

MIRROR

Melody Maker

Sound engineer finds rock 'n' roll better than the Finnish army

by CHRIS BARRY



Name: Claus Frostell

Occupation: Sound engineer and producer

Salary: Between zero and \$100 an hour

Bio: This enigmatic Finnish national and Outremont resident began his career in the music business as a guitarist but quickly “graduated” to the position of roadie for local sensations Me Mom & Morgentaler. Recognizing that the truly big bucks were in sound engineering, in 1993 Claus opted to spend a small fortune in tuition fees to attend the Ontario Institute of Audio Recording Technology and learn his modest trade. Returning to Montreal one year later, and getting his first big break working on Moist’s Creature album, this former anti-aircraft gunner in the Finnish military has since become one of the most sought-after engineers in town.

Do most of the people who pay a lot of money to go to school and learn sound engineering ever find jobs in the field? “Good God, no! For one thing there isn’t nearly enough work for all of the people who graduate from these courses. And it’s not exactly one of those fields where you graduate and somebody offers you a job. You have to really work hard on your own to make it happen.”

Is it safe to say that sound men usually walk away from a tour wealthier than the musicians? “Yes, I suppose—but it also depends on who you’re working for. Celine Dion brings home a lot more money than her sound engineer.”

Is it absolute torture to be a house engineer and be forced to record lame-ass know-it-all bands whose music you totally hate? “No, it’s not all that painful. You just have to do it and focus on other elements and not worry about how bad the song is. If you really want to know, the toughest thing is when people book the studio for a weekend and suddenly tell you that they want to record and mix an entire album by Monday.”

Does he ever get bogus bands coming into the studio who conveniently try to pretend that it’s all his fault as to why they sound so lame? “I suspect I probably do, but no-body ever tells you this stuff to your face.”

One act he is currently producing that really fries his burger: The Moonshine Orchestra.

Has Moist ever written a song for him? Yes, and it’s called Claus.

Is the song a sensitive testament to David Usher's undying love for him? No.

Does he ever fantasize about giving it all up to go back and live the good life in the Finnish armed forces? Not very often.

Is there a big demand for sound engineers in the Finnish armed forces? Claus suspects that there isn't.

Where he hangs out: Blizzarts, Nantha's.

Cologne: Chrome by Azzaro.

Last Book Read: In the Name of the Father, by Kjell Westo.

Musical preferences: The Clash, Cake, Toots and the Maytals.

Favorite film of all time: Ferris Bueller's Day Off.

Television preference: The Simpsons.

Words of Wisdom: "Have a good time, all the time."