

The Thieves

It's always a matter of nose to the grindstone when you're a touring band. Just ask former Oxfordites The Thieves, a UK trio currently trolling the LA basin with their brand of pure, unadulterated rock 'n' roll. Speaking from the blurry confines of a barroom, the band, who just wrapped up a state-to-state tour, remains enigmatically tight-lipped about their rock-postured lifestyle.

"A lot of people assume it's a drug or partying reference, which it isn't necessarily," says lead singer Hal Stokes on the title of their late-fall release, *Tales from the White Line*. "I mean, infer what you like, but we'd prefer

to keep it a secret." A rollicking throwback to the headier days of classic rock, the record's power chords and choruses are steeply rooted in the past, but are also electrified with a fresh kick that only a hungry young band can muster. With production by Chris Brown (Radiohead, Muse), it's a sweat-drenched pulpit from which the band ministers to the masses.

"Our plan is to play again and again until we build up that same sort of following,"

remarks Stokes in reference to the band's frequent comparisons to visceral rockers AC/DC and Led Zeppelin. Building the same sort of ecstatic fanbase as their predecessors is a determined goal for The Thieves, who find only one real difference between their hometown crowd and the US audience—the lamentable legal drinking age. "In Oklahoma, we had all these kids come to see us who couldn't even get in the pub. That's what's frustrating, man."

Shelby Host

