

own's 10,000 Maniacs



His considerable music talent must begin with her. She was a gospel song writer, with more than 300 published songs.

He remembers hearing her pounding on the piano in the middle of the night. Then she would come to his room and wake him. " 'Angels just came into my room and gave me this song,' " he says she said to him.

From her home and the piano, he moved to the city and to the guitar, his instrument in the band. But it is not his only one. He still plays the piano and talks about taking up different stringed instruments, like the mandolin. And he speaks wistfully of the saxophone.

"It's weird; a lot of my musical heroes have been saxophone players. It's all in my head — the sounds."

It may be his grandmother speaking.

Buck is nearly non-existent in crowds, the seeming shy or at least, semi-reclusive, one. He wanders around the edges of the party. At the gold-records ceremony at City Hall, he is the last to arrive and the first to leave.

But, like Gustafson, he's funny.

"I remember I used to tell everyone in first grade I was the young boy in Flipper — that I filmed it on the weekends," he says when asked if he always wanted to be famous.

The band's first national television spot was on the David Letterman Show.

"You don't get nervous because you know there's 20 million people watching; you get nervous because you might make a mistake," he remembers.

On the set of the Letterman show, he says, there were no cues, no direction. Someone told him he should be on stage, so he ran out. He wasn't supposed to be there.

So, while David Letterman was talking, he crawled behind the screen that forms the backdrop for Letterman's set and separates the stage from the back stage.

Asked if his life has changed since the record's success, Buck replies, "Other people's perceptions have changed more than anything else. All of a sudden your relatives go, 'Oh, maybe he's all right.'"

His grandmother probably already knew it.