

V NOW WE'RE TALKIN

By Helen Marketti

An Interview with Lawrence Gowan of STYX

On Friday, August 13, the band STYX will perform at Centennial Terrace in Toledo. Lawrence Gowan, lead singer and keyboardist, took some time for an interview while the band was on the road to their next performance.

"I loved the bands everyone else did because I was right at that age when The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Jimi Hendrix were popular. Later in the 70s, I liked Freddie Mercury and Elton John. They had the flamboyant style which I liked. It also showed that a piano player can be a front man," remembers Lawrence. "I started playing the piano when I was ten years old. When I was older, I played for my classmates. It was then I noticed that they seemed to like what I was doing. I think they looked at me in a different light. They seemed to enjoy it, no one ran out of the room. (laughs) So that's how I knew that maybe this was a right move for me to be a musician."

STYX has released a new CD called, *Crash of the Crown* (produced by the band's label, Alpha Dog 2T/Ume). There are 15 tracks with some great vocals. The song, "Reveries" has a "John Lennon" sound. "My singing style reflects those who I was influenced by," said Lawrence. "Earlier this week (June 28), *Crash of the Crown* made it to number one in Billboard Magazine which of course we are happy and proud with this news." Other tracks such as, "Our Wonderful Lives" and "Sound the Alarm" are songs we can all relate to and identify. The entire CD is a collection of music that addresses thoughts and issues we go through in life and suggests listeners to stay the course.

Lawrence enjoyed a successful solo career for 14 years in Toronto before joining STYX in 1999. "I had four platinum records in Canada but couldn't seem to break through to the American market. I opened for STYX in Montreal in 1997 and two years later I joined the band," he recalls.

When the tour stops at each new city, Lawrence has a routine that he tries to maintain while on the road. "I usually do a bit of yoga before a show. I also like to take a walk around the area to absorb the sound and



Photo Credit: Rick Diamond

left to right: (Chuck Panozzo, Ricky Phillips, Todd Sucherman, Tommy Shaw, James "JY" Young, Lawrence Gowan)



atmosphere of each city. I feel connected to the culture."

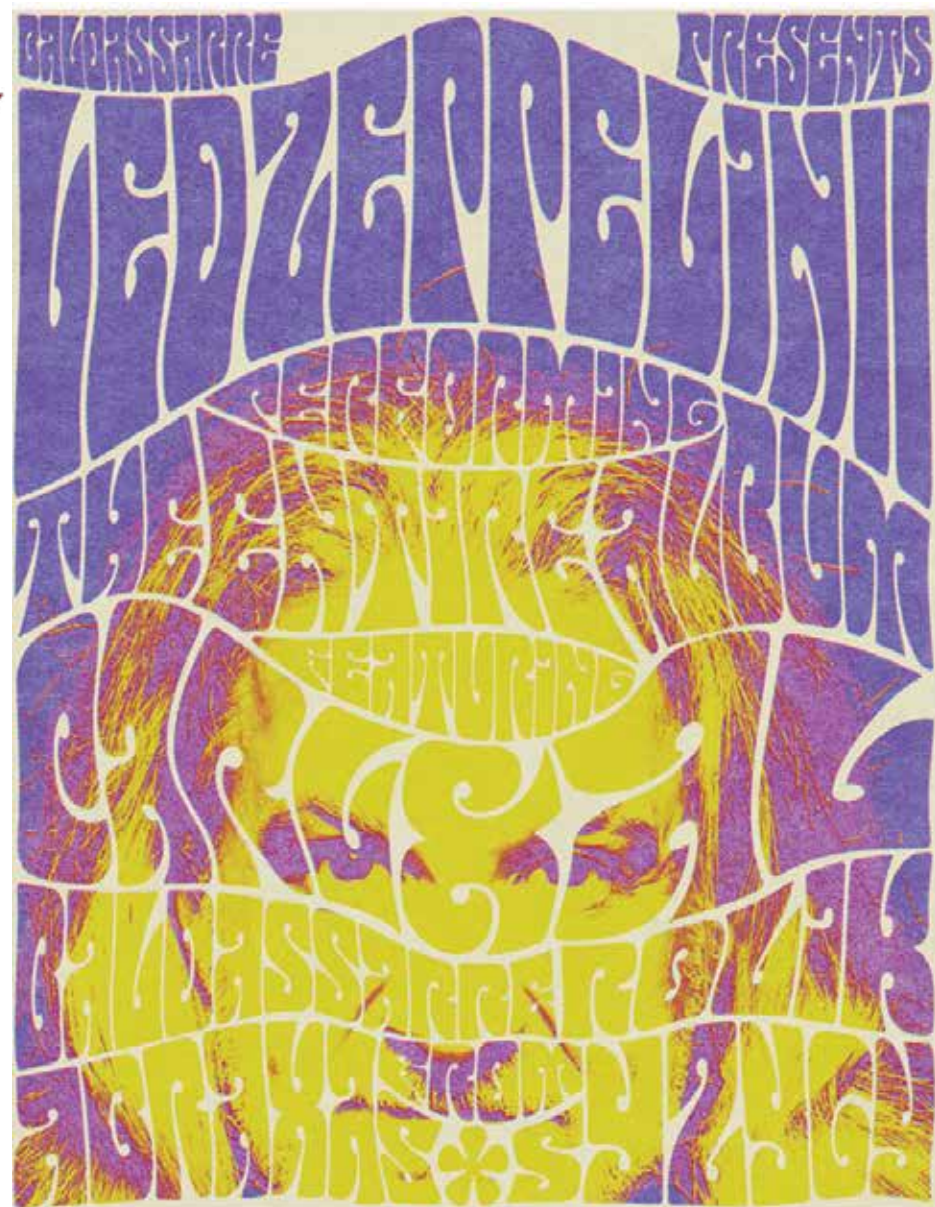
When asked what keeps him motivated and inspired, and for STYX to have such longevity, Lawrence responded, "We like each other's company and we love what we do. It's rewarding to see fans who follow our music and we like to give back. Plus, we don't know how to do anything else!" (laughs)

He continues, "I think the longevity of STYX is credited to the songs that were created in the late 70s and early 80s because they stand the test of time. The melodies and lyrics resonate with audiences. We are seeing younger fans at our shows which is great. It's wonderful to be out on tour once again. We rehearsed together a week before the tour started. It's been great to see fans enjoying the shows and smiling."

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