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## Metal musician Nick Oliveri mutes the manic for solo album

By [Mark Jordan](#)

Thursday, January 28, 2010

As bass player for such celebrated metal outfits as Kyuss, Queens of the Stone Age, and Mondo Generator, Nick Oliveri has made his name and reputation by rocking fast, loud, and furious.

His latest project, however, finds the California native strapping on an acoustic guitar for his first solo album, *Death Acoustic*, and a tour that stops at the Hi-Tone Saturday night. But Oliveri, who has always brought a jolt of punk energy -- as well as, frequently, a splash of on-stage nudity -- to whatever endeavor he undertakes, is not turning into a folkie.



"I do songs that I think are fun and made me want to play music," says Nick Oliveri, who plays acoustic guitar for his first solo album. "And if they're covers and songs that I thought would be challenging to transpose into acoustic, that's fine." Rob Hunt

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"I approach it the same way as I would any band show," Oliveri says of his solo acoustic set. "I play loud and I sing loud and I scream at times. Sometimes I play softer and more dynamic, more melodic. And sometimes I just rock it hard. The same as I would do with a band."

A surprising turn from the aggressive, manic music Oliveri is known for, *Death Acoustic* was born when his current bandmates in the long-running punk-metal band Mondo Generator -- guitarist Ian Flannon Taylor and drummer David "Hoss" Wright -- both took time off to start families. Suddenly without a band for the first time in years, Oliveri holed up in his home studio and cranked out a lo-fi set of solo renditions of songs from throughout his career, including numbers from Kyuss, Queens of the Stone Age, and the Dwarves, as well as personal favorites by the Misfits, the late punk provocateur G.G. Allin, and Italian hardcore outfit Raw Power.

"I kind of approach acoustic differently than singer-songwriter folk do," says Oliveri. "I do songs that I think are fun and made me want to play music. And if they're covers and songs that I thought would be challenging to transpose into acoustic, that's fine. To take an old Raw Power song and turn it into acoustic is very challenging."

Oliveri first came to prominence in the late 1980s as a guitarist in Katzenjammer, a band that also featured his frequent on-again, off-again collaborator, Josh Homme. Showing early signs of a music restlessness that has continued throughout his career, Oliveri left the band in 1988 but returned a few years later after the band had morphed into stoner rock pioneers Kyuss. Oliveri left the band again in 1992, joining the Chicago punk band the Dwarves for a spell (under the pseudonym Rex Everything) and forming Mondo Generator in 1997.



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The next year, Oliveri reunited with Homme in the highly successful Queens of the Stone Age. Oliveri played on the band's second release, *Rated R*, and by the next record, 2002's acclaimed *Songs For the Death*, the group was essentially a duo with he and Homme co-writing most of the songs.

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Despite Queens of the Stone Age's success, however, Homme soon fired Oliveri from the group. In 2005, he told BBC radio it was because of reports that Oliveri had hit a girlfriend.

As soon as Oliveri wraps up his solo tour, he'll reunite with Mondo Generator to complete the band's fifth album before hitting the road in the summer. He's also been recording with a new, as-yet-unnamed band with members of the Norwegian punk band Turbonegro. And you'll likely hear him singing and playing this spring on the debut album from Guns N' Roses' Slash.

"I always have to be doing something," says Oliveri of his packed music schedule. "I love to jump around where things are brand new, but I'm also really excited about the new band and being part of something new."

**Nick Oliveri with special guests Tanks**

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