

## FILM

# Ozzy Osbourne counts his blessings

Documentary takes candid look at the ups and downs of rocker's crazy life

BY RICK WARNER

NEW YORK — "I'm lucky to be alive," Ozzy Osbourne told reporters at New York's Tribeca Film Festival, where a documentary on his life was making its world premiere.

He wasn't exaggerating.

During his heyday as a heavy-metal star, Osbourne guzzled enough booze and ingested enough drugs to kill himself several times over. His decadent lifestyle made Keith Richards look like a choirboy.

"A lot of the friends I used to party with are dead," Osbourne, 62, said at last week's news conference.

"I'm not proud that I did all those things, but it's part of my journey. I can't deny it."

*God Bless Ozzy Osbourne*, co-produced by his son Jack, is a startlingly candid look at the life of the rock legend who once bit the head off a bat onstage.

The film follows Osbourne from his childhood in a working-class section of Birmingham, England, to his early stardom as the lead singer for Black Sabbath, his collaboration with influential guitarist Randy Rhoads and his failed first marriage.

It also chronicles his personal and career revival, both engineered by his second wife, Sharon, who starred with Ozzy and their kids in a popular reality show.

That was years after he defecated on a hotel room floor in front of Motley Crue drummer Tommy Lee and smeared the stuff on the wall. Unsurprisingly, he had shortcomings as



*God Bless Ozzy Osbourne*, co-produced by his son, will premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival.

a parent.

Asked what he learned from watching the film, Osbourne replied: "What an a----- I've been in the past. When you're in the middle of it, you don't realize you're as bad as you are."

Osbourne still has shoulder-length hair, a thick accent and a vocabulary filled with unprintable words.

But his renegade image has given way to a life that's sober and relatively tranquil. He's in the middle of a world tour, but when he's home in Los Angeles he relaxes by painting, listening to music and watching TV.

When he's on the road, he stays in shape by skipping rope

and riding a stationary bike. And he recently got his first driver's licence.

"I just got fed up with being messed up all the time," Osbourne said. "It just wasn't fun any more."

Jack, one of Ozzy's six children, says he made the film to "set the record straight" about his father.

"I've always heard the same stories from my mom and dad, so I wanted to interview other people and get more of a three-dimensional story," said Jack, who attended the news conference with his father and the film's co-directors, Mike Fleiss and Mike Piscitelli.

One unexpected admirer

of Osbourne is Paul McCartney, not normally associated with heavy metal. McCartney is interviewed in the film, along with Lee, Metallica bass player Robert Trujillo, former Red Hot Chili Peppers guitarist John Frusciante and one-time Black Sabbath band mates Bill Ward, Tony Iommi and Gerry (Geezer) Butler.

Lee used to moon his audiences and once made a sex tape with then-wife Pamela Anderson, but he admits he couldn't keep up with Osbourne's antics.

"I wasn't ready to compete on his level," he says in the film.

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