

RICH ROBINSON'S GOSPEL

by Katherine Turman

Black Crowes guitarist Rich Robinson is fuming: "Whatever you do, don't call the Black Crowes good ol' rock & roll! If I hear about the Sixties one more time, I'm gonna throw up. It's so overdone. A lot of people think we're a retro band. We just happen to like music from a different decade, which isn't a crime."

No matter what you call it, it spells success. The Crowes stompin' romp of a debut album, *Shake Your Money-maker*, recently passed the one-million mark in sales. But figures aren't what success is about for Rich, 21, nor elder sibling and lead Crowe-r Chris, 24, who founded the Atlanta-based five piece some six years ago. Success is

internal satisfaction for these enfants terrible of rock, and it's themselves they must please.

"I never really thought about the gravy aspects of success," says Rich. "It wasn't like, hey, party, girls! The cool thing was getting in front of twenty-thousand people, playing our songs, and having people like it."

"A lot of people are in it for the wrong reasons. For some reason, being in a band has become the norm, because a lot of people who aren't talented are in the business. And I think that's a problem today, because any average hack song that has a chorus—i.e. Vanilla Ice—can do well. I think that's bullshit."

"I think when the punk revolution

came about, and alternative music came out," Rich continues, "it proved people couldn't play their instruments. I think that's what brought about people getting in a band to look cool. Like Paul Westerberg [of The Replacements] said, 'Playing makeup, wearing a guitar.'"

No one can put the Crowes in that category, though record industry criticism *has* been leveled at Chris Robinson's outspoken attitude concerning his rock peers. "He's just being honest," says Rich of the claims. "A lot of people don't know how to handle that. When Chris says negative things, a lot of times it's just people pulling things out of him. It's like, 'hey, let's sell some magazines!'"

Black Crowes Johnny Colt, Chris Robinson, Steve Gorman, Rich Robinson and Jeff Cease.

