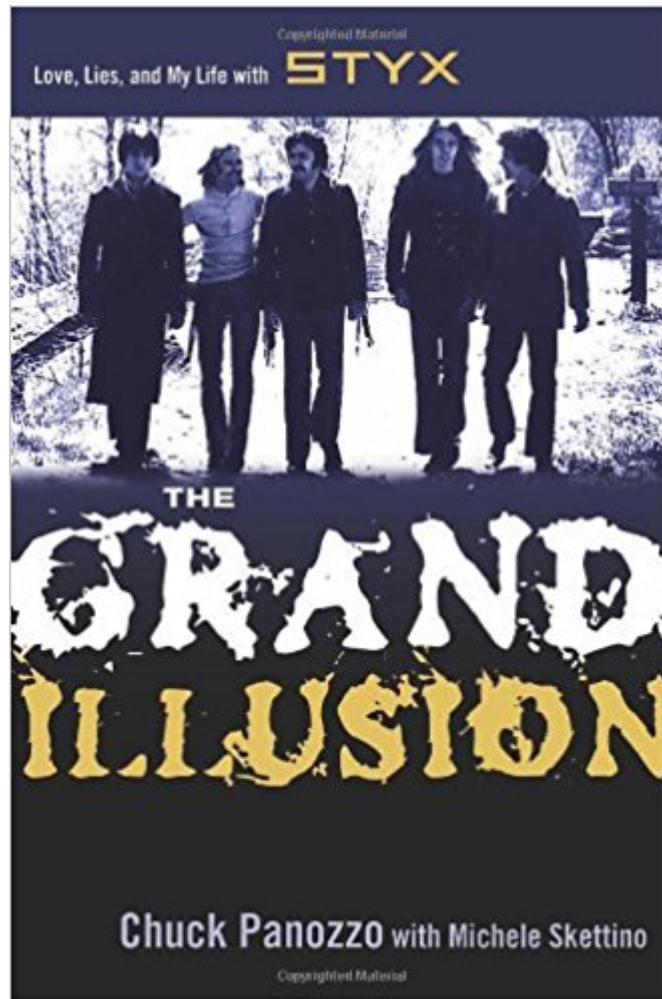


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# The Grand Illusion: Love, Lies, And My Life With Styx



## Synopsis

They are still one of the biggest rock bands of the last three decades. With four consecutive triple-platinum albums and 54 million records sold, their tours continue to sell out and classic songs like 'Lady,' 'Renegade,' 'Come Sail Away,' and 'The Grand Illusion' have earned them a whole new generation of fans. At the height of their fame, they were living the ultimate rock 'n' roll fantasy - an odyssey of groupies, drugs, and music that most musicians only dream of. As a band, Styx seemed invincible. But their founding member and bass player, Chuck Panozzo, was about to hit rock bottom. His seemingly debauched life as the ultimate rocker was a lie - and the truth was about to catch up with him. "The Grand Illusion" is a no-holds-barred, backstage pass to the journey of one of the world's most revered bands, and the true story of Chuck Panozzo's 50-year struggle to reconcile his public life as a rock star with his private life as a gay man. Beginning with the birth of Styx in Chicago and their meteoric rise, "The Grand Illusion" is a revealing look at the triumphs and tragedies that surrounded Panozzo's life. He chronicles life on the road, the break-up of the band, his struggle to help his twin brother and bandmate John Panozzo battle addiction, as well as his split with Dennis De Young, and finally coming to terms with his HIV positive status. Illuminating and unflinching, "The Grand Illusion" will captivate the band's legions of devoted fans, as well as music lovers everywhere.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

GRAND ILLUSION is more than a verismo aria from the ongoing grand opera production known as Styx. Co founder /bass player with one of the most celebrated rock bands of the Seventies Chuck

Panozzo has written not only a frank history of that band, its internal struggles and successes, but more important a personal and frank chronicle of his life, first as a closeted gay man in the Sixties and Seventies, his battle against the AIDS virus, and finally his emergence as an eloquent activist for AIDS and gay rights. The book covers Panozzo's growing up closeted gay in Sixties Chicago, his emergence as an international rock and roll star with one of the biggest rock groups of all time, his battle with AIDS, the death of his brother Styx drummer John Panozzo, his eventual coming out to family, friends, band members, and his recognition and personal acceptance of being a gay man and spokesman for AIDS and other gay rights issues. He pulls no punches in this chronicle. And spares no one including himself in his search for Self Truths. For those readers looking for band gossip--it's here but not sensationalized. But for those readers looking for a story spanning almost 60 years of a musician's journey to be recognized as a gay human being--GRAND ILLUSION is an eye opening, heartfelt memoir. -Bob Garcia (former director of Artists Relations, A&M Records, 1969-1996) I have known Chuck Panozzo, bass player and co founder of one of the more successful rock groups of the Seventies--Styx--since that band first signed with my former record company, A&M Records back in the early Seventies. As Artists Relations director I worked with Styx in its early years through its triumphs as a mega platinum band years later after that signing.

I have been looking forward to Chuck Panozzo's autobiography for a long time. It's the first time any Styx member has told his own story in his own words, and as such it's a great read. Taking the title from Styx' breakthrough and best-known album, 'The Grand Illusion' tells a compelling and heartfelt coming of age story about a young boy growing up [...] and in the closet in the conservative, predominately Catholic environment of 1950s middle-class Chicago. Panozzo was aware of his feelings of being "different" from an early age, he writes, and struggled through his adolescence and most of his adult life to reconcile his desire to live openly and without shame, and the guilt bestowed upon him about his sexuality because of his Catholic upbringing. Panozzo's views on the Church are among the highlights of the book. Recalling his days at Catholic school he writes, " . . . we were taught by nuns. These supposedly Mary-like women would hit us with rulers and even punch us with their fists. You had to wonder, did Mary really beat the hell out of Jesus like this?" Ironically it was also a nun who would give Panozzo, his twin brother John and their neighborhood friend Dennis DeYoung perhaps the best advice they ever got: to switch from playing standards in their little three-piece combo, to playing rock and roll. Thus, the band that would become Styx was born. 'The Grand Illusion' focuses on Panozzo's gradual development in coming to grips with his sexuality, even as Styx became, over the course of more than a decade of struggle, one of the most popular

rock rous in the world. Panozzo remained in the closet the entire time, terrified that in the macho rock culture of the 1970s, his secret could threaten the career that he had worked so hard to establish.

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