

Foreword by Axel Werbach

Compose new songs for the next CD, prepare for and take part in the race this coming weekend, help prepare and organize the upcoming concert tour, figure out lesson dates for his “Unity Music School”, fit in some time for private and family activities, smoothly transit from the set list for the next Rage concert to the set list for the following festival featuring an appearance by the Lingua Mortis Orchestra, give interviews for magazines, newspapers and/or radio stations, write the notes to complete, classical scores and then head to the studio to mix a power metal number, play in front of 80,000 people in Wacken, teach 20 students in a master class the next day and then give a workshop for amplifier manufacturers, make various appearances, give interviews, attend meetings and meet & greet events at a multi-day music fair. This all takes place without the help of a secretary, of course, because a secretary really wouldn’t be a help. The jobs are impossible to delegate and spontaneous decisions must constantly be made that no one except you knows how to make to ensure that everything rolls like it’s supposed to.

The guy who constantly has a zillion different things – great and small – racing around in his head, who organizes, coordinates and then chooses the right moment to implement it all in such a way as to reap the most optimal benefits for himself and his projects is the guitarist, ambitious hobby-racing driver and father Victor Smolski. He’s happy to do all of this. He does it voluntarily, successfully and on a daily basis. Looking at the almost stoic, relaxed but always concentrated way he deals with the various segments of his life, insiders and outsiders alike get the feeling that taking any of this away from him wouldn’t make him happier but instead would leave him dissatisfied and underutilized.

Let’s highlight a few of his artistic milestones:

Whoever talks about him as a guitarist has to make use of more than one superlative to really do justice to the extraordinary ability and artistic versatility of this exceptional musician. He’s left his mark not only as guitarist and songwriter for the German metal formation Rage. His song “Straight to Hell” for example, which served as the soundtrack for both “Bully” Herbig movie blockbusters Manitou’s Shoe (Der Schuh des Manitu) and Dreamship Surprise (Traumschiff Surprise), created a huge fervor.