

Alt-rockers Incubus to storm Bayfront Park

BY ADRIAN RUHI

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Mike Einziger, guitarist for the spacey, experimental alternative-rock band Incubus, is a fan of stormy weather. Luckily for him, Incubus will be playing Sunday outdoors in downtown Miami — smack-dab in the middle of our storm season.

"One thing I really love about Florida is the lightning. I usually get a storm of some kind while we're there," he said on the phone. "I actually just enjoy being anywhere where there isn't snow."

The current tour, (the band's last one in the United States was in 2007), is in support of the release of *Monuments and Melodies*, a two-disc retrospective of greatest hits, B-sides, rarities and new songs.

It also comes on the heels of what Einziger refused to call a "hiatus."

"We took a break — every time we finish touring behind an album, we take a break," Einziger said.

Even a highly successful band like Incubus, which also includes singer/heartthrob Brandon Boyd, bassist Ben Kenney, drummer Jose Pasillas and turntablist/keyboardist Chris Kilmore,



INCUBUS: The band is touring the United States in support of the release of *Monuments and Melodies*.

needs time off to recharge.

The Calabasas, Calif.-based band had a much different sound on its 1995 debut, *Fungus Amongus*: Heavy metal chords, bass-slapping funk and some hip-hop influence (namely rapping and record scratching). But it wasn't until the release of more melodic singles like *Pardon Me* and *Drive* from 1999's *Make Yourself*, that Incubus would establish itself as a staple on rock radio and MTV.

Since 1999, the band has landed 13 singles in the top 10 of Billboard's Alternative Songs charts, four of those reaching No. 1. They've toured the world

several times, but decided they needed a few years off to explore personal endeavors.

"Jose is the first one of us to become a parent," Einziger said of how drummer Pasillas spent his break. And while singer Boyd worked on developing his visually artistic side — he designed the album cover for *Monuments*, as well as projected visuals for the current tour — Einziger went back to school.

"I never went to college before this," the 33-year-old said. "I'm having my big college experience now."

The school of choice: Harvard

University, where he is studying physics, evolutionary biology and music theory.

But with *Monuments* out in stores — it debuted at No. 5 on the Billboard Top 200 albums chart — the band was ready to get back to business.

"We're playing better than we've ever played," he said.

Only two years ago, he had surgery on his wrist after finding it increasingly difficult to play live because of carpal tunnel syndrome.

"I'm able to play a lot more and better now than last tour," said Einziger, who not only plays lead guitar but often tackles other instruments such as electric piano and pipa, a Chinese string instrument. "I feel good about it."

The Miami show promises a well-balanced setlist including hit singles and album cuts from every era, such as *Anna Molly*, *Megalomaniac*, *Drive* and *A Certain Shade of Green*, as well as a few of the rarities and B-sides from *Monuments*. One such song is a surprisingly faithful rendition of Prince's *Let's Go Crazy*. When asked how the band was able to get permission from the usually possessive and protective singer, Einziger said he was

If you go

What: Incubus with opening act The Duke Spirit

When: 7:30 p.m. Sunday

Where: Bayfront Park Amphitheater, 301 Biscayne Blvd., Miami

Tickets: \$36 (lawn), \$46 (reserved), \$171 (per person for VIP party box, must buy in pairs) at www.livenation.com

unsure. "He might cringe at the idea of us covering the song," he said. "But I've met him a bunch of times, and he told me the first time he really liked our band."

A largely retrospective CD like *Monuments* is the type that often tarnishes an active band, implying that its best music is in the past. But Einziger said he wasn't worried.

"Years from now when we continue to put records out and do what we do, I think we'll have shed that stigma," he said.

As for fans, they shouldn't worry either. There won't be another "break" when the tour ends.

"We're going to start a new album in January."