

Skydiggers' singer sees bright future for independent bands

Source: Reflector (Mount Royal Collège)
By Aric Johnson

CALGARY (CUP) - While he sings in a band with a more traditional musical approach, Skydiggers' vocalist Andy Maize casts a perceptive eye toward the future of the music industry.

He has been involved in the industry long enough to see that changes are taking place.

"In many ways the CD has killed the album," said Maize over the phone from Toronto. While his statement may be a bit bold, Maize does not speak with any hint of sarcasm.

"I think that in a couple of years, with the downloading of stuff over the Internet, the idea of making albums won't be necessary anymore," said Maize. "What's going to happen, and particularly with MP3 players and CD burners becoming more affordable,

people are going to, and already are, creating their own compilations."

But, he adds, the music industry is not only being altered by the Internet and computer technology. Today, bands also have to deal with major labels that are expanding in size and power through mergers.

While the prospect of only two or three labels holding all the power may frighten some, Maize finds it interesting and exciting.

"Those major labels, all they're set up to do now is to sell a million records," he said.

"Anything less than that, they're not really equipped to do because everything moves so slowly they can only follow the trends—they can't create them."

"The great thing about [the mergers]

is that it is going to, I think, allow a whole new wave of independent acts to develop because there are lots of bands that can sell 20,000 or 25,000 copies of a record and make money doing it."

Maize believes the Internet will help some of these bands get their name out to the masses. The Skydiggers, who were once part of the garbled major-label world, are now happily independent and busy recording new material.

"I think its quite exciting because it allows us to move quicker, to take more risks and to make our own decisions. I think that with the Internet, the music going directly to your audience, I think you're cutting out the middle-man anyway."

"I can't predict, what the future is going to be, but I do think there is going to be lots of room for new artists and creative artists bubbling under that wall of multi-million sellers."

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