



The Stool Pigeon

MUSIC NEWSPAPER

Dave Cloud Interview by Ann Lee

*Interview conducted at the Luminaire in Kilburn, North London.
Originally published by The Stool Pigeon music newspaper, June 2006.*

It's not every day you get to meet a Methodist Christian who likes to prance around on stage pretending to have sex. Comparisons to grizzled shamans and Charles Bukowski abound, but when I'm introduced to Dave Cloud a bespectacled pensioner appears politely offering me a can of Diet Coke.

He quickly puts me straight on any notions of living a life of music-related depravity, but admits that on stage it's a different story. "I'm a mixed bag," he says. "You know what Walt Whitman said? 'I contain multitudes.' So I might strip down to my boxer shorts, get sweaty and hump the stage one night, but another night I might keep my jacket zipped up, my pants on and be low-key."

The similarities between him and alcohol-drenched writer Bukowski aren't too far off, as it happens. Both have deeply evocative voices, which Nashville's Cloud deploys to devastating effect on his new album *Napoleon of Temperance*.

One track's called "Puff Rider". An updated version of "Puff the Magic Dragon" perhaps? "Oh give me a puff of that tough stuff bad boy Puff, oooh I do believe I've had enough," he croons. "Nah! It's about a 34-pound cat with incredible claws," he tells me. "This cat would attack anyone who would say the word S-H-I-T." Feigning anxiety Cloud glances left and right then adds, "Just in case he's in the room."

Story-telling has always been Cloud's forte. He has recorded thousands of hours of audio books and magazines for the Talking Library back in his hometown of Nashville. And for the past 22 years he has volunteered to read to the blind.

"Even the fundamentalist Baptists have a sense of humour," he says when asked how he thinks others might see him. "Even the conservatives understand the joy of phantom intercourse and the harmlessness of it. A little bit of letting down your guard, a little bit of swinging, and a little bit of going wild is an essential part of living. It's like Clark Kent and Superman; during the week I'm running errands, doing the shopping and going to the Talking Library, but on the weekend I become a rock'n'roll bad boy and sometimes just sheer noise bad boy."