

# Arts & Entertainment

## A visit to the Planet Martini

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Correspondent

It's a long solo flight from Claremont to the Planet Martini, but for Martin Richmond a former hamlet resident the musical journey has been a "trip worth taking."

The Planet Martini is Richmond's self-produced debut CD, released this November by the west-coast independent label, Nomad Records.

Although difficult to pigeon-hole, Richmond's music— all self-composed under the name Martini, is an eclectic sampling of progressive guitar rock, freely influenced by the style of contemporary music heavy weights like U2, Peter Gabriel and Eddie VanHalen.

Now living in Fulford Harbor, British Columbia, Richmond recorded the CD from a studio in the home of his mother— another ex-Claremont resident and well-known artist Loraine Sourcouf.

On the rebound from a stint with a band called Bored of Education, Richmond wanted to see what he could accomplish on his own.

So he traded in his less than adequate equipment and leased quality computerized instruments and sequencers and began to experiment with his own raw talent.

Talking to the island residents, many of them artist and musicians Richmond was able to drum up enough interest in his project from established

music people.

"It is true. Sometimes you do have to step back, go away from home. Leave the familiar to see what you can accomplish as an individual," said Richmond in relating how he originally began the project by cutting demo tracks as a pitch to a record company.

Like other musicians today, Richmond found solace and creative satisfaction in working on his own, mixing his original instrumentals and vocals with technological precision.

Richmond, now 26 years-old is an accomplished musician, who was inspired to play the guitar at the age of twelve after hearing rock guitar guru Van Halen.

"All I could think of then, was yes, this is style and how do I get to be that good," said Richmond.

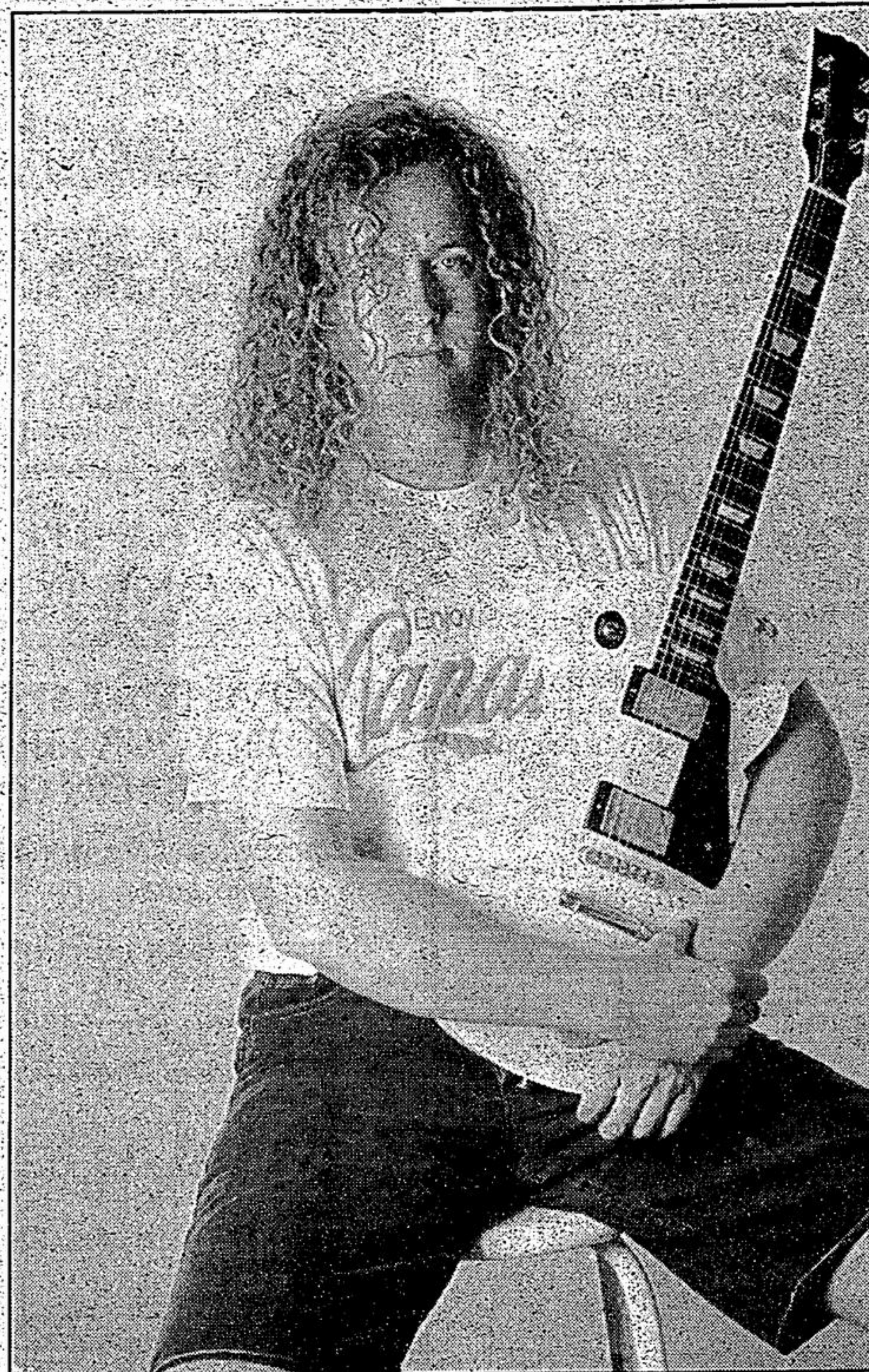
He found the answer in countless hours of practice and several failed attempts playing within a band.

While a student at Uxbridge Secondary School, Richmond never stopped thinking about playing in front of an audience. "Looking back I'm sure my parents and teachers at the high school thought how is this kid going to wind up," said Richmond.

Recalling those failed efforts, Richmond's father well-known Uxbridge artist John Richmond described one concert scheduled at the Uxbridge Legion as "ill-fated."

Martin and his friends were so eager to play anywhere they just booked a hall. They never considered that most of the teens coming out to listen to the band would be under age and the Legion staff would never let them into the place.

Richmond worked on the music on Planet Martini



Martin Richmond has released a self-produced CD, entitled The Planet Martini.

"almost as a building block process. I'd start by playing the guitar, getting a hook in my head, then going with it and recording it right at the moment it felt right to me giving the music a live spontaneous feel."

Although essentially a one-man studio project that sense of immediacy is evident in both the lyric and the music on the CD described by Richmond as "future rock."

The Planet Martini is available locally at Radio Shack.

### Music

## Pax Christi Chorale on stage Dec. 20

On Monday, Dec. 20, Pax Christi Chorale will be appearing in Noels with Brass, a special Christmas concert of choral music to be held at Parkview Village Auditorium at 7.30 p.m.

The 40 voice choir is drawn from the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations throughout the greater Toronto area. It features several area performers, including Joe Nighswander, John Harder, Eleanor Nash and Hugh Lawrence, all of whom are members of the Rouge Valley Mennonite Church.

Pax Christi Chorale has been presenting two concerts annually since 1987, one in the spring and one in the fall, and all members of the choir are volunteers with a strong commitment to excellence in music. The Chorale had its beginnings in the Toronto Unity Mennonite Church, where the congregation included some professional singers, among them a soloist who has sung with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir.

You don't have to be a professional singer to join the choir, however, stressed Nighswander. "The idea was to draw in people from other churches, primarily Mennonite and Brethren in Christ.

"It's totally volunteer and there are no auditions. If you enjoy singing and want to work hard in a choir, you're welcome to join." The number of members has remained steady at between 35 and 45 since its inception, he said.

Nighswander and his wife started attending Pax Christi Chorale concerts in the late 1980s. "I decided that once I retired (from Parkview Village) and had a little more time, I would see if I could join the choir myself."

He performed with the ensemble for the first time in the spring of 1991, and has been a member ever since. It's a big commitment and something of a challenge, he said, but one he thoroughly enjoys.

Nighswander invited the choir to appear at Parkview Village earlier this year. "We've been practising for our December concert since the second week of September."

Pax Christi Chorale has performed at a variety of venues including the Ontario Bible College, Leaside United Church and Eglinton United Church. Joining them for the Christmas concert are John Ford B.A., A.R.C.T., who is a professional conductor, along with pianist Christel Wiens and Toronto-based ensemble York Brass.

Among the beautiful music to be performed at Parkview Village will be Pachelbel's Magnificat in G; Pinkham's Christmas Cantata; Rutter's Candlelight Carol and Ave Maria.

A selection of well-loved carols will also be featured and the audience will be invited to participate during part of the program. Pax Christi Chorale is a member of the Ontario Choral Federation and features mostly religious music from the classics and other sources. Tickets for Noels with Brass are \$15 for adults, and \$10 for seniors and students. They are available from the Parkview Village office at 12184, 9th Line or by calling 640-1940 or 640-1536.

~ Kate Gilderdale



Photo: CELIA BRONKHORST

### It's a dove

Shakespeare The Magician entertained crowds, including volunteer Andrew Walter, during a performance at Angie's Eatery in Stouffville on Satur-

day. The event was a breakfast with Santa Claus to help local residents prepare for the Christmas season.