

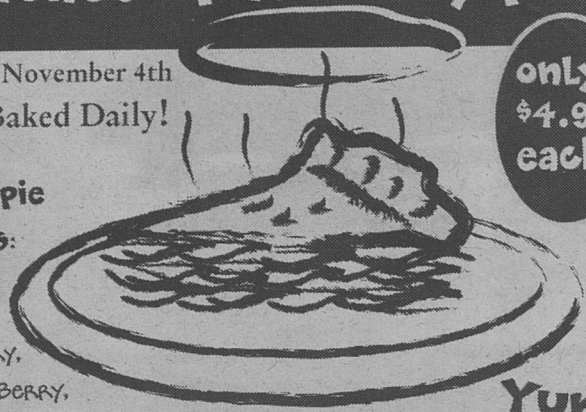
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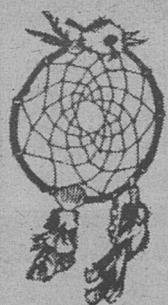
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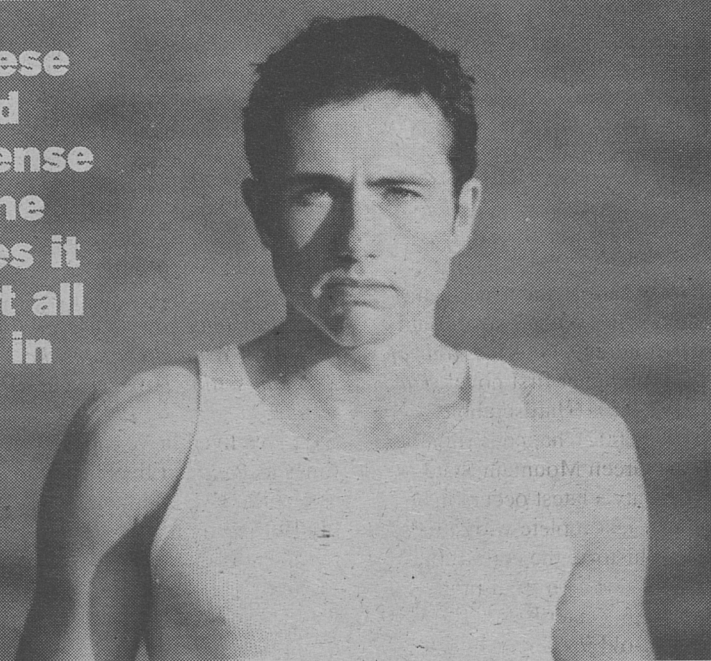
## MUSIC

# Complex Dark Joy: Sacha Sacket

Editor's Note: Out singer-songwriter Sacha Sacket recently discussed his new album and how he got there with OITM's Cynthia Potts.

**"You take all these experiences, and you try to condense that all it into one song. Sometimes it coalesces, and it all comes together in one night!"**

**- SACHA SACKET**



### Shadowed Sacha Sacket Self-released, 2004

As we're shivering through a chilly, dank New England fall, Sacha Sacket is enjoying sunny Los Angeles. He's been on tour to promote his recent album *Shadowed* and is blissfully in love. It'd be easy to envy him - if you didn't know the heartache he went through to get to this point.

"*Shadowed* is a dark, dark album," Sacket said in a recent interview, "I'd gone through a rough break up, and was dealing with some self-worth stuff. Writing this album, I tried to address what I kept doing in all these relationships, how I kept trying to 'fix' people."

The inspiration may have been painful, but *Shadowed* is a joy to listen to. Complex lyrics are laid over what could be termed experimental pop, with interesting song structures that keep listeners eager to hear what comes next.

"Each song has a language," Sacket explained. "I spend a lot of time with the lyrics. Maybe I have more trouble than most people," he laughed, "but I wind up writing the chorus fifteen, twenty times." A brief pause. "I get obsessed with that."

"You take all these experiences, and you try to condense

that all it into one song. Sometimes it coalesces, and it all comes together in one night. *Prodigal* (the first track on the album) was like that."

"*Desire*," the most challenging and arguably the best track on the album, wasn't so easy. "We were literally down to the last few days on that." Sacket had already recorded the myriad keyboard and synthesizer elements, but still had to integrate the vocal track. "It's almost spoken-word, in some parts." Weaving all the elements together was "a little nerve wracking" but resulted in a strong, complex tune.

The dramatic flavor of Sacket's work may have had something to do with his early years.

"I'm from LA, and you don't get out of here without trying to be an actor," he laughed. Sacket attended film school at the University of Southern California, forgoing the music program because "I didn't want to be doing opera." He chuckled. "I went to college because I was expected to go to college," Sacket added. "But when I turn thirty, I'd like to try to get back into film."

He might be too busy. His current tour has him crossing the country, playing to an enthusiastic club following. There's a message Sacket would like to share with his college-aged fans.

"Don't be ashamed," he said.

"That's still very relevant. Shame is still the biggest issue."

That being said, Sacket is quick to identify as a musician first, a gay musician second. "That's not without a sense of irony," he said. "I'm still learning, still understanding exactly what it is I'm doing. But there's no secret about it. I'm going to be myself. I'm a gay man just living my life."

"I'm still in the middle of the new album," Sacket replied, when asked about new projects. "It's totally different. I fell in love, and now I'm finally letting go of my walls."

Opening himself to love has resulted in a different body of work for the new album.

"Obviously I'm writing love songs," he laughed. "Jubilant love songs. Joyous love songs."

"I go where my spirit takes me," Sacket continued. "I'm not trying to put myself in a box, all dark and brooding, or all pop and happy."

Sacket released *Shadowed* independently. "I'm not against going with a label," he explained, "but I'm not going to sacrifice my music. I'm not a 'struggling artist' anymore. I can bring more to the table, when they want to talk." ▼

Cynthia Potts is a freelance writer who lives with her family and their menagerie in Ellenburg Center, New York.