

"I BROKE OUT OF THE MANSION ONE NIGHT... THEY SAID 'DO IT AGAIN AND YOU'RE GOING TO GO HOME'"
—JD FORTUNE



INXS GET A DOSE OF CANADA

JD Fortune tames his wild child for sake of new band

[L-R]
Kirk Pengilly, Andrew Farris,
Jon Farris, JD Fortune,
Garry Beers, Tim Farris

by Bryan Borzykowski

During JD Fortune's first few weeks on *Rock Star: INXS*, the Nova Scotia native didn't endear himself to the voting public. He was cocky and brash, insulted his co-competitors and was too raw, even by rock 'n' roll standards. But at the end, Fortune emerged as a graceful, self-controlled frontman — someone who just might be able to replace INXS' revered former lead singer, the deceased Michael Hutchence.

Discovering restraint while interviewing for one of the world's biggest '80s bands wasn't easy however. In fact, Fortune is the first to admit that his antics on the show may have gone too far. In one unaired incident, the former Elvis impersonator was almost kicked out of the *Rock Star* house by the show's producers.

"I broke out of the mansion one night," says Fortune, chucking. "[The producers] called the police and they were running around L.A. trying to find me. I went down to a bar. I just jumped the fence and snuck out where I knew there were no cameras. They were really pissed off. They said, 'Do it again and you're going to go home.'"

Now that the show is over and the world's eyes are fixated on the tattooed Canadian, Fortune doesn't have time to piss anyone off. He's gearing up for a world tour behind the recently released *Switch*, INXS' 11th studio album. While his hectic schedule has kept him out of trouble, it's also prevented him from enjoying his reality show win.

"To be honest, I haven't really had a chance to let it sink in yet," says Fortune. "I've been really busy."

Choosing "Pretty Vegas" as INXS' first single proved that this reality TV show wasn't like other musical talent contests. Unlike *American Idol*, where the winner is handed a single, Fortune wrote "Pretty Vegas" himself.

"The band didn't change 'Pretty Vegas' at all. At the writing clinic [during the show], I had that track and sang it through a crappy little mic and a crappy little speaker, but it was a solid song then and it's a solid song now," he says.

Now, as "Pretty Vegas" has gone on to receive heavy radio play, *Rock Star: INXS* seems like a distant memory. But it's hard to forget Mig Ayesa, the Australian singer who only once fell into the bottom three.

During the show, rumours ran rampant that Mig was a plant. If the rest of the contestants bombed then Mig would be crowned the winner. It seems like an odd rumour now, but at the time even Fortune thought the Aussie wasn't your average contestant.

"I thought he was a plant," he says. "I'm like 'This guy is too good.' He's never been in the bottom three. But then, on the last night when he was the second

last to go I was like, 'OK, cool.' We did hear about the rumours though, right after I won."

Even if Mig was a plant, by the end Fortune had the competition in the bag. What was the extra edge the Canuck had over Mig and other finalist Marty Casey? He has a past history of winning over discerning judges. Back in 2000, Fortune and his old band Juice scored 100 per cent on *Chart's* inaugural Canadian Music Week report cards.

"Oh yeah! That was awesome," says Fortune, thankful that *Chart* helped (however minutely), get him to where he is today.

Seeing how Fortune's progressed since his vocal chord-busting days in the Limp Bizkit-ish Juice and from *Rock Star: INXS*' first few episodes, it's clear the wild man hasn't only tamed, he's become wiser.

"I just let the music speak for itself now. Juice was very raw and in your face. It was don't-fuck-with-us sort of rock 'n' roll and this comes from a different place. It comes from within and you're finding your audience by drawing them in, not by shouting at them." **C**

Revolving Doors

INXS aren't the first rock band to switch their frontman to varying degrees of success.

BAND	SWITCHEROO	GRADE
AC/DC	Brian Johnson for Bon Scott Their success went up, quality only down a hair.	A-
Black Sabbath	Ronnie James Dio for Ozzy Osbourne There are some metalheads who swear by Dio-era Sabbath.	B+
Van Halen	Sammy Hagar for David Lee Roth By the end, it was Van Halen making Hagar look less cool, not the other way around.	C-
The Doors	Ian Astbury for Jim Morrison Bad news all around.	D-
INXS	Terence Trent D'Arby for Michael Hutchence We haven't forgotten...	F

