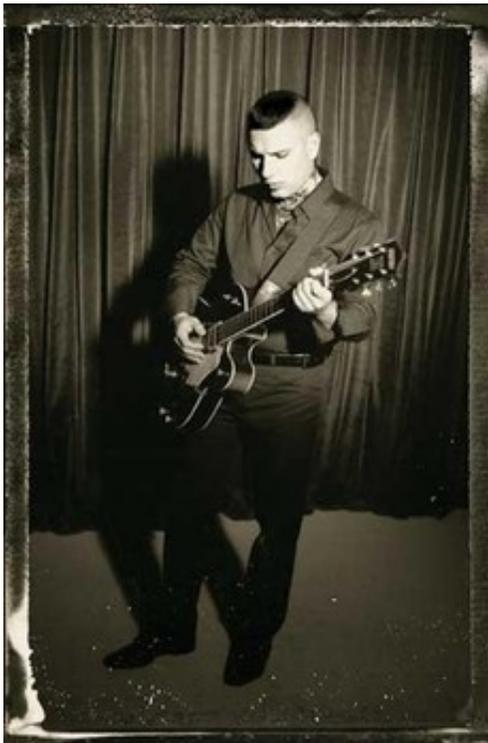


AXS ENTERTAINMENT / ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT / MUSIC

Eye of the tiger

September 29, 2011

9:27 PM MST



Nick 13

Samantha Rapp, Sugar Hill Records

In the alternative music world, **Nick 13** is best known for leading seminal **psychobilly** band, **Tiger Army**. **Tlger Army** has been bridging the gap between rockabilly and alternative music since 1995. After years of recording and touring, Nick is taking time for his solo project strictly playing **Americana** and Country music. His self titled solo album was released in June and he has been touring the US ever since. This Saturday, Nick 13 will be performing at Shank Hall on Milwaukee's East Side. Before his tour stop, I had the opportunity to speak with him about the tour, album, and wide fanbase he is reaching through both projects.

You're on tour now in support of your solo album which was released June 7th. The first show on the tour was a sell out in Phoenix. Describe your feelings on now doing a solo tour

and having immediate success.

That was definitely a great way to kick off the tour, but a lot of work went into trying to get this off the ground and there are a lot of places where we're still trying to get the word out. I've been very lucky to have the support of the Tiger Army fans, but not all of them have heard the record yet and of course I'm also trying to build a name in the Americana/Country world where most people have never heard of me or Tiger Army. It makes it exciting on the road – will it be a big show, a small one? Will people know the songs, or are they just there to check it out? A lot of the venues are pretty intimate.

I'm guessing at your shows you have a large cross section of fans ranging from country fans to die hard psychobilly fans. Do you feel this is helping those coming to your shows open up to new genres they may have never explored before?

Definitely. Country music gets a bad rap, people say they "like everything but Country", but they appreciate [Johnny Cash](#), [Hank Williams](#), [Merle Haggard](#). The problem is that those artists aren't what come to mind anymore when you use the words "country music" and there's something wrong with that picture. The Country music I love is mostly from the late 1920's through the 60s and there are a lot of artists in the Americana scene making great music today as well, it's just not as visible as it should be. I hear a lot of cool things from people, my record has connected people with their parents more in some cases and inspired others to check out the roots of Country more deeply.

Previously, you have opened for country legend Merle Haggard. Who would you want to work with in the future?

I'd like to sing a duet with someone like [Loretta Lynn](#), [Emmylou Harris](#), or [Connie Smith](#), they're the royalty of female vocalists when it comes to country music. I'd love to actually record something with Merle Haggard or [Marty Stuart](#).

It has been said that Paul from legendary psychobilly act [The Meteors](#) gave you the initial idea to do a solo act. What did he tell you and when?

I met him a couple of times years ago, but it wasn't from a conversation. He was the first musical artist to catch my attention who was the sole writer/driving creative force behind a band who did a solo album while the band still very much existed – I thought that was an intriguing idea: you have a band that's yours, you write everything, yet there are certain things that you feel don't quite fit in with what the band's sound, so you do a separate album outside your band. That idea stayed with me, and the enjoyment I got from writing and recording songs like "Outlaw Heart" and "In The Orchard" with Tiger Army along with my continuing exploration

of hillbilly music over the years made me want to pursue writing and performing it more and more.

Your record was released on [Sugar Hill](#). How did you hook up with the label for your release? I know Tiger Army is with [Epitaph Records](#).

We met with various labels in LA and Nashville while I was writing the album, but Sugar Hill actually approached me, they'd caught my live set at [Hootenanny](#) 2010. I wanted to either self-release or sign with a label that was releasing legitimate country music and I'm proud to be part of a lineup that includes Marty Stuart, [Jim Lauderdale](#), Merle Haggard and many, many other fine artists. Tiger Army completed our contract with the release of our last album and I'm excited about making the next album, but there's a good chance that the second solo album may come first. I've done some writing for the Tiger Army next album and we're celebrating our 15th anniversary this year, including our 4th annual [Octoberflame](#) festival in Orange County, CA but we'll focus on talking to labels when recording gets closer – I may start my own, we'll see.

I noticed the album charted at number 22 on the US Country Albums chart on [Billboard](#) which is a feat for not having extensive Country music radio air play. What do you hope to accomplish in the country music genre? Do you consider this project 'starting over' for you musically?

We didn't have ANY Country music airplay at the time the record was actually released. Since then, the Americana radio world has been supportive, there are a lot of specialty shows on community and college radio which are great. It was a big thrill to learn my song had been played on [WSM-AM](#) in Nashville, the famous station that broadcasts the [Grand Ole Opry](#). As for what I'm trying to accomplish, I'd like to build a name for myself as a singer and a songwriter, while promoting the tradition of real Country music. This album and live shows are about my love of roots music, there's no rock influence, no punk influence. I'm still using everything I learned up to this point, so I wouldn't say it's starting over, but it's definitely a new chapter.

I read that you took up temporary residence in Nashville when writing for the album. Obviously, Nashville is the epicenter for country music. Did living in the environment help in writing the record? Did living in Nashville give you more pressure?

It was a huge help in writing. I was looking for inspiration in Los Angeles and while there are many echoes of country's history, unfortunately there's not a great deal of good country music being played on a nightly basis, it's more something you mark your calendar for. Living in Nashville provided the opportunity to be inspired by live music every single day and night and

the songs started flowing. It felt very natural, no pressure. I'm going to be splitting my time between there and Los Angeles in the future.

Do you see this solo project as a long term musical outlet for yourself?

I do. I plan on doing both this and Tiger Army as long as I can. They're quite different, but they're both related, like two sides of the same coin. I find myself calling it a "project" as well, but it's not finite, there are no limits. I hope people will come to the show & check out the album – download the free "[Nick 13](#)" iPhone App or check out [Nick13.com](#) for more info.

Nick 13 will be performing at [Shank Hall](#) on Saturday, October 1st.

-AK

Recommended

Kate Middleton verbally 'attacked' by Camilla in a public speech

Top ten sexual fantasies for men

Credit Cards Now Offer 0% Intro APR Through 2017

CompareCards.com
Sponsored

Jennifer Lopez Shares A Portion Of Her Daily Diet

Vibe Sponsored

Joel Osteen's church theft opens can of worms: Jaws drop as folks do the math

Downhearted shelter dog no longer faces visitors passing by to adopt

\$400 Just For Using A New Credit Card? Yep.

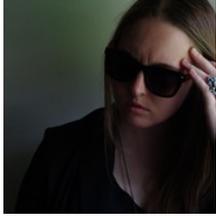
NextAdvisor.com
Sponsored

Popular Sleep Aid Takes CVS by Storm

Peak Life Sponsored

[Learn more](#)

Powered by [for you](#)



Arika Kaosa

Milwaukee Concerts Examiner

© 2006-2015 AXS Digital Group LLC d/b/a Examiner.com