

THE FEED
THIS WEEK IN ROCK

(SOUND)GARDEN OF LEGENDS

LAST MONTH, THE LATE, GREAT **CHRIS CORNELL** WAS LAID TO REST IN LOS ANGELES. KERRANGI'S EVE BARLOW WAS THERE TO PAY HER RESPECTS...

➔ FOR a man who roared like a beast, there is an added sadness to the stark quiet of Hollywood Forever Cemetery on Friday, May 26. The air is filled with nothing but the odd twitter from a bird – a stark contrast to the volume of the life that Chris Cornell, one-in-a-million vocalist, led. There are so many gigs and events thrown at Hollywood Forever; it's easy to forget that it's also a graveyard. The final resting place of many an LA hero, such as filmmaker Cecil B DeMille, Dee Dee and Johnny Ramone, and actor Anton Yelchin, it's become a place for parties and tourists and Instagram moments. But not today. Today is a more sombre celebration.

Earlier, the likes of Courtney Love, Chester Bennington, Metallica's Lars Ulrich and James Hetfield, Tom Morello, Dave Grohl, even Brad Pitt came here to throw one last get-together for the former Soundgarden frontman, who tragically lost his life at the age of 52. It was a goodbye befitting a seismically important dude. The remaining Soundgarden bandmates gave eulogies, while Tom Morello – who Chris played in Audioslave with – addressed the mourners with a plea to look out for one another; Chester Bennington – godfather to one of Chris' kids – sang Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah. It was a private, moving and understated affair, with fans respectfully waiting at the cemetery gates until the A-listers left.

Once the doors open to the public, the chairs upon which those guests sat are still laid out in front of a tranquil lake. That's a spot that's usually teeming with crowds who come here to watch rock shows and drink beers. There's no such carefree jubilation here today, but there is an air of togetherness, a sense of communal love that renders Chris' suicide even more painful. The LA sky above is weirdly thick with grey, the sunlight struggling to get through. The question of what a Black

Hole Sun is remains a mystery, but that sky looks uncannily like it might have been the answer.

You know when you've arrived at the right spot for Chris. He's buried in the Garden Of Legends next to his hero Johnny Ramone, but today one fan has temporarily stuck a handwritten note above the sign so that it says *Soundgarden Of Legends*. Chris' gravestone reads: 'Voice of our generation and an artist for all time.' That first part is certainly proven true by the singing attempts of the scores of fans that quickly gather around. Sitting cross-legged by the fresh grave, one woman wails and rocks back and forth, singing Temple Of The Dog's Say Hello 2 Heaven. A chorus of other fans help her out, but

"WE NEED TO GET THE MESSAGE OUT ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH..."

nobody can reach the high notes – though many try, and sometimes break out into relieving laughing fits.

Together they wear tour T-shirts from all of Soundgarden, Audioslave and Temple Of The Dog's histories, recognising that this may be the last time they'll get together as a community. A kid waves a daffodil over the stone, another long-haired fan stands apart from everyone else, holding a single red rose by his waist. Some recognise each other from shows, some are making new friends, discussing the legacy Chris has left behind. Many arrive alone. Morris, 41, hasn't seen Soundgarden live since 1994 but wants to be around people who cared as much as him. "I haven't had the chance to be around people who love Soundgarden like I do since that gig. I wanted to take the chance to do that today," he says.

Before long, a guy called Michael, 33, makes a speech, announcing that the death of Chris Cornell inspired him to finally form the Soundgarden tribute band he's been threatening to create for years. He tells everyone here that there'll be an event in New York this coming week where tribute acts from all over the States will play to raise money for the You Rock Foundation: a charity specifically aimed at helping musicians with mental health issues. He tells K! afterwards that he was in a downward spiral in the weeks before Chris' death, and that the passing of his hero jolted him back to life.

"He clearly was suffering silently," says Michael. "A lot of us have. But we're not alone, and that's what this is all about. We're grieving, but we need to get the message out about mental health." It's important that Chris Cornell doesn't die in vain.

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