

EDDIE TRUNK



* For more information about Eddie Trunk and his shows go to www.eddietrunk.com and Eddie can be heard locally on Friday nights between 10pm-1am on 101.7 WHMH and in Fargo on 101.9 KKBX on Sunday nights from 10pm-1am.
** For the complete interview check out the RX Myspace page www.myspace.com/rxmagazine or on my page www.myspace.com/izzypresley.

by:Izzy Presley

Eddie Trunk has had a pretty amazing career and has a lot of fun while doing it. From his radio shows to being Ace Frehley's tour manager to being Vice President of Megaforce Records and even sang back ups on the Overkill song "Old School" on their 2005 release RELIXIV. Not to mention that his radio show is by far the best show on radio, bar none.

He was quintessential in breaking Metallica by being one of the very fist people in the country to play their record and while working for Megaforce signed bands like Ace Frehley and Kings X and it still boggles his mind to this day why Kings X never broke through.

Sit back and enjoy as I dive into the head of the only person I can think of with a greater metal mind than myself; the one and only Eddie Trunk.

Izzy Presley - Having your experience on both sides of the music industry, which way to you see it going and can it survive they way it is heading?

Eddie Trunk - Well I think it can survive, I mean people will always want to hear music, but I think there are a lot of other diversions in peoples worlds beyond music. For a lot of people it's just not as important as it once was because they have a lot of other things to take your attention away. There is a lot more competition than when someone would just look forward to getting in their car and listening to a CD or a cassette or whatever it was; an 8-track or whatever you had, or getting on a plane and listening to whatever now, it's completely different. Music doesn't have the same place that it once did for most people. It doesn't play the same role or take up the same amount of time but that being said I think that people are going to care about seeing their favorite bands or hearing their favorite songs by the bands, but as far as on the industry side of things, clearly there's a huge, huge problem I don't see getting any better. I think all the money is gonna be made from the live shows and merchandising and things like that and I think the music is just going to become a disposable promotional element to let people know that the bands are active and that they have something out there. You are seeing that with bands either giving their music away or saying "tell me how much you want to pay for this" like Radiohead did or Nine Inch Nails did recently and then you are seeing the other trend where these bands that are so established and are such big names are cutting out the record labels all together and selling directly to the stores like WALMART so it's a complete, complete change. I just think it's a complete change in the mentality of how this whole industries gonna work and I think that with the newer bands its get yourself on Youtube and Myspace and grow it virally through the internet and for the established bands with huge fan bases it's "let's sell direct on the web or through a big retailer and most importantly own our music, own the copyright." That's a HUGE part of it. That's where the big money is made and that's where the real control is; when you own it, you finance it, and you can manage it for a lifetime and that's really, really important.

That comes also from technology because in the past you would need a record label to finance your recording because it cost so much money and you needed to into a recording studio. Now you can make great sounding records in your bedroom on a computer and you don't need the budget. So it's all a big byproduct of that, it really is. It's just a whole trickle down effect of a lot of things and in the end spells a lot of trouble for the record industry.

Presley - I know you have a long, great relationship with Ace and have tons of stories about him. Got a good one to share with us?

Trunk - Oh man, there are so man, so many. I guess the one that comes to mind just immediately because there are so many. I am really proud of Ace because he has been clean and sober now for the better part of three years and for all the years I have known him I am most proud about that because there were some scary times and he has had his battles and he really is a changed person and has been consistent the past few years and he's sticking with it and I feel good for him about that. With that being said when Ace was in his days of drinking was a guy that was so much fun to drink with and party with because he would have the best stories and the best jokes and the best laughs and all that he would tell, but then there were other times when he would be so wasted that he would just fall apart on ya. I remember that around the time of the first or second solo album he did with us at Megaforce we had a limousine and we were going around to radio stations in the New York/New Jersey area to promote the record for him to do interviews and he had been going at it pretty hard all day drinkin and I don't know what else he was doing but he was not really all there. As the day progressed he was getting more and more out of it,

more and more tired, and more and more unable to function. The last station of the day was in New Jersey and was a station that I grew up working at and at the time I was still working at doing a radio show on the weekend. It was really important to me that he walked in there and really knocked it out of the park because it was the station that I worked at. So we pulled up that night in the car and as we're driving to the station he was snoring and he's completely out of it in the seat next to me and I was trying to shake him and revive him. I was like "dude you gotta wake up, you gotta do this" and he couldn't even speak and he was like (Eddie makes and incoherent slur) and just mumbling. I was going "listen, you gotta get in there, you gotta do this interview. I need you on this one, please. What can I do? What can I do?". We were in the parking lot of the radio station and I'm trying to revive him and walk in thinking that if he doesn't pull this off I could lose two jobs; I could lose my job at the record company because I didn't deliver the artist and I could lose my job at the radio station because I didn't deliver the artist. So in this stupor he mumbled out "fish sandwich". I'm like, "What? What are you talking about?". He goes, "McDonald's fish sandwich". I go, "Ace what are you talking about?" He goes, "get me to a drive through. Get me two fish sandwiches and I'll be fine". I had no idea what he was talking about so I told the driver to get us to the nearest McDonald's and go through the drive through. I gave the guy like ten bucks to get like 3 or 4 fish sandwiches. So we get to the drive through and the guy gets the fish sandwiches and hands em back to us and I gave them to Ace and we get in the parking lot and he eats these two fish sandwiches. He just about finishes the last bite of the second one and almost like a boxer shaking off a punch opens the car door and goes "let's do it". He went on the air and he was absolutely great. He had a great interview and had everybody laughing, everybody had fun, got back in the car and just completely passed out again. I just call it the story of the fish sandwich because who know that of all the things to revive someone who was in that state, a couple McDonald's fish sandwiches brings him back to life.

Presley - I had the pleasure of listening the night that Axl Rose ended up in studio and still talk about it to this day. Do you consider that the defining moment of your show?

Trunk - It's without question the biggest show I have ever done in twenty five years and this is my twenty fifth year and it is definitely the biggest newsworthy, news making radio show I ever did, yeah. Leaving that studio that night we all knew something newsworthy and special had happened. We could feel it. We walked out of that building and we could just feel it. It sounds cheesy to say, but you could just feel this buzz in the air over what had just taken place. It sent out shockwaves around the globe, literally, that this guy had surfaced as was sitting there in my radio studio. The amount of email because of that show that I get to this day is absolutely

astonishing to me. I knew that there was a whole Guns n' Roses very fanatical fan base but I had no idea that there is a level of Guns n' Roses fan that rivals almost any other fan. It was a very special night, something I will never forget, something people still talk about everywhere I go, whether it be people I meet at concerts or whether it be a guy like Steven Tyler who I saw after that interview happened and the first thing out of his mouth was "what was it like talking to that guy and what's his head like these days?". I mean everyone. To Slash who I just talked to the other day, I mean everyone knows about it and it just became this thing, this monstrous moment for music fans that they couldn't believe what they were hearing and they couldn't believe what had happened. The other thing was people couldn't believe that they were hearing Axl Rose in that way; just a guy hanging out telling the stories he was telling and talking about W.A.S.P. and what other crazy sh*t that he was talking about. Just being a fellow rock fan with us was what really was special about that. There was a really delicate tight rope that I had to walk that night because obviously no one saw that coming, no one knew that was going to happen, no one could believe that it was happening when it happened and the entire show that night was about something completely different. I had Sebastian (Bach) and Scott Ian and Chris Jericho and all these other people in the studio which was an amazing show to begin with in terms of cast of characters. Then out of nowhere everything came to a screeching halt and everyone's jaw dropped when Axl walked in there. I owe Sebastian and Axl greatly for doing that because Sebastian started getting the text messages then Axl called in and I invited him to come up and he did and it was just an amazing moment. So many people say so many things about Axl Rose and you can read anything you want and hear anything you want and some of its probably true and some of its probably not, but I can only speak from my personal experience with the guy and that was that he was incredibly great and cool on my radio show. This incredible thing he did; he came in and was a fly on the wall with us, he hung out, was one of the guys, invited me out to his shows the next couple nights in New York, we went out after the radio show and had a drink. My only regret is that I really wish we could have hung out. I would have loved to have sat with him one on one in a little more of a controlled environment, even privately. Publicly you know if I would have had him in that studio with just me and him it probably would have been a different interview and probably could have gotten a lot of more of a traditional interview out of him, but even privately I would like to get to know him a little bit better because he is an interesting guy. We have met a few times besides that radio interview but one of the things I really pride myself on doing is treating any artist, any celebrity like they want to be treated and people think that you mean that you fall all over them and make them feel special and your are at their beckon

call. To me its actually opposite of that I have found, if you treat them as one of the guys and don't make a big deal about em it actually ends up becoming a much more comfortable situation. That's how I have become somewhat friendly with a lot of people with some sort of celebrity stature because they trust me and they know what I'm about and they know that they're gonna get a fare shake with me.

Presley - The one thing I loved about that night was that it made him human. There is this mystical aura about him because you don't see him and don't hear from him and just hear stories.

Trunk - That was thing. Beyond the fact that "Holy sh*t, Axl Rose was just on this guys radio show" the other thing that was the most talked about aspect of that entire day was the fact of he was one of the guys. Sebastian Bach had a great quote about what happened that night. Sebastian came up to me and got a few inches away from my face and just looked at me and goes in the only way he can "Dude do you realized that you just had the Howard Hughes of rock music in your studio". That's a great analogy and he is absolutely right. This guy has got almost this mythical quality now and one of his guitar players (Bumblefoot)who is in the band now has become a really good friend of mine and we talk all the time. So I have a lot of loose connections to the Guns n' Roses world and like I said I was with Slash for almost an hour yesterday and Slash is just a great guy, love Slash, he's just a real sweetheart of a guy. So I don't take sides in all of this. I give everybody an outlet and a forum. I know for a fact that Axl reads my website and as do a lot of these artist and I just try to give everybody a fare shake. It's great to be close to these artists but I am not going to compromise what I do. I think that the reason that I get respect from the artists and the audience is because they know that their gonna get it strait. I'm not gonna be a phony, if I don't like something I am gonna say it and I welcome the opportunity for others to say it. I think everyone is entitled to an opinion and should be able to express it. The point is that I want to present both sides and I'm not saying that everyone has to agree with it but I just want it to be more real, more natural, more conversational about how people really talk. That's what I strive to do and that's what I have been trying to do for a long time. People give me a lot of grief that don't get what I'm about because sometimes they'll listen and be like "oh my god the guy talks so much, there's so much talk in his show, there's so much interviews" well you know what? We just talked a few minutes ago about how accessible music is today and what's going on in the industry. To me, when I go out and I am on the street and people come up to me they all want to ask me "what was it like to talk to Axl Rose? Tell me an Ace Frehley story. Tell me this, tell me that. Let's talk about this, what did you hear about this guys record that's coming out?". They don't say "holy sh*t you played AC/DC "Have a Drink on Me" last week. That's a great song and you know what? Of course I will always

play music but to me the most compelling side of things; you know I've got twenty five years of experience to call on now, is to be able to share these stories and give these artist a real forum where they can be themselves, that's what I'm striving to do. That's the much more appealing side to me, the much more creative side to me as opposed to just playing a lot of cool records and I will always do that, but I like to mix it up and I like to keep it more honest.

Presley - You seem a lot like me where the new stuff I am into sounds like it is old like Silvertide, Black Stone Cherry, EndeveafterR, and Airbourne. Why don't we hear a lot more new music on your show?

Trunk - I feel very strongly about giving new bands and new music and opportunity when I can. I would do so much more with new music and new bands and give them so many more opportunities if I had more opportunities with time, I just simply don't. It's very difficult for me because my niche is definatly the classic hard rock and metal from the 70's and 80's. people forget that those bands; you talk about KISS, Judas Priest who are coming in to do my show next week, Dream Theater who did my show last week, the list goes on and on. Those bands who are big established bands with fan bases, they have nowhere to go with their new music either. I serve and fill that void for them.

When Judas Priest comes to New York, I'm thankful for it, but they make sure that they come and see me. They arrange their schedule to try and include me on the radio front because frankly there are not a lot of people who are going to have them in for an hour and a half to have them talk about their new album in depth. That's really the void I fill.

It's so hard because yes that is my bread and butter but I would love to give newer bands or smaller bands opportunities at a shot on my show as well, it's just that you can only fit so many things into the program. It's like you wanna get a lot of new music in from classic bands, you wanna get new music from new bands in, you wanna get the Thin Lizzy song besides "The Boys Are Back In Town". I've been known for exposing all these deep cuts from these great artists that you never hear, there is such a delicate balance to try and figure it all out.

If I had five days a week, four hours a day I would have such a wider net of what I could bring to people. I hope after twenty five years someday I will get that opportunity but for right now I am grateful for what I have, extremely grateful for the audience support that I get, and the passion that I get back from the people that care about what I do. Just like the bands that we talked about earlier exploring new outlets and new ways to connect with people and I'm kind of in the same boat. I'm going to embrace and keep doing what I can to connect and keep doing what I do and reach as many people as I can who are many of them woefully underserved when it comes to being real rock fans.