December 2024

Rock And Blues International



Warren Haynes

Also Inside
Cat Stevens

Also In This Issue
Kiko
Delta Circle
Marc Storace
Xandria
Duran Duran
and more!


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Rock And Blues International

December 2024

Hello Rock And Blues International readers. I hope everybody had a great November.

Rock And Blues is happy to announce that we have now entered the era of Podcasts. We would really like you to check out our new Podcast Channel - *Rock And Blues International - The Podcast*. If you like the interviews we feature in our publication, then you will love our Podcast Channel as we feature those interviews in their entirety there. On our Podcast Channel you can actually hear those interviews as they were originally done. Our special guests so far are JJ Gray, Sue Foley,Tinsley Ellis, Biff Byford, Chris O'Leary, Paul Reed Smith, Honey Island Swamp Band, Paul Reed Smith, Bob Margolin, Don Dokken, Foghat (Scott Holt), Puddle Of Mudd (Wes Scantlin), The Blackburn Brothers, Coco Montoya, Barry Kerch from Shinedown, Jerry Shirley from Humble Pie, Jim Stapley from Humble Pie Legacy, Kissing Judas, Nick Moss, Devon Allman, Stevie D. from Buckcherry, Chris Henderson from 3 Doors Down, Garnet Grimm from Savoy Brown, Phil Lewis from L.A. Guns, Graham Russell from Air Supply, Robert Jon from Robert Jon and The Wreck, Selwyn Burchwood, J.W. Jones, Chris Henderson from 3 Doors Down, and Warren Haynes from Gov't Mule and more!. You can check it out on all the major podcast channels as well as at our website at http//www.rockandbluesinternational.com. We hope you enjoy them.

And now on to the December issue of Rock And Blues International. On the cover of this issue we have Warren Haynes. Warren Haynes is headlining out on tour to support his new album, "Million Voices Whisper" with his "Million Voices Whispter Tour 2025" We also have a wonderful feature story in here about Cyndi Lauper and her new tour, the "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun Tour". This is going to be a fantastic tour and he's sure to perform several songs from his new album. It's simply fantastic, so if he performs near you, be sure to attend. You'll be happy you did. There's also a great story by Edoardo Fassio about Blues artists, Kiko. Be sure to check that one out too, it's very interesting. There is also a great story about rising star Eddie 9V. You need to check this guy out. Also in this issue are stories on Welsh Wolf, Joe Bonamassa, Delta Circle, the upcoming Napalm Death and The Melvins co-headlinging tour, Nightborn, Within Destruction, Cat Stevens, Seventh Crystal, Sunstorm, Don Henley, Iron Maiden, and more! As you can see, there are a lot of varied genres of music here for you to check out, or as we like to say, there's a little of something for everyone here. We have even included the current installment of the novella, "The Biker". Read it and than email us back with your thoughts on this. So far our readers seem to really like this Blues loving Biker.

I sincerely hope that everybody reading this publication finds something here that they like and I would like to encourage you to let your friends and colleagues know about us. Just look for us every month at http://www.rockandbluesinternational.com. I would also like to encourage you to email us for a free subscription to Rock And Blues International as well. Just email us at rockandbluesinternational@gmail.com and in the subject line simply put "Sign Me Up" and we'll email you a link to the magazine each month when it is published.

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Contents

VOL. 5 NO. 5 DECEMBER 2024 ISSUE NO. 53



Page 6
Warren Haynes
Warren Haynes Embarks on Million Voices Whisper 2025 Tour in Support of Chart-Topping New Solo Album



Page 16
Kiko
Kiko: The Blues and the ghosts from the past



Page 14
Eddie 9V
Rising Star Eddie 9V Delivers Americana-Infused Blues on Captivating New Album “Saratoga”



Page 34
Xandria
Xandria Merges Celtic Mythology with Symphonic Metal in Groundbreaking EP ‘Universal Tales’: German Icons Push Genre Boundaries with “200 Years”

Contents

VOL. 5 NO. 5 DECEMBER 2024 ISSUE NO. 53



Page 48
Duran Duran
Duran Duran's Halloween Spectacular: MSG Show and 'Danse Macabre' Expansion Mark New Era for New Wave Icons



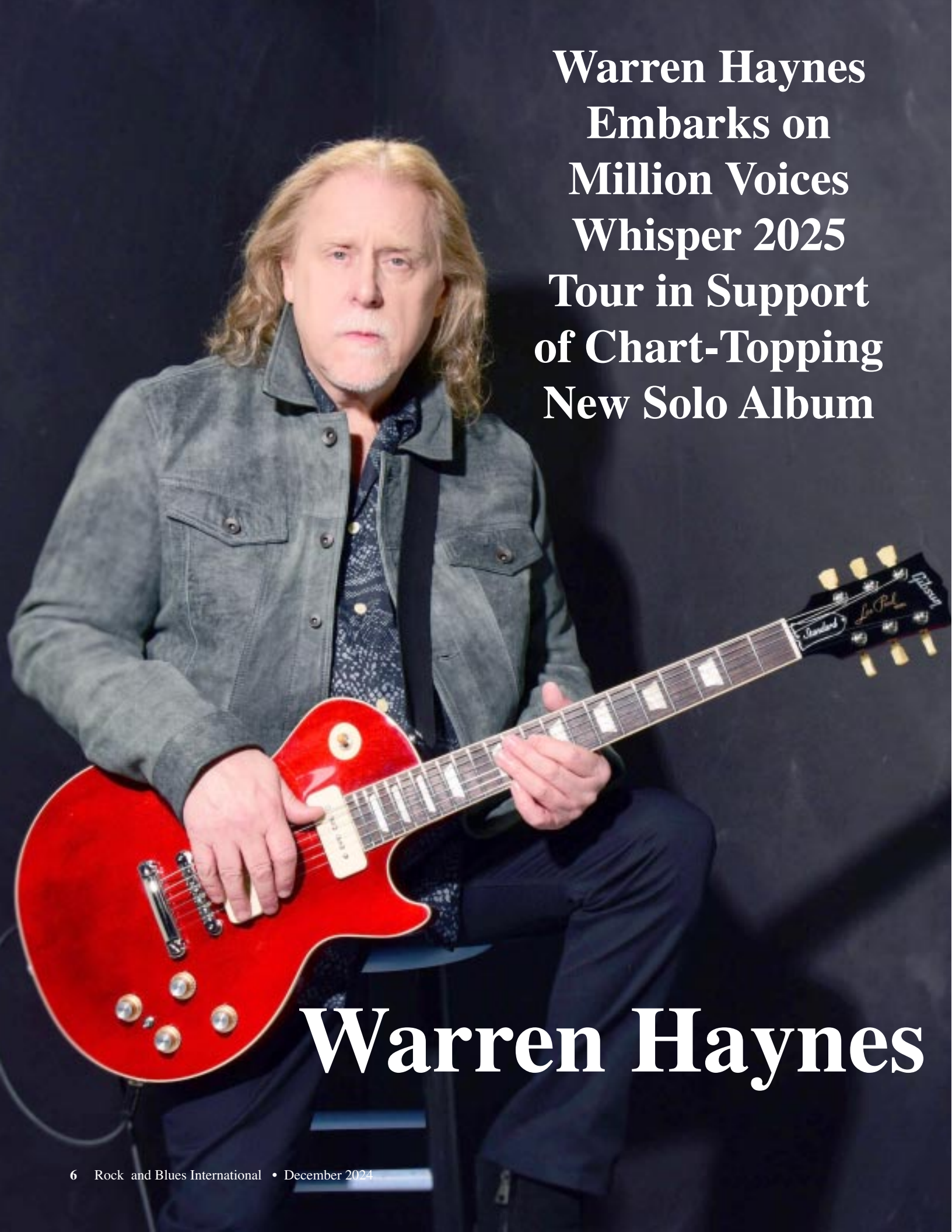
Page 80
Cat Stevens
Legendary Cat Stevens Concert Album 'Saturnight' Gets First U.S. Release After 50-Year Wait



Page 96 - The Biker

In This Issue:

6 Warren Haynes
14 Ninth Annual New Orleans Cigar Box Guitar Festival
14 Eddie 9V
16 Kiko (English)
17 Kiko (Italian)
20 The Braided Janes (English)
22 The Braided Janes (Italian)
24 Welsh Wolf
26 Joe Bonamassa
28 Delta Circle
30 Napalm Death & The Melvins
32 Clozure
34 Jaye Jayle
36 Nightborn
38 Within Destruction
40 Marc Storace & Storace
44 Xandria
48 Duran Duran
50 Cage The Elephant
52 Christopher Cross
56 Exploring Birdsong
58 No Cure
60 Seventh Crystal
64 Sunstorm
68 Bella Rios
70 The Bloody Beetroots
72 Skinlab
74 Wednesday 13
76 FLO
80 Cat Stevens
84 Iron Maiden
88 Don Henley
92 The Biker



Warren Haynes Embarks on Million Voices Whisper 2025 Tour in Support of Chart-Topping New Solo Album

Warren Haynes

Warren Haynes



New Solo Album *Million Voices Whisper* Debuts at #1 on Blues Albums Chart

To Listen Go To https://found.ee/WHMillionVoicesWhisper

By Greg Fontaine

Renowned GRAMMY® Award-winning vocalist, songwriter, guitar legend, producer, and Gov't Mule frontman Warren Haynes has announced the highly anticipated Million Voices Whisper 2025 Tour. The 9-date run, set to kick off on February 7th in Knoxville, will see the Warren Haynes Band traverse the Midwest and Northeast, making stops in cities such as Huntsville, Toledo, Des Moines, and Burlington, before concluding on February 22nd in Buffalo.

The tour comes in support of Haynes' latest solo album, "Million Voices Whisper," which has already made a significant impact on the music scene. Released on November 1st via Fantasy Records, the album debuted at an impressive #1 on Billboard's Blues Albums Chart, #3 on the Americana/Folk Albums chart, #5 on the Current Rock Albums chart, and #29 on the Top Current Albums Sales chart. This marks Haynes' first solo release in nearly a decade and his fourth solo collection in his illustrious career.

Produced by Haynes himself and recorded at Power Station New England, "Million Voices Whisper" is an 11-song collection of soulful blues-rock that showcases Haynes' exceptional musicianship and songwriting prowess. The album features standout singles such as "This Life As We Know It" and "Day of Reckoning," the latter featuring guest appearances from Lukas Nelson and Jamey Johnson. Another highlight is "Real Real Love," a track with lyrics initially started by the late Gregg Allman, which Haynes finished in honor of his friend and former Allman Brothers Band bandmate. The song also features a guest appearance by Derek Trucks, another longtime friend and collaborator.

Critics have already hailed "Million Voices Whisper" as Haynes' best album to date, praising its powerful and soulful tracks that perfectly combine his eloquent musicianship as a triple-threat blues-rocker with the glowing spirit of a vital creative artist at the peak of his powers. Throughout the album, Haynes tackles the question of how to make things better – in love, in life, and in the world – with his soaring vocals and the poignancy of his six-string mastery on full display.

Joining Haynes on the Million Voices Whisper 2025 Tour will be an all-star lineup of the Warren Haynes Band, featuring longtime drummer Terence Higgins (of the Dirty Dozen Brass Band), Gov't Mule bassist Kevin Scott, Matt Slocum on keys, and Greg Osby on sax. Fans can expect an electrifying live experience as Haynes and his band bring the new album to life on stage, along with fan favorites from his extensive catalog.

In a generous gesture, $1 from every ticket sold for the winter tour will be donated to assist with hurricane relief efforts. Additionally, a limited number of specially curated fan packages will be available, including the Ultimate Guitar Player Package, which features a Les Paul Standard 60s Plain Top guitar in

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Warren Haynes

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Sparkling Burgundy to be played and signed by Warren, a meet & greet with a photo opportunity, soundcheck access, premium reserved seats, and more. The Guitar Player Package includes an autographed Gibson Les Paul Standard Pickguard, a set of custom Warren Haynes guitar picks in a collector box, a Dunlop guitar slide, and a set of GHS strings (items as used by Warren), plus soundcheck, priority access, and more.

Leading up to the tour, Haynes will perform the album's lead single, "This Life As We Know It," which recently reached the Top 15 on the Americana singles chart and Top 40 at Triple A radio, on ABC's "GMA3: What You Need To Know" on November 22nd. On November 24th, Haynes, a native of Asheville, and Dave Matthews Band will host "SOULSHINE," a benefit concert at Madison Square Garden to aid relief and recovery efforts in Western North Carolina and Florida in the wake of Hurricanes Helene and Milton. The sold-out, all-star event will feature performances from DMB, Warren Haynes Band, Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats, and Goose, along with very special guests Trey Anastasio, Mavis Staples, Robert Randolph, Joe Russo, Trombone Shorty, Susan Tedeschi, and Derek Trucks. The concert will be available worldwide via a free livestream hosted on YouTube from 7:00-11:00pm ET on the official event website SOULSHINEMSG.COM.

Following "SOULSHINE," Haynes will wrap up the year with Gov't Mule's annual New Year's Run and then launch 2025 with his annual concert-cation experience Island Exodus 15 in Jamaica from January 19-23 before embarking on the Million Voices Whisper 2025 Tour.

As a visionary GRAMMY Award-winning artist, Warren Haynes has firmly established himself as a cornerstone of the American music landscape. Lauded as one of the most formidable guitarists and vocalists of the modern era and a prolific songwriter and producer, Haynes effortlessly cross-pollinates genres and unfurls solos that broil with passion in his distinctive, signature style. Throughout his

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Apple Music @ https://music.apple.com/us/artist/warren-haynes/549279

Warren Haynes

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prolific career as part of three of the greatest live groups in rock history – Allman Brothers Band, Gov't Mule, and the Dead – and as an acclaimed solo artist, he has become one of music's most treasured storytellers, with his artistry leading to thousands of memorable performances and millions of album and track sales.

Haynes' ability to inspire fans and fellow musicians alike is evident in the diverse array of artists he has performed and recorded with, including Dave Matthews Band, Peter Frampton, Chris Stapleton, Coheed and Cambria, Dave Grohl, Carlos Santana, Willie Nelson, and Dolly Parton, among many others. His influence on the music world is undeniable, and his dedication to giving back to the community is exemplified through his annual Christmas Jam, a star-studded holiday charity show in his home-town of Asheville, North Carolina, which will celebrate its 33rd event in 2025. The Christmas Jam has raised nearly $3 million for Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity, constructing over 50 homes, and continues to support the region's housing needs through newer partner BeLoved Asheville.

With the release of "Million Voices Whisper" and the upcoming Million Voices Whisper 2025 Tour, Warren Haynes once again demonstrates his unwavering commitment to his craft and his ability to captivate audiences with his soulful and powerful performances. As he continues to push the boundaries of his artistry and leave an indelible mark on the music world, it is clear that Warren Haynes remains a vital force in the industry, and his latest endeavors are not to be missed.



WARREN HAYNES TOUR DATES

Gov't Mule – New Year's Run
December 28 – New Haven, CT @ College Street Music Hall
December 30 – New York, NY @ Beacon Theatre
December 31 – New York, NY @ Beacon Theatre

Island Exodus 15
Featuring Gov't Mule, Warren Haynes, Drive-By Truckers Karina Rykman & Big Sugar
January 19-23, 2025 – Runaway Bay, Jamaica @ Jewel Paradise Cove Resort

Million Voices Whisper Tour 2025
February 7 – Knoxville, TN @ Bijou Theatre
February 8 – Huntsville, AL @ Mars Music Hall
February 11 – Toledo, OH @ Stranahan Theater
February 13 – Northfield, OH @ MGM Northfield Park – Center Stage
February 14 – Carmel, IN @ The Palladium
February 15 – West Des Moines, IA @ Val Air Ballroom
February 20 – Burlington, VT @ The Flynn
February 21 – Concord, NH @ Chubb Theatre
February 22 – Buffalo, NY @ Town Ballroom
April 5 – Columbia, SC @ Township Auditorium (rescheduled from 9/28)

Gov't Mule – Festival Appearances
March 6-8 – Live Oak, FL @ Suwannee Amp Jam #1 (on sale 11/21)
July 23-27 – Floyd County, VA @ FloydFest 25~Aurora

Warren Haynes Band – European Festival Appearance
July 6 – Sperken, Austria @ Castle Clam



Ninth Annual New Orleans Cigar Box Guitar Festival Promises Three Days of Musical Magic in the Crescent City

https://www.NewOrleans CBG.com

Facebook.com/NewOrleansCBG

Instagram.com/explore/tags/neworleanscigarboxguitarfestival/

By Greg Fontaine

In a celebration that perfectly embodies the innovative spirit of American music, the Historic New Orleans Jazz Museum will transform into a haven of homemade musical ingenuity this January, hosting what has become known as the "World Cup of cigar box guitar events." The 9th Annual New Orleans Cigar Box Guitar Festival, scheduled for January 16-18, 2025, promises an unprecedented gathering of international talent, bringing together master craftsmen and virtuoso performers in a three-day extravaganza that honors one of music's most fascinating traditions.

Limited to an exclusive audience of just 150 fortunate ticket holders, this intimate festival offers what few modern music events can: the rare opportunity to experience world-class performers up close and personal in one

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Ninth Annual New Orleans Cigar Box Guitar Festival

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April Mae & the June Bugs

of America's most historically significant musical venues. The Jazz Museum at 400 Esplanade Avenue, itself a testament to New Orleans' rich musical heritage, provides an appropriately iconic setting for this unique cultural celebration.

The 2025 lineup reads like a who's who of the global cigar box guitar movement, featuring an extraordinary assembly of talent that spans continents and genres. Headlining the festival is a powerful trio of acts that showcase the incredible versatility of these handcrafted instruments. New Jersey's roots music phenomena April Mae and the June Bugs bring their electrifying blend of vintage-inspired sounds, while Florida's Memphis Lightning promises to deliver their signature brand of high-octane rock 'n' roll that has audiences across the South talking. Perhaps most intriguingly, the super-sensational one-woman band Ghalia Volt will demonstrate how a single performer can create a wall of sound using these ingenious instruments.

The international flavor of this year's festival is particularly exciting, with a unprecedented gathering of European talent making the journey to the Crescent City. France's La Durance Blues Band brings their distinctive Gallic interpretation of American blues, while Germany's Captn Catfish offers a maritime-themed twist on traditional cigar box guitar music. Belgium's John Mary Go Round, Italy's Riccardo Ferrini, and England's El Gordeaux round out the European contingent, each bringing their unique cultural perspectives to this quintessentially American art form.

The local New Orleans scene will be well represented by an impressive roster of hometown heroes. The beloved Cigar Box Serenaders, whose performances have become legendary at previous festivals, return to showcase their mastery of these unique instruments. They're joined by the innovative Mahmoud Chouki, whose fusion of world music styles has earned him international acclaim, and the soulful Ed Wills and Blues 4 Sale, who remind us why New Orleans remains the birthplace of the blues. Adding to the local lineup are the exceptional talents of Rumsey Kadar and Amzie Adams, each bringing their distinctive interpretations of the cigar box guitar tradition.


Memphis Lightning

But the festival is far more than just performances. The carefully crafted schedule includes over 24 hours of programming, beginning with Thursday's enlightening Evening Symposium. This opening event combines riveting performances with fascinating cultural history presentations and culminates in the pulse-pounding finale of the International Cigar Box Guitar Video Playoffs, where global competitors vie for recognition in this growing musical movement.

Friday and Saturday's Builders' Forums have become legendary among instrument crafters worldwide. These sessions bring together some of the most innovative minds in instrument building, offering attendees unprecedented access to the techniques and wisdom of master craftsmen. Builders will compete for coveted prizes while sharing their secrets and stories, ensuring that this unique tradition continues to evolve and thrive.

The historical significance of cigar box guitars in American music cannot be overstated. These humble instruments emerged from the innovative spirit of pioneers, Civil War soldiers, farmhands, and street musicians who, faced with limited resources, created expressive musical instruments from household items and whatever hardware they could find. This tradition of musical resourcefulness took particularly strong root in Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta, where these simple instruments helped shape almost every style of American music we know today.

In New Orleans, these homemade instruments played a crucial role in the birth of both jazz and blues, making the Historic Jazz Museum the perfect venue for this

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Ninth Annual New Orleans Cigar Box Guitar Festival

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celebration. The term "Cigar Box Guitar" has evolved to encompass a wide variety of homemade stringed instruments, including banjos, basses, dulcimers, fiddles, mandolins, and the distinctive diddley bow. Today's musicians continue to push the boundaries of what these instruments can do, incorporating their authentic, traditional sound into contemporary music while honoring their historic roots.

The festival's growth since its 2016 inception has been remarkable. After winning OffBeat Magazine's 'Neighborhood Festival of the Year' award in 2019, the event expanded its reach through a partnership with internationally-acclaimed singer/guitarist Samantha Fish in 2020. Even the challenges of the global pandemic couldn't dampen the festival's spirit - when forced to go virtual in 2021, the event produced two nights of supercharged video content streamed worldwide. After a brief hiatus in 2022, the festival returned triumphantly to live performances in 2023, with 2024's edition being hailed as the most successful yet.

The all-inclusive tickets for the 2025 festival offer an extraordinary value for music lovers. Beyond access to all performances and workshops, ticket holders will receive chances to win one of three handcrafted cigar box guitars being given away during the event. Each attendee also receives an official festival poster, a commemorative refrigerator magnet, and a special event laminate - tangible mementos of this unique cultural experience.

The festival's timing in mid-January provides the perfect opportunity for music lovers to experience New Orleans during one of its most pleasant seasons. The Historic Jazz Museum's comfortable confines ensure that regardless of weather, attendees will enjoy every moment of the performances and workshops in climate-controlled comfort. The museum's world-class listening and exhibit spaces provide the perfect acoustic environment for both intimate performances and educational sessions.

For those seeking to immerse themselves in a truly unique musical experience, the 9th Annual New Orleans Cigar Box Guitar Festival offers a rare opportunity to witness the past, present, and future of American musical innovation. As these simple yet expressive instruments continue to capture the imagination of musicians worldwide, this festival stands as a testament to the enduring power of musical creativity and the universal language of handcrafted music.

Early bird tickets are available until November 1st, and given the festival's limited capacity and growing international reputation, early purchase is strongly recommended. For those unable to secure all-inclusive passes, a limited number of standing-room-only single-day tickets may be released closer to the event, pending available space. Interested parties can secure their spot at this extraordinary gathering by calling (504) 568-6993 or visiting NewOrleansCBG.com.

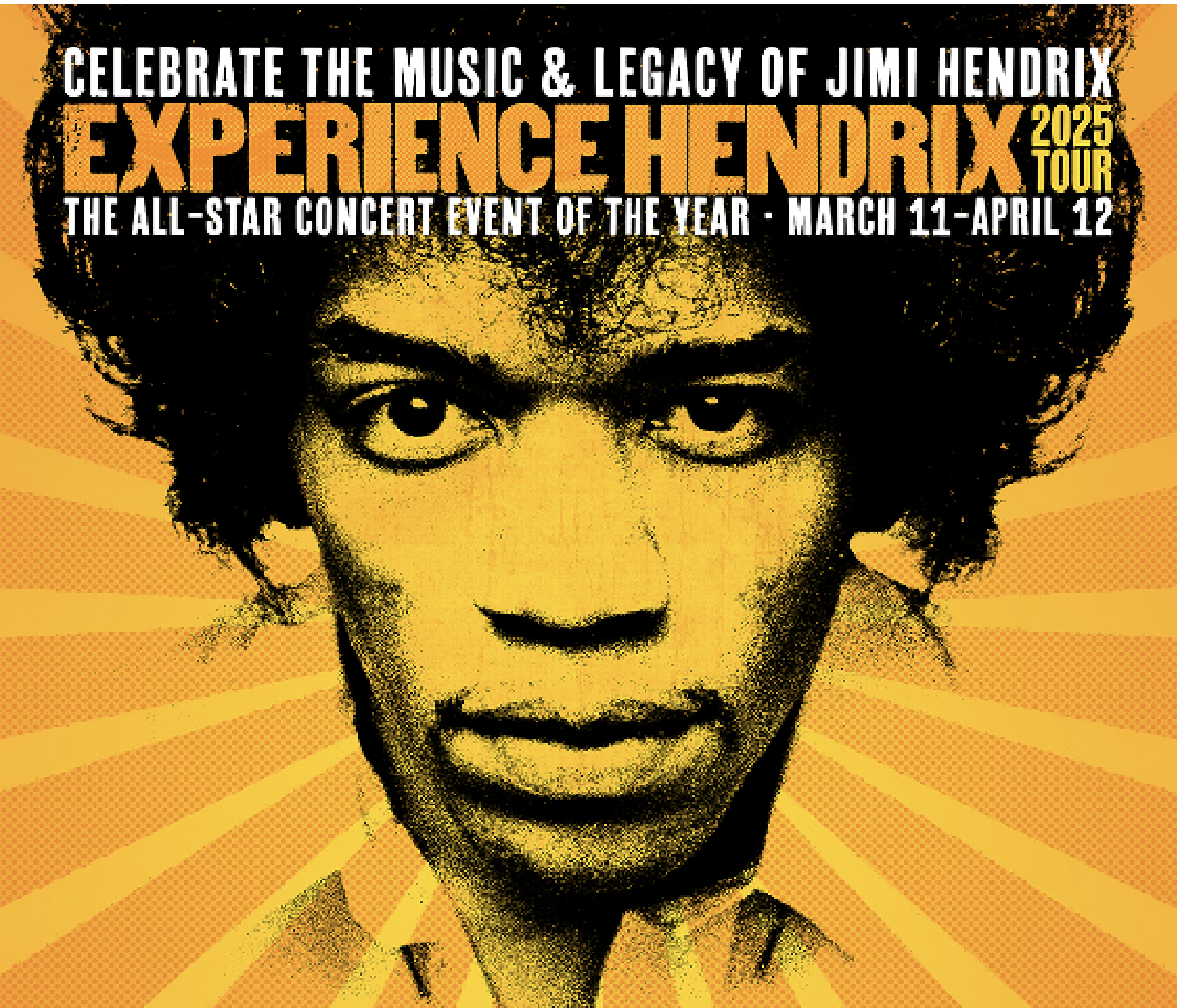
As New Orleans continues to evolve while honoring its rich musical heritage, the Cigar Box Guitar Festival stands as a brilliant example of how traditional music can remain vibrantly relevant in the modern world. This January's gathering promises to be the most exciting edition yet, offering attendees a chance to be part of a growing global movement that celebrates the ingenious spirit of American musical innovation.



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Rising Star Eddie 9V Delivers Americana-Infused Blues on Captivating New Album "Saratoga"

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By Albert Schwartz

In the world of contemporary blues and roots music, few artists are generating as much excitement as Eddie 9V. With his powerful vocals, soulful guitar playing, and memorable songwriting, the Georgia-born musician has quickly risen from local sensation to international acclaim. Now, with the release of his fourth solo album, "Saratoga," on November 22, 2024 via Ruf Records, Eddie 9V is poised to reach even greater heights.

Recorded primarily at Eddie's home studio in Georgia, with a few tracks laid down at Crown Lanes Studio in Denver, Colorado, "Saratoga" showcases Eddie's growth as a songwriter and his desire to push beyond the boundaries of traditional blues. The eleven original songs, co-written with his brother and frequent collaborator Lane Kelly, blend elements of Southern soul, rock, funk, and Americana into a captivating musical journey.

"I was shooting for a more Americana-type album this time — less blues songs and solos and more focusing on the songwriting," Eddie explains. The result is a cohesive and engaging record that feels like the perfect soundtrack for a long road trip. "I do think it's a wonderful road trip album," Eddie adds with a smile.

The album's title track, "Saratoga," perfectly encapsulates Eddie's approach to songwriting. Written while he was staying at an Airbnb, feeding carrots to a mule deer just outside his porch, the song's funky groove and vivid lyrics paint a picture of a restless spirit yearning for something more. "I was sitting on an Airbnb porch picking a riff I had recently come up with," Eddie recalls. "I was writing all these little lyrics while looking out to a huge mule deer directly in front of me eating grass and carrots that I was throwing to them."

Other standout tracks on "Saratoga" include the slow-burning "Love Moves Slow," the horn-driven "Delta," and the

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Eddie 9V

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introspective album closer "The Road To Nowhere." Throughout the record, Eddie's guitar playing is a revelation, whether he's delivering stinging leads on rockers like "Red River" and "Cry Like The River" or laying down subtle, soulful licks on more subdued tracks.

To bring his vision for "Saratoga" to life, Eddie enlisted a talented group of musicians, including his brother Lane Kelly on bass, Wurlitzer, and various organs, Spencer Pope on Fender Rhodes and keys, and drummers David Green and Seef Anam. Guest appearances by saxophonist Scott Box, trombonist Danny Wytanis, fiddler Sam Baumel, and vocalist Leah Bella Frasier add depth and texture to the album's sound.

Music critics have been quick to praise "Saratoga" and Eddie's unique voice as a songwriter and performer. "Eddie 9V has created a unique artistic identity on his latest, 'Saratoga'," writes Blue Notes & Conversations' John Muller. "Focusing more on his songwriting this time around these sessions found Eddie writing in a whole new direction — finding, in the process, his own indelible voice as a singer-songwriter. Eddie's signature wit and sharp observations of contemporary America make the songs on 'Saratoga' truly special."

Eddie's rise to prominence has been nothing short of meteoric. Born Brooks Mason in June 1996, he began playing guitar at the age of six and quickly developed a passion for blues, soul, and roots music. By his teenage years, he was already making a name for himself on the Atlanta blues scene, representing the Atlanta Blues Society at the 2013 International Blues Challenge in Memphis.

But it was when he adopted the stage name Eddie 9V (pronounced "Nine Volt") that his career really took off. His debut album, "Left My Soul In Memphis," released in 2019, earned rave reviews from critics and fans alike. Classic Rock Magazine called him "the new master of the blues," while Rock and Blues Muse hailed the album as "fresh and life-affirming."

Eddie's follow-up albums, 2021's "Little Black Flies" and 2023's "Capricorn," recorded at the legendary Capricorn Studios in Macon, Georgia, further cemented his status as one of the most exciting young artists in blues and roots music. The Guardian and Classic Rock's Henry Yates declared, "As an artist, he sounds fully charged."

Now, with the release of "Saratoga," Eddie 9V is ready to take his music to even wider audiences. The album's blend of blues, soul, rock, and Americana is sure to appeal to fans of artists like Gary Clark Jr., Nathaniel Rateliff, and Jason Isbell, while Eddie's unique voice and storytelling ability set him apart as an artist to watch.



As Eddie prepares to hit the road in support of "Saratoga," he reflects on the journey that has brought him to this point. "It's been a wild ride so far," he says with a grin. "But I feel like I'm just getting started. There's so much more music I want to make, so many more stories I want to tell. 'Saratoga' is just the beginning."

With its compelling blend of classic and contemporary influences, powerhouse performances, and masterful songwriting, "Saratoga" is an album that demands to be heard. Eddie 9V has delivered a record that not only solidifies his place as one of the most exciting young voices in blues and roots music, but also points the way forward for the genre as a whole. Buckle up and let "Saratoga" take you on a unforgettable musical journey.

Eddie V on Tour!

12/01 • Rock City • Nottingham, UK
12/02 • Cluny 2 • Newcastle, UK
12/03 • The Caves • Edinburgh, UK
12/04 • The Black Heart • London, UK
12/05 • Retro Bar • Manchester, UK
12/31 • Pearl Street Warehouse • Washington, DC

2025

01/18 • Saturn • Birmingham, AL
01/24 • The Grey Eagle • Asheville, NC
01/30 • The Charleston Pour House • Charleston, SC
01/31 • Terminal West • Atlanta, GA
02/01 • Grant's Lounge • Macon, GA
02/02 • 3rd & Lindsley • Nashville, TN
02/04 Coda Concert House • Joplin, MO
02/05 • Coda Concert House • Joplin, MO
02/07 • Bluebird Theater • Denver, CO
02/08 • The Armory • Fort Collins, CO
02/11 • 7th Street Entry • Minneapolis, MN
02/12 • High Noon Saloon • Madison, WI
02/13 • Lamplight Sessions • Mosinee, WI
02/14 • SPACE • Evanston, IL
02/15 • The Stockroom East • South Bend, IN
02/16 • Beachland Ballroom Tavern • Cleveland, OH
02/18 • Iron Horse Music Hall • Northampton, MA
02/19 • Daryl's House Club • Pawling, NY
02/20 • Ardmore Music Hall • Ardmore, PA ^
02/21 • The Stephen Talkhouse • Amagansett, NY
02/22 • F.M. Kirby Center for Performing Arts • Wilkes-Barre, PA
02/23 • Rams Head On Stage • Annapolis, MD
03/20 • The Funky Biscuit • Boca Raton, FL ~
03/21-03/26 • Keeping the Blues Alive At Sea • Miami, FL
04/04 • Hogs for the Cause • New Orleans, LA
04/05 • Baton Rouge Blues Festival • Baton Rouge, LA
05/31 • Michael Arnone's Crawfish Fest • Augusta, NJ
07/05 • Long Cove on Cedar Creek Lake • Malakoff, TX
09/04-09/07 • Big Blues Bender • Las Vegas, NV

Kiko: The Blues and the ghosts from the past

By Edoardo Fassio



Fresh from their podium at the 2024 edition of the **European Blues Challenge**, **Kiko & the Blues Refugees** launch their second album, three years after their impressive debut ***Threadbare***. The jury of the prestigious competition, which brought together artists from twenty-four countries in Braga, Portugal, awarded third place on a continental basis to a homeboy: **Francisco "Kiko" Pereira**, leader of the group and a native of Newark, New Jersey, who resides in Vila Nova de Gaia, in the Porto metropolitan area, a mere 45-minute drive.

The success is an indicator of an evolution in tastes: for metrics and structure, ***Ghosts*** is hard to ascribe to the blues genre in the strict sense. Kiko himself, a songwriter, and a vocalist of vibrant expressiveness, does not consider himself a bluesman; he rather belongs to the area of avant-garde jazz, one of his albums was released in 2012 under the name of **Jazz Refugees**.

The songs he performs and composes, in words and music, incorporate elements of pop, rock, jazz, R&B, soul and gospel. The sound output is the result of a high-level rendition, for which his backing musicians are proudly responsible: **António Mão de Ferro**, guitars, and arrangements; **Jorge Filipe Santos**, keyboards; **Carl Minnemann**, bass and **João Castro Cunha**, drums.



Yet, no matter what form the songs take, the blues is everywhere the substance. It embodies the gaze turned towards the world, towards society, towards human relations; it is the hope that tries to appear through the haze. It surfaces with disenchantment and bitter irony about self-consciousness and the challenges of aging in "Wise Old Man," the dancefloor-ready single that anticipated the LP, which could have been composed by Delbert McClinton. Or in "(Time Is) Not My Enemy," where echoes of Gil Scott-Heron resound instead, or in the melancholic "I Miss You All."

The blues appear like ghosts from the past, when "people used to pay attention" and phones were not yet "smart," haunting the toxic "Lockdown," a paraphrase on the theme of isolation, or in the acid falsetto à la Curtis Mayfield of the odd, freaky "Cheap Shot." ??And, of course, in the imaginative cabaret cut "Trash Can Heart," where one is mesmerized by Santos' electric piano and the lap steel of guest **AG Weinberger**, the Romanian boss of the six strings.

The record, produced by André Indiana, welcomes other classy supporters of the Refugees cause: **Eduardo Cardinho** on vibraphone, **Telmo Marques** on piano and an effective backing vocal section that includes **Patrícia Silveira** and **Patrícia Antunes**. Icon **BJ Cole**, who has formerly worked with Elton John, Scott Walker, Bjork, R.E.M. and Depeche Mode, returns to play steel guitar.

Kiko: i blues e gli spettri dal passato

By Edoardo Fassio

Freschi del podio conquistato all'edizione 2024 dell'**European Blues Challenge**, **Kiko & the Blues Refugees** lanciano la loro opera seconda, a tre anni dall'impressionante esordio ***Threadbare***. La giuria del prestigioso concorso che ha radunato a Braga, in Portogallo, ventiquattro artisti da altrettanti paesi, ha assegnato il terzo posto su base continentale a un relativo *homeboy*: **Francisco "Kiko" Pereira**, leader del gruppo e nativo di Newark, nel New Jersey, risiede a Vila Nova de Gaia, nell'area metropolitana di Oporto, a soli tre quarti d'ora di macchina.



Il successo è significativo di un'evoluzione del gusto: per metrica e struttura ***Ghosts*** è difficile da ascrivere al genere blues in senso stretto. Kiko stesso, autore e vocalist di vibrante espressività, non si ritiene un bluesman; proviene piuttosto dall'area del jazz d'avanguardia, uno dei suoi lavori uscì nel 2012 a nome dei **Jazz Refugees**.

Le canzoni che interpreta e compone, in parole e musica, incorporano elementi pop, rock, jazz, r&b, soul e gospel. La resa sonora è frutto di un'esecuzione di alto livello, di cui hanno fiera responsabilità i suoi comprimari: **António Mão de Ferro**, chitarre e arrangiamenti; **Jorge Filipe Santos**, tastiere; **Carl Minnemann**, basso e **João Castro Cunha**, batteria.

Eppure, al di là della modalità in cui i brani prendono forma, il blues è ovunque la sostanza. Incarna lo sguardo gettato sul mondo, sulla società, sui rapporti umani; è la speranza che tenta di apparire nella foschia. Affiora con disincanto e amara ironia sulla coscienza di sé e sulle sfide dell'invecchiamento in "Wise Old Man," il singolo riempipista che ha anticipato l'LP, che avrebbe potuto essere composto da Delbert McClinton. Oppure in "(Time Is) Not My Enemy", dove invece si odono echi di Gil Scott-Heron, o nella malinconica "I Miss You All".



I blues compaiono come spettri dal passato, quando "la gente prestava attenzione" e i telefoni non erano ancora "smart", infestano la tossica "Lockdown", una parafrasi sul tema dell'isolamento o nell'acido falsetto alla Curtis Mayfield della curiosa, *freaky* "Cheap Shot". E naturalmente nell'immaginoso pezzo da cabaret "Trash Can Heart", dove si resta prigionieri del piano elettrico di Santos e della lap steel dell'ospite **AG Weinberger**, fuoriclasse rumeno delle sei corde.

Il disco, prodotto da **André Indiana**, accoglie altri prestigiosi sostenitori della causa dei Rifugiati: **Eduardo Cardinho** al vibrafono, Telmo Marques al pianoforte e una efficace sezione di coriste che include **Patrícia Silveira** e **Patrícia Antunes**. Alla steel guitar ritorna un'icona: **BJ Cole,** già con Elton John, Scott Walker, Bjork, R.E.M. e Depeche Mode.



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Chicago's The Braided Janes Release Groundbreaking Love Song "Bésame," Marking First All-Female Production

Listen To "Bésame" here at https://ffm.to/lyonjve.OYD

By Jose Martinez

The Braided Janes, Chicago's acclaimed Latin alternative band, have made a triumphant return to the music scene with "Bésame," a groundbreaking new single that marks several significant firsts for the group. Released today, the track is not only their first new material since their 2023 album "Renacer," but also represents their first production fully spearheaded by women, setting the stage for their highly anticipated third album due in 2025.

"Bésame" emerges as a deeply personal celebration of love, inspired by the enduring relationship between lead singer Jessica "Museica" Rodriguez and drummer Juny Alvarez, who are approaching their 20th anniversary together. The song's warm, sunny rhythms and uplifting melodies serve as a testament to the universal power of love, transcending gender boundaries while emphasizing love's role as a unifying force across humanity.

"Music has always been my refuge both in good and bad times," shares Rodriguez, reflecting on the song's origins. "During the nearly 20 years that we've spent together, we have documented our story through music. I have written protest songs defending our identity, songs of triumph celebrating our perseverance, but this is the first love song that encapsulates how fulfilled I feel with my wife, and the innocence and pure love that occurs when you find the person for you. Because love is a global language, the common denominator that unites us all."

The production of "Bésame" marks a significant milestone for The Braided Janes, as it's their first recording completed entirely in their Chicago home studio. The project brought together an impressive team of female talent, with Grammy-nominated audio engineer and award-winning radio producer Jeanne Montalvo leading the production efforts, while Margret Luthar handled the mastering process. This collaboration represents the band's first release fully helmed by women, adding another layer of significance to the project.

The Braided Janes, formed by a close-knit family unit including Rodriguez (vocals, keys, guitar), Alvarez (drums, percussion), and brother-in-law Andrew Doyle (bass, electric guitar), have established themselves as a powerful voice in the Latin alternative scene. Their impact extends beyond music, with their commitment to social change earning them recognition from major media outlets including NPR and PBS. The Advocate has notably praised them as "one of the best Latin alternative bands from Chicago."

The band's journey to this point has been marked by significant achievements. Their bilingual debut album tackled crucial social issues including gun violence, femicide, and the struggles faced by immigrants and people of color. The track "Fuego" from their 2019 project caught NPR's attention, earning a spot on their Best Latin Alternative Songs of 2019 list. Following this success, 2023 saw the release of their sophomore album "Renacer" and the completion of their inaugural U.S. tour, Corazón Migrante U.S. Tour 2023.



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The Corazón Migrante tour proved to be a milestone for the band, featuring a successful album release show in their hometown of Chicago and notable performances at the Consulado General de México in major cities including New York City, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. These performances helped solidify their reputation as one of the most compelling voices in contemporary Latin alternative music.

"Bésame" serves as the first preview of The Braided Janes' forthcoming third album, scheduled for release in 2025. This new single, with its celebration of love and groundbreaking all-female production, suggests an exciting new chapter for the band, one that builds upon their commitment to social justice while exploring more personal, intimate themes.

As The Braided Janes continue to evolve both musically and thematically, "Bésame" stands as a testament to their growth as artists and their ability to address universal themes while maintaining their distinctive voice in the Latin alternative music scene. The single not only celebrates love in its purest form but also marks a significant step forward in the band's mission to create meaningful, inclusive music that resonates across cultural and social boundaries.



The Braided Janes Marcan Historia con “Bésame”, su Primera Producción Totalmente Femenina

ESCUCHA “BÉSAME”AQUI: https://ffm.to/lyonjve.OYD

Por Jose Martinez

La aclamada banda latina alternativa de Chicago, The Braided Janes, ha regresado al panorama musical con “Bésame”, un revolucionario nuevo sencillo que marca varios hitos significativos para el grupo. Lanzada hoy, la canción no solo representa su primer material nuevo desde su álbum “Renacer” de 2023, sino que también destaca por ser su primera producción dirigida íntegramente por mujeres, anticipando su próximo álbum previsto para 2025.

“Bésame” surge como una celebración profundamente personal del amor, inspirada en la duradera relación entre la vocalista Jessica “Museica” Rodríguez y la baterista Juny Álvarez, quienes próximamente celebrarán sus 20 años juntas. Con ritmos cálidos y melodías soleadas, la canción se presenta como un bálsamo reconfortante para el alma, reflejando la alegría de encontrar a la persona perfecta, independientemente del género, mientras celebra el amor como el vínculo universal que une a la humanidad.

«La música siempre ha sido mi refugio, tanto en los buenos como en los malos momentos», comparte Rodríguez al hablar sobre los orígenes de la canción. «Durante los casi 20 años que hemos pasado juntos, hemos documentado nuestra historia a través de la música. He escrito canciones de protesta defendiendo nuestra identidad, canciones de triunfo celebrando nuestra perseverancia, pero ésta es la primera canción de amor que resume lo realizada que me siento con mi mujer, y la inocencia y el amor puro que se produce cuando encuentras a la persona para ti. Porque el amor es un lenguaje global, el denominador común que nos une a todos».

La producción de “Bésame” marca un momento histórico para The Braided Janes, siendo su primera grabación realizada completamente en su estudio casero de Chicago. El proyecto reunió a un impresionante equipo de talento femenino, con la ingeniera de sonido nominada al Grammy y galardonada productora de radio Jeanne Montalvo liderando los esfuerzos de producción, mientras que Margret Luthar se encargó de la masterización. Esta colaboración representa el primer lanzamiento de la banda dirigido íntegramente por mujeres, añadiendo otro nivel de significado al proyecto.

The Braided Janes, formada por los miembros de la familia Jessica Rodríguez (voz, teclados, guitarra), Juny Álvarez (batería, percusión) y su cuñado Andrew Doyle (bajo, guitarra eléctrica), se han establecido como una voz poderosa en la escena alternativa latina. Su impacto se extiende más allá de la música, con su compromiso con el cambio social ganándose el reconocimiento de importantes medios de comunicación como NPR y PBS. The Advocate los ha elogiado notablemente como “una de las mejores bandas alternativas latinas de Chicago”.

El viaje de la banda hasta este punto ha estado marcado por logros significativos. Su álbum debut bilingüe abordó temas sociales cruciales, incluyendo la violencia armada, el feminicidio y las luchas que enfrentan los inmigrantes y las personas de color. La canción “Fuego” de su proyecto de 2019 captó la atención de NPR, ganándose un lugar en su lista de las Mejores Canciones Alternativas Latinas de 2019. Después de este éxito, 2023 vio el lanzamiento de su segundo álbum “Renacer” y la realización de su primera gira por Estados Unidos, Corazón Migrante U.S. Tour 2023.



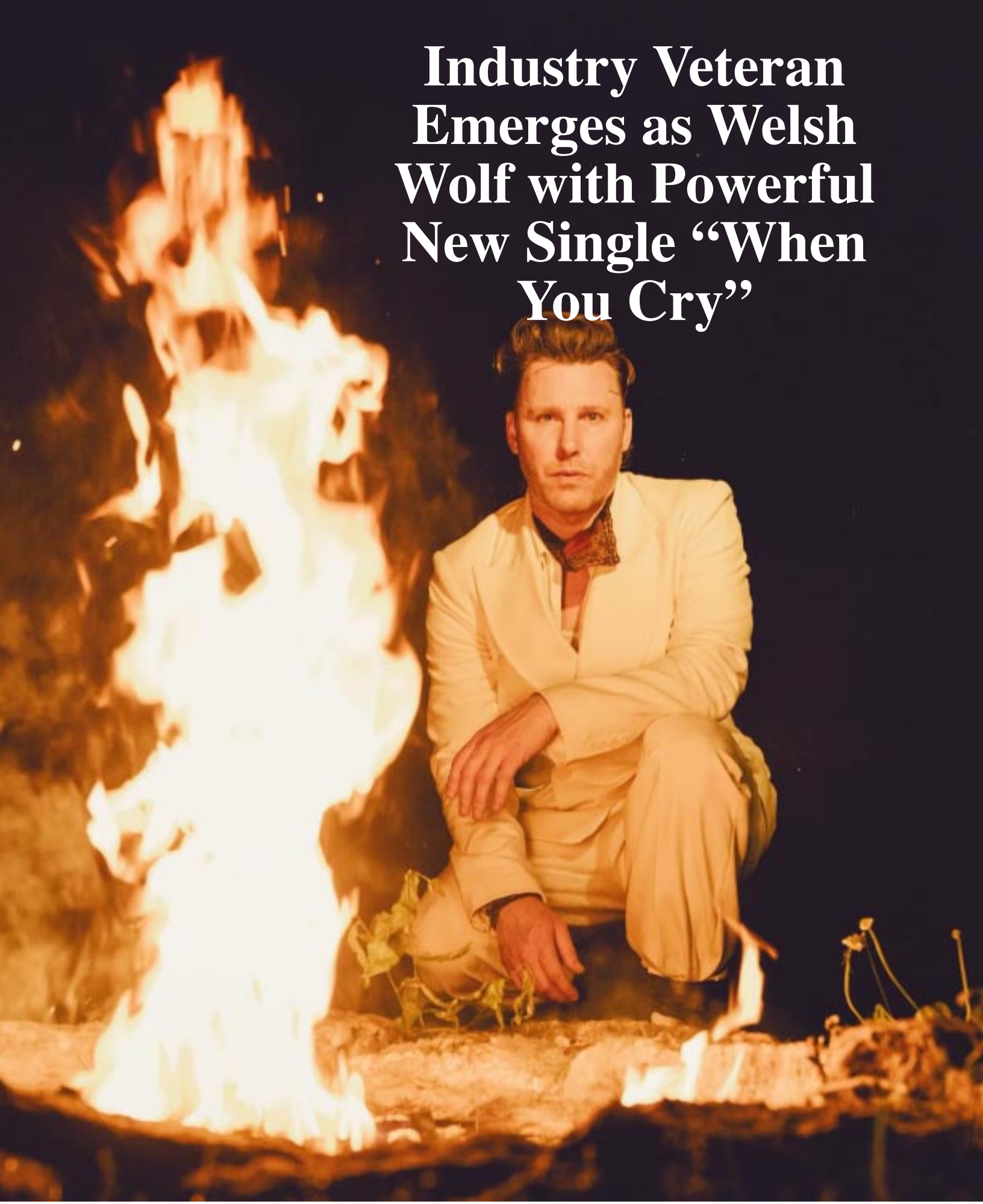
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La gira Corazón Migrante resultó ser un hito para la banda, presentando un exitoso show de lanzamiento del álbum en su ciudad natal de Chicago y notables actuaciones en el Consulado General de México en importantes ciudades como Nueva York, Atlanta y Los Ángeles. Estas presentaciones ayudaron a solidificar su reputación como una de las voces más convincentes en la música alternativa latina contemporánea.

“Bésame” sirve como el primer adelanto del próximo tercer álbum de The Braided Janes, programado para su lanzamiento en 2025. Este nuevo sencillo, con su celebración del amor y su revolucionaria producción totalmente femenina, sugiere un emocionante nuevo capítulo para la banda, uno que se construye sobre su compromiso con la justicia social mientras explora temas más personales e íntimos.

Mientras The Braided Janes continúan evolucionando tanto musical como temáticamente, “Bésame” se erige como un testimonio de su crecimiento como artistas y su capacidad para abordar temas universales mientras mantienen su voz distintiva en la escena de la música alternativa latina. El sencillo no solo celebra el amor en su forma más pura, sino que también marca un paso significativo en la misión de la banda de crear música significativa e inclusiva que resuene a través de las fronteras culturales y sociales.

Industry Veteran Emerges as Welsh Wolf with Powerful New Single "When You Cry"



By Nathan Pugh

From playing guitar on one of the biggest hits of the 2000s to touring with rock legends, Paul Freeman has long been a behind-the-scenes force in the music industry. Now, under the moniker Welsh Wolf, the Los Angeles-based artist is stepping into the spotlight with his compelling new single "When You Cry" and announcing exclusive December performances in Nashville and London.

The new track, which showcases Welsh Wolf's knack for crafting arena-ready power anthems, follows the successful September release of "Wreck," which garnered significant streaming numbers in its first week. Both singles were produced and mixed by John Spiker, known for his work with The Killers, Beck, and Filter, and will be featured on Welsh Wolf's forthcoming debut EP, scheduled for early 2025.

Freeman's journey to Welsh Wolf is a fascinating tale of music industry evolution. His guitar work can be heard on James Blunt's massive hit "You're Beautiful," and his touring credentials read like a who's who of rock royalty – The Who, Chris Cornell, Chris Isaac, Roger Daltrey, and Brandi Carlisle. As a songwriter, he's penned a Top 40 hit for Sleeping With Sirens and seen his compositions recorded by iconic artists including Meat Loaf and Robbie Williams.

"When You Cry" emerged from an intensive period of creative exploration, during which Freeman spent over a year in his studio honing his sound. The result is a powerful blend of influences that draws from The Cult, The Killers, and Sam Fender, while paying homage to his early musical loves: The Cure, T-Rex, Dire Straits, and Paul McCartney and Wings.

"It felt like I was allowing my true self to be seen," Freeman reflects on his latest work. "Before it felt like there was a filter that I didn't realize was even there. But now, I was finally allowing myself to be myself."

Freeman's musical origin story begins in South Wales with a serendipitous discovery – a discarded guitar sitting on a dumpster when he was just 10 years old. That fortunate find set him on a path that would shape his entire life. His mother recalls how Paul McCartney's "Band on the Run" was the only thing that would lull him to sleep, an early sign of his deep connection to music.

His talent developed rapidly, leading him to London where he formed the band Boedekka and signed with Boy George's label. The next chapter brought him to Los Angeles, where a fateful connection with legendary music executive Clive Davis opened doors throughout the industry. Beyond his touring work, Freeman's music has reached audiences through various media, featuring in films like "The Break-Up" and hit television series including "Jessica Jones" and "Insatiable."



HEAR "When You Cry" Here at https://unitedmasters.com/m/when-you-cry-3

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Now, as Welsh Wolf, Freeman is embarking on perhaps his most personal musical venture yet. The project represents not just a new stage name, but a creative rebirth. With two singles already showcasing his ability to craft compelling, stadium-sized rock anthems, the upcoming EP promises to be a powerful statement from an artist who, after years of helping others shine, is ready to step into his own spotlight.

The December dates in Nashville and London will offer audiences their first chance to experience Welsh Wolf's dynamic live performance, combining Freeman's years of stage experience with his fresh artistic vision. These intimate shows promise to be a rare opportunity to witness the birth of this exciting new project in close quarters before its inevitable expansion to larger venues.

As the music industry continues to evolve, Welsh Wolf stands as a testament to the enduring power of reinvention and authenticity in rock music. With decades of experience informing his craft and a clear vision for his artistic future, Freeman's emergence as Welsh Wolf marks the beginning of what promises to be an exciting new chapter in an already impressive musical journey.

For fans of Sam Fender, The Killers, Bruce Springsteen, and The Cure, Welsh Wolf offers a fresh voice that honors rock's rich heritage while pushing boldly into new territory. As 2024 draws to a close and anticipation builds for his 2025 EP release, these winter shows in Nashville and London may well be remembered as the moment a seasoned industry veteran transformed into rock's newest rising star.



Joe Bonamassa Spreads Holiday Cheer with New Single "Lonely Christmas Eve" Amidst Milestone Year and GRAMMY Nomination

LISTEN NOW:
https://joeb.me/StreamLonelyChristmasEve
WATCH THE OFFICIAL VIDEO:
|https://joeb.me/YTLonelyChristmasEve

By Greg Fontaine

Blues-rock icon Joe Bonamassa is ringing in the holiday season with a heartwarming new single, "Lonely Christmas Eve," released today on all streaming platforms. The track, co-written with acclaimed songwriter James House (known for his work with Martina McBride, Bonnie Raitt, and George Strait), showcases Bonamassa's signature guitar mastery and soulful vocals while capturing the essence of the festive season. "Lonely Christmas Eve" tells the story of friends coming together to celebrate the holidays, adding a fresh and uplifting tune to Bonamassa's growing collection of Christmas music.

Fans can now enjoy all of Bonamassa's Christmas songs, including "Lonely Christmas Eve," in one convenient playlist, available HERE. The release of this new single comes on the heels of Bonamassa's recent GRAMMY nomination for his album "Blues Deluxe Vol. 2" in the "Best Contemporary Blues Album" category, marking his fourth career nomination. The album, which debuted at #1 on Billboard's Blues Album Chart last year, has resonated with both fans and GRAMMY voters alike, further cementing Bonamassa's status as a modern blues powerhouse.

Bonamassa's previous GRAMMY nominations include 2022's "Royal Tea" (Contemporary Blues Album), 2017's "Live At The Greek Theatre" (Best Traditional Blues Album), and 2014's "Seesaw" (Contemporary Blues Album) with Beth Hart. These accolades serve as a testament to his unwavering dedication to his craft and his ability to captivate audiences with his exceptional talent.

The year 2024 has been a monumental one for Bonamassa, with his live album and concert film "Live at the Hollywood Bowl with Orchestra" debuting at #1 on multiple Billboard charts, including Blues, Classical, and Classical Crossover. This remarkable achievement marks his 28th career #1 on the Billboard Blues Chart, further solidifying his position as a trailblazer in the genre and showcasing his unique ability to seamlessly blend blues with orchestral grandeur.

In addition to his chart-topping success, Bonamassa recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of his landmark album "Different Shades of Blue" with the special digital reissue "Different Shades of Blue (Overdrive)." This reissue features rare tracks and fan favorites, such as the newly released "Black Irish Eyes," inviting listeners to revisit the album that marked a turning point in Bonamassa's career. Upon its initial release in 2014, "Different Shades of Blue" debuted at an impressive

continued on next page

Joe Bonamassa

(continued from previous page)

#8 on the Billboard 200, demonstrating his crossover appeal and ability to reach a wide audience.

Currently, Bonamassa is in the midst of his highly anticipated Fall Tour, treating fans across the U.S. to electrifying performances that showcase his unparalleled musicianship. Concertgoers can expect a powerful mix of new tracks, classic hits, and perhaps even a few holiday surprises, making these shows an unmissable experience for blues-rock enthusiasts. For the latest updates on Joe Bonamassa's music, tour dates, and upcoming projects, fans are encouraged to visit his official website at jbonamassa.com.

As a four-time GRAMMY-nominated artist and 15x Blues Music Award Nominee (4-time winner), Bonamassa has established himself as one of the most celebrated performing musicians of his generation. With an astounding multi-genre catalog that includes more than 40 albums, spanning studio and live recordings, as well as collaborative projects with his adventurous side projects, Black Country Communion and Rock Candy Funk Party, Bonamassa's limitless work ethic and passion for music continue to drive his success.

In recent years, Bonamassa has also made significant contributions to the music industry as a producer, working with talented artists such as Joanne Shaw Taylor, Marc Broussard, Larry McCray, Jimmy Hall, and others for his independent label KTBA Records. His latest venture, Journeyman LLC, a full-service artist management, record label, concert promotion, and marketing company, aims to build awareness for independent artists worldwide, further demonstrating his commitment to nurturing and supporting the next generation of musical talent.

As Joe Bonamassa continues to reign over the blues charts, his new Christmas single, "Lonely Christmas Eve," serves as a heartwarming reminder of the power of music to bring people together during the holiday season. With his ongoing Fall Tour and the promise of more exciting projects on the horizon, Bonamassa's star shows no signs of dimming, and fans can look forward to more incredible music and unforgettable performances from this blues-rock icon in the years to come.



U.S. SPRING 2025 TOUR

February 16 - Seattle, WA - Climate Pledge Arena
February 19 - Milwaukee, WI - The Riverside Theater
February 21 - Chicago, IL - The Chicago Theatre
February 22 - Cleveland, OH - Playhouse Square
February 25 - Buffalo, NY - Shea's Buffalo Theatre
February 27 - New York City, NY - Beacon Theatre
February 28 - Boston, MA - MGM Music Hall at Fenway
March 1 - Mashantucket, CT - Foxwoods Resort & Casino
March 3 - Easton, PA - State Theatre
March 5 - Charleston, WV - Clay Center
March 7 - Cherokee, NC - Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort Event Center
March 8 - Atlanta, GA - Fox Theatre
March 10 - Chattanooga, TN - Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Auditorium
March 12 - Greensboro, NC - Steven Tanger Center
March 14 - Charlotte, NC - Ovens Auditorium
March 15 - St. Augustine, FL - The St. Augustine Amphitheatre
March 16 - Mobile, AL - Saenger Theatre
March 18 - Evans, GA - Columbia County Performing Arts Center
March 19 - Melbourne, FL - The King Center

KEEPING THE BLUES ALIVE AT SEA

March 21-26 - Miami, FL - Keeping The Blues Alive at Sea X

EUROPE TOUR 2025

April 21 - Glasgow, UK - SEC Centre
April 23 - Cardiff, UK - Utilita Arena
April 25 - Liverpool, UK - M&S Bank Arena
April 26 - Nottingham, UK - Motorpoint Arena
April 27 - Brighton, UK - Brighton Centre
April 29 - Oberhausen, DE - Rudolf Weber Arena
April 30 - Munich, DE - Olympiahalle
May 2 - Prague, CR - O2 Universam
May 3 - Warsaw, PL - COS Torwar
May 6 - Hannover, DE - Zag Arena
May 8 - Frankfort, DE - Jahrhunderthalle
May 9 - Frankfort, DE - Jahrhunderthalle
May 10 - Antwerp, BE - Lotto Arena

EUROPE SUMMER TOUR 2025

July 1 - Cork, IE - Live at The Marquee*
July 2 - Cork, IE - Live at The Marquee*
July 3 - Cork, IE - Live at The Marquee
July 6 - Klam, AT- Clam Castle
July 18 - Pordenone, IT - San Valentino Park
July 19 - Rome, IT - Auditorium Parco della Musica Ennio Morricone

* Sold Out

KEEPING THE BLUES ALIVE AT SEA ALASKA

September 15-21, 2025 - Seattle, WA - Keeping The Blues Alive at Sea ALASKA

Conversations With The Professionals

By John in Houston



This Month Southern Rockers Delta Circle

Talk about text book southern rock coming right out of the heartland Delta Circle has got it working big time. When not on tour, they just returned from New Orleans for example, these get it done guys out of Savannah Georgia absolutely, positively love playing the local, regional honky tonks and spirited club circuit. Their audiences eat it up because Delta Circle is not only home town material gone viral but they deliver not only their own fresh hot sound but part of their on stage DNA is to entertain to the max so their shows include famous songs we all love to this day. Yep, you name it and they got it down pat and their audiences go wild. Four guys with diverse backgrounds that came together in the south with two of them arriving there from the north-eastern area of the United States. Some groups sound good while some groups sound bad ass, over the top. Some produce a great sound but lack stage presence, show quality. Not this group, nope, it's kick ass over the top good. I originally became aware of Delta Circle through Barry Coffing the internationally famous sync licensing and event promoter. Barry had called me and said he thought I might want to learn more about them and since it was Barry calling well of course I am going to look into them. Man was I ever glad for that call after I hearing their sound and watching them on stage.



They had released a track named "Back And Better" and a video to go with it that was and remains extremely cool. The song delivers a driving rhythm with no one instrument over

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Conversations With The Professionals
This Month Southern Rockers Delta Circle

By John in Houston



powering the intended collaborative effort. The end result of the mixing and the mastering present a clean, crisp sound while the video is way cool in its own right. One of the impressive components of Delta Circle is their on going team effort to support common good through 501c3 legitimate charities and non-profits. Most recently that level of commitment carried over into the topic of domestic abuse. There is just too much to write about on this topic unfortunately to go into this article but we all know abuse can be a major problem if you are caught up in the situation. These guys stood up and were counted as staunch supporters of equal footing for all Americans. In this scenario the support required of them by The Tri-County Preventative Agency was to participate in the agency's upcoming battle of the bands. Not only did Delta Circle enter it, they won as well. A nice reward for a job well done. This is not unusual for these musicians, all of them having come up as grateful Americans who have not stopped giving due to a passionate belief that we all need to do what we can. These are the Delta Circle band members on the left: Kyle Graden (Drums), Joshua Buck Owens (Rhythm Guitar/Vocals) Nic Ziter (lead vocals, guitar) and Earnest Spiva (vocals, bass). Joshua grew up on country. His introduction to country came to him by way of his uncle back in the '70s. His uncle had a deep love for country music and so it went that when Josh was him it was coming through loud and clear. When it comes to Kyle his interest in percussion was actually fueled at a very early age. He had received a toy drum kit. His Dad would go on to tell people years later that one day it was noise, the next day it was music. His Dad was a dyed in the wool ZZ Top Fan and that heightened Kyle's interest in good ole southern rock. The third guy from left in the photo is Nic. His musical interests were piqued early on in church. Later he would be introduced to country music and got into Johnny Cash right out of the gate. As time went by the new man on the scene would become Keith Urban and that sound is still with him today. Then there is Earnest. If you were Earnest you couldn't help but feel the luxury of good music coming your way from your family. On his Dad's side was Brenda Lee and on his Mom's side of the family well Mom came from a musical family who were always either listening or singing. Earnest, a confident vocalist and bass player today smiles when he says it was both Mom and Dad. The guys like to kid around about both Josh and Earnest being from the south while Nic and Kyle got there as soon as they could. Check 'em out.



Delta Circle | Savannah GA | Facebook @ https://www.facebook.com/deltacircle/



credit: Jelena Jakovljevic

The Melvins and Napalm Death Announce Co-Headlining Tour, Bringing Together Two Iconic Forces in Extreme Music

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By Troy Wilkins

Get ready for a seismic event in the world of heavy music as two legendary bands, The Melvins and Napalm Death, have announced a monumental co-headlining tour. This highly anticipated collaboration brings together two of the most influential and groundbreaking acts in the history of extreme music, promising an unforgettable experience for fans across the globe.

The Melvins, formed in 1983 in Montesano, Washington, by vocalist/guitarist Buzz Osborne and later joined by drummer Dale Crover, have been credited with pioneering a unique subgenre that merges the worlds of punk rock and heavy music. With a career spanning over four decades and a discography boasting more than 30 original albums, numerous live records, and countless singles and rarities, The Melvins have solidified their status as one of modern music's most influential bands.

Napalm Death, hailing from Meriden, England, and formed in 1981, are widely regarded as one of the pioneers of grindcore and have been at the forefront of extreme music for over three decades. With their politically charged lyrics, uncompromising sound, and relentless work ethic, Napalm Death have released numerous critically acclaimed albums and have become a revered institution in the world of heavy music.

The co-headlining tour will see both bands performing extensive sets, showcasing their most iconic and groundbreaking works. Fans can expect a night of unparalleled intensity and musical prowess as The Melvins and Napalm Death share the stage, each delivering their own unique brand of sonic assault.

Buzz Osborne of The Melvins expressed his excitement about the collaboration, stating, "We've been admirers of Napalm Death for years, and it's an honor to share the stage with them on this tour. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for fans to witness two of the most influential bands in extreme music coming together for an unforgettable night of pure, unadulterated heaviness."

Napalm Death vocalist Mark "Barney" Greenway echoed Osborne's sentiment, adding, "The Melvins have been a constant source of inspiration for us throughout our career. Their fearless approach to pushing the boundaries of heavy music has always resonated with us, and we couldn't be more excited to join forces with them on this tour. Get ready for a night of unrelenting intensity and sonic mayhem."

The tour announcement comes amidst a flurry of recent activity from both bands. The Melvins have recently released their 2024 album,

continued on next page

Chris Casella

The Melvins and Napalm Death

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'Tarantula Heart,' as well as the 2022 EP 'Bad Mood Rising' and the ambitious 36-track acoustic collection 'Five Legged Dog' in 2021. Napalm Death, meanwhile, have been working on new material and recently celebrated the 30th anniversary of their seminal album, 'Harmony Corruption.'

As two of the most respected and influential bands in extreme music, The Melvins and Napalm Death's co-headlining tour promises to be a landmark event for fans of heavy music worldwide. With dates and venues to be announced shortly, anticipation is building for what is sure to be one of the most talked-about tours of the year.

Prepare yourself for a night of uncompromising heaviness, groundbreaking music, and sheer intensity as The Melvins and Napalm Death join forces to create a once-in-a-lifetime experience for fans of extreme music. This is a tour not to be missed, as two legendary bands come together to celebrate their iconic legacies and push the boundaries of heavy music even further.

"***Savage Imperial Death March Part II***"

Tour Dates:

April 4 - San Diego @ CA Music Box
April 5 - Santa Ana, CA @ The Observatory
April 7 - San Francisco, CA @ Great American Music Hall
April 8 - San Jose @ CA The Ritz
April 10 - Los Angeles @ CA The Belasco
April 12 - Las Vegas, NV @ TBA
April 13 - Phoenix, AZ @ The Van Buren
April 14 - Tucson, AZ @ Rialto Theatre
April 15 - El Paso, TX @ Lowbrow Palace
April 17 - Dallas, TX @The Echo Lounge & Music Hall
April 18 - Austin, TX @ Emo's
April 19 - Houston, TX @ White Oak Music Hall – Downstairs
April 20 - Baton Rouge @ LA Chelsea's Live
April 21 - New Orleans, LA @House of Blues New Orleans
April 23 - Tampa, FL @ The Orpheum
April 24 - Ft. Lauderdale, FL @ Culture Room
April 25 - Orlando, FL @ The Beacham
April 26 - Savannah, GA @ District Live
April 27 - Atlanta, GA @ The Masquerade – Heaven Stage
April 28 - Birmingham, AL @ Saturn
April 29 - Athens, GA @ 40 Watt Club
May 1 - Charlotte, NC @ The Underground – Charlotte
May 2 - Carrboro, NC @ Cat's Cradle
May 3 - Virginia Beach, VA @ Elevation 27
May 4 - Baltimore, MD @ Baltimore Soundstage
May 5 - Philadelphia, PA @ Union Transfer
May 7 - Brooklyn, NY @ Warsaw
May 8 - Boston, MA @ Paradise Rock Club
May 9 - Harrisburg, PA @ Harrisburg Midtown Arts Center
May 10 - Pittsburgh, PA @ Mr .Small's
May 11 - Cleveland, OH @ TBA
May 12 - Detroit, MI @ Saint Andrew's Hall
May 13 - Grand Rapids, MI @ The Intersection
May 15 - Cincinnati, OH @ Bogart's
May 16 - Louisville, KY @ Mercury Ballroom
May 17 - Nashville, TN @ Brooklyn Bowl Nash ville
May 18 - St. Louis, MO @ Red Flag
May 19 - Chicago, IL @ Metro
May 20 - Milwaukee, WI @ The Rave II
May 22 - Minneapolis, MN @ First Avenue – Main room
May 23 - Des Moines, IA @ Wooly's
May 24 - Kansas City, MO @ Madrid Theatre
May 25 - Omaha, NE @ The Waiting Room
May 27 - Denver, CO @ Summit
May 29 - Salt Lake City, UT @ Metro Music Hall
May 31 - Bozeman, MT @ The ELM
June 1 - Spokane, WA @ Knitting Factory Spokane
June 2 Seattle, WA @ The Showbox
June 3 - Portland, OR @ Revolution Hall
June 4 - Eugene, OR @ McDonald Theatre
June 6 - Reno, NV @ Virginia Street Brewhouse
June 7 - Berkeley, CA @ Cornerstone Berkeley



Rock Band Clozure Signs with Wake Up! Music Rocks! and Releases New Single "Criminal Mind"

STREAM "Criminal Mind" at https://onerpm.link/CriminalMindCloZure

WATCH the Video at https://youtu.be/zlGnjRbAB44

For More Information Please Visit:
Official Website @ https://www.officialclozure.com/
Facebook @ https://www.facebook.com/officialcloZure
Instagram @ https://www.instagram.com/officialclozure/
YouTube @ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOioM3wjMhWq2rB3By_i7kw

By Albert Schwartz

Exciting news for fans of the high-energy rock band Clozure! Following their successful October tour with Fozzy, the band has announced their signing with Wake Up! Music Rocks! and the release of their brand new single, "Criminal Mind." This marks the beginning of a thrilling new chapter for the South Alabama-based group.

Formed in early 2012, Clozure set out to fill the void of heavy rock music in the South-East Alabama area. Since then, the band has developed an ever-evolving, full-on rock show that they work tirelessly to make a memorable experience for each and every fan. The band's current lineup consists of Michael Cordle (Lead Guitar), Nikollaj Lleshi (Lead Vocals), Matthew Russell (Rhythm Guitars), Michael McCann (Drums), and Zack Taylor (Bass).

In late 2023, Clozure underwent dynamic line-up changes, welcoming Nikollaj and Zack to the fold. These additions transformed the band into a female-fronted powerhouse, bringing fresh energy and perspectives to their sound. Following these changes, the band headed to 1979 Studios in Nashville, TN, in November to record four new singles with Grammy-winning producer Malcolm Springer.

Two of those singles, "The Devil Effect" and "Nevermore," have already been released to great acclaim, quickly followed by a well-crafted cover of Evanescence's "Bring Me to Life," which continues to gain traction and attract new fans.

2024 has been a remarkable year for Clozure, with the band being newly signed to Wake Up Music, who recognized their immense potential, and Full Circle Media joining their team. These new partnerships have added fuel to the forge, creating a nearly unstoppable force in the rock music scene. The release of their latest single, "Criminal Mind," is a testament to the band's growth and the exciting future that lies ahead.

Clozure's lead vocalist, Nikollaj Lleshi, expressed the band's enthusiasm, stating, "We're just getting started!" With the support of their sponsors, including WBGear, InTuneGP, Red Cymbals, WB Gear, BASN, RailHammer Pickups, SIT Strings, SJC Drums, and Scorpion Percussion, Clozure is poised to take the rock world by storm.

Fans can expect to hear more from Clozure in the near future, as the band continues to create unforgettable music and electrifying live performances. Keep an eye out for "Criminal Mind" and stay tuned for what promises to be an exhilarating journey with this rising rock sensation.





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Jaye Jayle Announces New Album "After Alter" and Shares Captivating Single "Father Fiction"

Listen To "Father Fiction" at https://orcd.co/jayejayle-father-fiction

Pre-order After Alter" at https://orcd.co/jaylejayle

Watch "Father Fiction" video at https://youtu.be/Av5ktCHFGwY

Follow Jay Jayle Online:

Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/jayejayle

Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/jayejayle/

By Troy Wildon

Kentucky-based gothic blues ensemble Jaye Jayle has announced the upcoming release of their highly anticipated fifth full-length album, "After Alter," set to drop on January 31, 2025, through Berlin's Pelagic Records. The band has also shared the lead single, "Father Fiction," giving fans a tantalizing glimpse into the new record's raw and introspective sound.

Originally conceived as an unfiltered outlet for the unique musical vision of band leader Evan Patterson, Jaye Jayle has always been an unpredictable creative force. What began as a lighthearted solo project with short, acoustic-based songs not intended for public consumption quickly evolved into a full-fledged band and a haunting post-punk, kraut-blues debut album, "House Cricks and Other Excuses To Get Out," released in 2016.

Now, with "After Alter," Jaye Jayle delves deep into their musical archives, drawing together fragments and memories from previous recording sessions and personal experiences to create an astounding collection of songs that chart a cathartic course into uncharted territories. The album is a testament to the band's rollercoaster career as outsider artists, as they rework and reframe pivotal moments and unfinished refrains into a powerful representation of their raw, undiluted essence.

The excitement of budding creative relationships collides with the crushing demise of turbulent personal ones throughout the album, resulting in a volatile, gut-wrenching, and serene listening experience that showcases the unexpected twists and turns that have come to define Jaye Jayle's sound.

The lead single, "Father Fiction," which also serves as the album's opening track, fearlessly dives into the fables and factious ideologies of organized religion. With hardened gazes and wry smiles, the band weaves rolling drums and repetitive discordant guitar refrains into a spiraling labyrinth of meaning and misinterpretation, setting the stage for an album that careens off into different places, times, and people from Jaye Jayle's past.

While "After Alter" serves as a powerful document of the band's history, it also represents a new beginning. By creatively exorcising these poignant moments, Jaye Jayle has opened themselves up to fresh inspirations, hinting at an exciting future with much more to come.

Fans can pre-order "After Alter" now and eagerly await its official release on January 31, 2025. With this new album, Jaye Jayle continues to solidify their position as a captivating and innovative force in the world of gothic blues and experimental music, promising an unforgettable journey through their most personal and provocative work to date.




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Nightborn Unleashes Uncompromising Metal Fury on New EP "Hammer of the Heretic"

Stream *Hammer of the Heretic* here:
https://open.spotify.com/album/6iH4o6qyEToT7oA6X5XAGc?si=mJqsavqdQ4aVjBOlTv3K5Q
Watch "Grave Madness" here at https://youtu.be/dxDOpRbJVyM
Watch "Temporal Nightmare" here https://youtu.be/jBYQXx2DzEI
Watch "Aphelion Dusk" here at https://youtu.be/ltfPQuc-VuQ

By Robert Wilkins

Thrash metal powerhouse Nightborn has just unleashed a blistering new EP titled "Hammer of the Heretic," a relentless onslaught of speed, aggression, and raw power. Released as a follow-up to their acclaimed 2022 album "Unhuman," this four-track offering showcases the band's unwavering commitment to pushing the boundaries of their signature sound while maintaining the intensity that has earned them a dedicated fanbase.

Frontman Arda K., the mastermind behind Nightborn, explains the band's approach to the new EP: "With 'Hammer of the Heretic', the idea was to experiment with different approaches and themes in each song, while maintaining that fast, dynamic, skull-crushing beat that defines the Nightborn style."

The EP opens with "Impenitent Ones," a chaotic and rhythmic thrash assault designed to incite instant headbanging. Arda's shrieking vocals explore the theme of autophagia, setting the stage for the unrelenting intensity that follows. The title track, "Hammer of the Heretic," maintains the high energy while introducing a groovy and

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Nightborn

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melodic midsection. Lyrically, the song delves into the revenge of heretics against their inquisitors and incorporates elements related to occult philosophies.

"Pulls of Darkness" showcases Nightborn's versatility, opening with an acoustic section before transitioning into realms of melodic black metal while still retaining the band's signature Slayer-like riffing. The song explores the inescapable allure of darkness that resides within every human being. Closing out the EP is "The Undertow," a blast-beat-driven onslaught that ventures into death metal territories, featuring a hard-hitting and groovy midsection. The lyrics address pure hatred towards theocratic dictatorships and their inevitable downfall.

For the recording of "Hammer of the Heretic," Arda employed an extremely rare Ken Lawrence Explorer guitar, the only one of its kind in the world. This unique instrument played a crucial role in sparking inspiration for the EP. Arda also experimented with different singing styles on each track, aiming to create an atmosphere that captures the unrelenting, speed-driven thrash/death mania that Nightborn is known for.

The EP features all music and lyrics written by Arda, with Simon McKay (The Agonist) performing the drum parts, which were recorded and mixed at Chris Donaldson's studios. Hubert Wiecek (Ex-Decapitated, Dieth, Blasphemer) handled the bass parts, and the EP was mixed and mastered by Remi LeGresley (Grizzly Productions) in Montreal, Canada.

Nightborn, formed in 2012 by Arda K., initially began as a one-man project, with some compositions dating back even further. The band's focus lies in producing melodic thrash metal that blends old-school sounds with elements from the revival scene. Their debut album, "Skyeless," released in 2017, was mastered at the renowned Fascination Street Studios in Sweden, known for working with artists such as Kreator, Arch Enemy, Dark Tranquillity, and Sepultura.

The band's lyrics often explore politically anti-system sentiments, the allure of death, somberness, desperation, hatred, rage, serial killers, murder, the dark nature of the human mind, nightmares, and the night itself. These themes are masterfully woven into their music, creating a powerful and immersive listening experience.

Nightborn's second album, "Unhuman," released in 2022, further solidified their position as a force to be reckoned with in the thrash metal scene. The album featured fast, unrelenting thrash metal reminiscent of genre greats like Slayer, Testament, Kreator, Sepultura, and Exodus, while incorporating dark melodic elements.



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YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@nightbornofficial/featured
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The drum parts on "Unhuman" were performed by Krimh of Septic Flesh, Decapitated, and Behemoth, with additional guitar edits carried out by Gokalp Ergen, the vocalist of Mezarkabul.

The video for "Grave Madness," from the "Unhuman" album, premiered on Metal Injection in June 2022, with the publication writing, "Nightborn's new video for 'Grave Madness' is pretty gross...the song also shreds." Directed by infamous dark performance artist Louis Fleischauer, the video features real blood, skulls, bones, body modification, and actual hanging by hooks, showcasing the band's commitment to pushing the envelope both musically and visually.

With "Hammer of the Heretic," Nightborn once again proves their mastery of the thrash metal genre, delivering a fast-paced, hard-hitting, and uncompromising metal feast that will undoubtedly satisfy fans of the band and attract new listeners who crave raw, unadulterated aggression in their music. As Nightborn continues to evolve and push the boundaries of their sound, one thing remains certain: they are a force to be reckoned with in the world of extreme metal.



Within Destruction Unleashes Haunting New Single "Kanashibari" and Announces 2025 US Tour with Born of Osiris

Within Destruction Drop Terrifying New Single "*KANASHIBARI*"

Listen HERE At https://sumerian.lnk.to/kanashibari

Watch HERE At https://youtu.be/0cguFbYDg3I

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Website at https://sadboikroo.com/

By Robert Wilkins

Within Destruction, the audacious and genre-defying metal act from Slovenia, has once again pushed the boundaries of their craft with the release of their haunting new single, "Kanashibari." The track, which explores the terrifying experience of sleep paralysis and the mysterious world of ancient Buddhist deities, showcases the band's unparalleled ability to blend various genres and themes into a cohesive and immersive sonic experience.

Drawing from their signature mix of deathcore, metalcore, electronic infusions, and anime-inspired themes, "Kanashibari" is a testament to Within Destruction's fearless approach to musical exploration. The song features an electrifying combination of heavy riffs, electronic flourishes, guttural vocals, and soaring melodies, creating a

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Within Destruction

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soundscape that is both aggressive and eerily captivating.

The title "Kanashibari" holds significant cultural meaning in Japan, referring not only to the unsettling phenomenon of being conscious but unable to move during sleep but also to the ancient belief that Buddhist monks possessed the magical power to paralyze others. This fascinating blend of modern sleep paralysis and historical mysticism adds an extra layer of depth to the song's already dark and intense subject matter.

Drummer Luka Vezzosi provided insight into the creative process behind "Kanashibari," explaining that the lyrics vividly depict the horrifying experience of being trapped in a semi-sleep state, unable to move while enduring vivid hallucinations and a sense of claustrophobia. He also noted that the song represents a heavier side of their upcoming LP, incorporating elements of 90s nu metal into their signature formula of combining heavy instruments with electronic elements.

"Kanashibari" is the second release from Within Destruction since their highly publicized signing with the globally renowned independent label, Sumerian Records. The first track, "Demon Child," which was released in September along with the signing announcement, was accompanied by a high-octane music video inspired by Fast & Furious: Tokyo Drift and shot on location in Japan, further emphasizing the band's deep connection to Japanese culture and their commitment to creating visually stunning and immersive experiences for their fans.

In addition to the excitement surrounding their new single, Within Destruction has also announced a highly anticipated US tour with Born of Osiris, set to commence on January 31, 2025, in Iowa City. The tour, which will span 17 cities across the United States, promises to be an unforgettable experience for



fans of both bands, showcasing Within Destruction's unrivaled live performances and their ability to captivate audiences with their genre-bending sound and intense stage presence.

Since their formation in 2010, Within Destruction has been a driving force in the deathcore and metalcore scenes, consistently pushing the boundaries of what is possible within the genre. Their unique incorporation of electronic elements, anime samples, and unconventional themes has earned them a dedicated global following and critical acclaim from fans and industry professionals alike.

Throughout their career, Within Destruction has released a string of groundbreaking albums, including 'VOID' (2016), 'DEATHWISH' (2018), 'YOKAI' (2020), and 'LOTUS' (2022), each showcasing the band's unwavering commitment to evolution and experimentation. These releases have not only solidified their reputation as innovators in the heavy music landscape but have also sparked passionate discussions among fans, with some embracing their bold new directions and others remaining devoted to their earlier, more traditional sound.

As Within Destruction continues to carve out their unique path in the world of heavy music, fans can expect even more boundary-pushing releases and electrifying live performances in the near future. With their signing to Sumerian Records and the release of "Kanashibari," the band is poised to reach even greater heights and cement their position as one of the most exciting and innovative acts in the genre.

The upcoming US tour with Born of Osiris is just the beginning of what promises to be an unforgettable year for Within Destruction and their dedicated fanbase. As they continue to defy expectations and challenge genre norms, there's no telling what thrilling surprises the band has in store for the future, but one thing is certain: Within Destruction will continue to push the boundaries of heavy music and captivate audiences around the world with their unparalleled creativity and passion for their craft.



Rock Legend Marc Storace Ignites the Scene with ‘Crossfire’: A Triumphant Return to Hard Rock’s Roots

Out NOW via Frontiers Music Srl

Order Here at https://ffm.to/storacecrossfire

New Lyric Video for “Adrenaline” Out Now

Watch Here at https://youtu.be/aHL3HxpLb8c

Watch the Music Video for “We All Need the Money” Here At https://youtu.be/E44uTaSC4Ow

Watch the Music Video for “Screaming Demon” Here At https://youtu.be/AmrdKOr5qD0

By Nathan Pugh

In a masterful demonstration of hard rock’s enduring vitality, Swiss rock icon Marc Storace has unleashed his latest studio masterpiece ‘Crossfire’ through Frontiers Music Srl. The album arrives alongside a compelling lyric video for its lead single “Adrenaline,” marking what might be the most significant release in the veteran vocalist’s post-Krokus career. This powerful return to the spotlight showcases not only Storace’s undiminished vocal prowess but also his ability to assemble and inspire an extraordinary team of rock music veterans.

The project’s inception was marked by a fortuitous collaboration with Tommy Henriksen, whose credentials as Alice Cooper’s guitarist and member of Hollywood Vampires would typically make him difficult to pin down for production duties. Despite juggling commitments with these high-profile acts and his own project Crossbone Skully, Henriksen made time to helm the production of ‘Crossfire,’ a testament to both his friendship with Storace and his belief in the project’s potential.

“Tommy Henriksen, in spite of his tight touring schedule with Alice Cooper, The Hollywood Vampires, and his work with his Crossbone Skully, actually ‘made time’ to produce my ‘Crossfire’ album!” Storace exclaims with evident enthusiasm. “Hell yeah, that’s what I call a good friend!” The collaboration yielded immediate creative dividends, with Storace noting, “Creating the songs with Tommy felt like magic.”

The production team was further strengthened by the inclusion of legendary engineer Olle Romo, known for his work with acclaimed producer Mutt Lange. This addition elevated the project’s technical execution to match its creative ambitions, resulting in what Storace describes as “a match made in heaven.”

The album’s lead single, “Adrenaline,” serves as a perfect introduction to the record’s dynamic sound. Storace explains the song’s

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Marc Storace

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inspiration with characteristic passion: "It's a song about passionate feelings arising from close encounters with the woman of my dreams!" This emotional authenticity runs throughout the album, infusing each track with a compelling blend of raw energy and seasoned craftsmanship.

Behind this powerful sound stands Storace's carefully assembled band, featuring Dom Favez providing rhythm guitar, Serge Christen delivering lead guitar pyrotechnics, Patrick Aeby commanding the drums, and Emi Meyer anchoring the sound on bass. This combination of talented musicians brings both technical precision and emotional depth to Storace's vision, creating a sound that honors rock's traditions while pushing forward into new territory.

The release of 'Crossfire' represents the latest chapter in a remarkable musical journey that began in 1970, when the Maltese-born Swiss musician first made his mark with the progressive rock band TEA. During his tenure with TEA, Storace released five successful LPs, establishing himself as a formidable frontman known for his distinctive high-pitched, raunchy vocal style that would become his trademark.

However, it was his role as the voice of Krokus, beginning in 1979, that truly launched him into the international spotlight. Following the release of their first album together, 'Metal Rendez-Vous,' Krokus embarked on a series of world tours that would see them sell over 15 million records and accumulate an impressive collection of gold and platinum awards. This period established Storace as one of hard rock's most distinctive and powerful voices.

Following Krokus's initial disbandment, Storace demonstrated his versatility by forming the band Blue, achieving considerable success with their 1991 self-titled album, which included the hit single "You Can't Stop The Rainfall." His artistic journey continued to expand beyond music, as he took on acting roles in feature films including 'Anuk' and 'Handyman,' while maintaining his musical presence through various collaborations and guest appearances.

These included performances with Rock Meets Classic, participation in Sweet's 50th Anniversary celebrations, appearances on Ken Hensley Live in Switzerland, contributions to Schubert In Rock, and featured roles on Manfred Ehlert's albums 'Amen' and the rock opera 'Test.' Each of these projects allowed Storace to explore different facets of his artistry while maintaining his connection with fans.



A particularly significant moment came in 2008 with the reunion of the original Krokus lineup. This reformation led to triumphant tours across multiple continents, including the United States, Japan, Europe, and South America. The band released two new studio albums during this period, both achieving platinum status and demonstrating the enduring appeal of their classic sound. This chapter of Storace's career culminated in a memorable farewell concert at Zurich's Hallenstadion in December 2019, marking the end of an era but not the end of Storace's musical journey.

Early 2021 saw Storace embark on his solo career under the STORACE banner, releasing his debut solo album 'Live And Let Live.' Despite the challenges posed by the global pandemic, he maintained his connection with fans through touring in Switzerland, accompanied by his studio band. Since May 2022, he has been captivating audiences with his new band lineup, proving that his passion for performance remains as strong as ever.

The creation of 'Crossfire' occupied much of 2023 and 2024, with songwriting duties shared between Storace, Henriksen, and drummer Pat Aeby. The collaborative nature of the writing process brought diverse perspectives to the material, resulting in a collection of hard rock anthems that feature massive choruses, virtuosic guitar work, and a powerhouse rhythm section. The production by Henriksen and mixing by Romo have given these songs a contemporary edge while maintaining the organic energy of classic hard rock.

This latest release stands as more than just another album in Storace's extensive discography; it represents a powerful statement about the continuing vitality of hard rock when created by artists who understand its essence. The combination of Storace's seasoned vocals, the band's tight performances, and the production team's expertise has resulted in an album that should appeal to longtime fans while potentially attracting a new generation of hard rock enthusiasts.

'Crossfire' emerges as a testament to Storace's enduring creativity and passion for his craft, demonstrating that even after five decades in the music industry, he continues to push boundaries and create compelling new music. The album stands as a powerful reminder that rock's fire burns brightest when fueled by experience, passion, and unwavering commitment to musical excellence.

'*Crossfire*' Track List:

1. **Screaming Demon**
2. The New Unity
3. **Rock This City**
4. **Adrenaline**
5. Love Thing Stealer
6. Let's Get Nuts
7. Thrill And A Kiss
8. **We All Need The Money**
9. Hell Yeah
10. Millionaire Blues
11. Sirens
12. Only Love Can Hurt Like This

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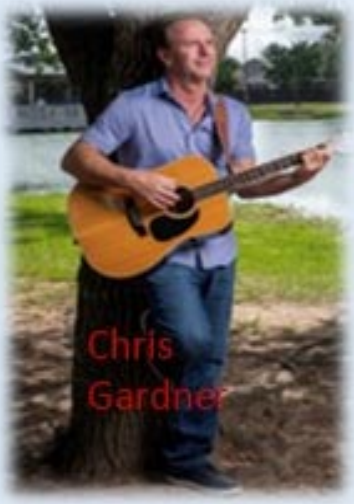
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Xandria Merges Celtic Mythology with Symphonic Metal in Groundbreaking EP 'Universal Tales': German Icons Push Genre Boundaries with "200 Years"

German Symphonic Metal Icons XANDRIA Release New Outlander-Inspired Single *"200 Years"* + Official Music Video Watch Here At https://youtu.be/coW6PbYYlk8

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By Troy Wilson

In a masterstroke of musical evolution, German symphonic metal titans Xandria have unveiled their most ambitious project to date with the release of "200 Years," a Celtic-influenced single and cinematic music video that headlines their newly released EP, 'Universal Tales,' available now through Napalm Records. This nine-track collection emerges as a triumphant follow-up to their 2023 success 'The Wonders Still Awaiting,' which achieved top 10 status on the German charts and introduced the world to their reinvigo-

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Xandria

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rated lineup.

Building upon their legacy while forging new ground, Xandria's current lineup represents a perfect blend of experience and fresh energy. At the helm is the extraordinary Ambre Vourvahis, whose dynamic vocal range and commanding stage presence have breathed new life into the band's sound since joining their ranks. Founding member Marco Heubaum continues to be the band's creative cornerstone on guitar, bringing decades of experience and vision to both the songwriting and production processes. Robert Klawonn's addition on guitar has added new dimensions to the band's melodic architecture, while Tim Schwarz's precise and powerful bass work provides a solid foundation that bridges the gap between the rhythmic and melodic elements of their sound. Rounding out this formidable lineup is drummer Dimitrios Gatsios, whose technical prowess and versatility behind the kit brings both power and nuance to Xandria's symphonic soundscapes. Together, this quintet represents the perfect synthesis of symphonic metal tradition and modern innovation, pushing the boundaries of what's possible within the genre while maintaining the epic scope and technical excellence that has always been Xandria's hallmark.

The new single "200 Years" stands as a testament to the band's artistic growth, featuring a remarkable collaboration with renowned violinist Ally Storch of Subway To Sally. Drawing deep inspiration from Diana Gabaldon's 'Outlander' series, the track masterfully interweaves traditional Celtic elements with Xandria's signature symphonic metal sound. The result is an immersive sonic journey that transports listeners to the misty highlands of Scotland, where ancient tales of love, war, and destiny unfold against a backdrop of sweeping orchestral arrangements and powerful metal riffs.

"We hope you enjoy our new song and video!" the band shares with palpable enthusiasm. "It's inspired by our deep love for Scotland and its rich history. The many stories of this land have sunk deep into our collective consciousness, becoming the roots of the fantasy worlds we all share - worlds filled with epic tales, like those of Middle-earth and beyond. Stories of



people fighting for freedom, love, and the survival of their culture." This passionate declaration reflects the band's commitment to storytelling through their music, creating a bridge between historical narrative and modern metal expression.

'Universal Tales' represents more than just a collection of songs; it's a carefully crafted journey through various musical landscapes that showcases Xandria's versatility and artistic vision. Each track on the EP serves as a unique chapter in this musical odyssey, from bombastic film score atmospheres to choir-and-orchestra-driven anthems. The incorporation of authentic Celtic instruments like fiddles and whistles alongside traditional metal elements demonstrates the band's willingness to push genre boundaries while maintaining their core sound.

At the heart of this evolution is vocalist Ambre Vourvahis, whose extraordinary vocal capabilities have become a defining element of Xandria's modern incarnation. Her impressive range encompasses everything from gritty rock vocals to soaring operatic heights and powerful growls, elements that she explores even more deeply on 'Universal Tales.' Vourvahis's performance on this EP surpasses her already remarkable work on 'The Wonders Still Awaiting,' showcasing new dimensions of her vocal artistry and further cementing her place as one of symphonic metal's most versatile vocalists.

The EP's political consciousness comes to the fore with "Universal," a powerful statement piece supporting freedom and diversity while standing in opposition to authoritarianism and religious fundamentalism. The track, dedicated to Jina Mahsa Amini and others fighting for freedom worldwide, demonstrates Xandria's willingness to engage with contemporary social issues through their art. This commitment to meaningful storytelling continues with "Live the Tale," a track that addresses global challenges while maintaining an optimistic outlook on humanity's potential for positive change and evolution.

The production of 'Universal Tales' brought together some of the industry's most respected professionals. Marco Heubaum's production expertise provided the foundation, while mixing and mastering by Jacob Hansen (known

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Xandria Merges Celtic Mythology with Symphonic Metal

for his work with Volbeat, Arch Enemy, and Evergrey) added the polished, professional sound that modern metal demands. This combination of talents has resulted in an EP that sounds both massive and intricate, with every musical element given room to breathe while contributing to the overall sonic tapestry.

Reflecting on the EP's creation, Xandria explains, "This EP is a big 'Thank you!!' to all our fans who welcomed us back in such an amazing and heartwarming way last year. The energy and connection we felt during our live shows with you inspired us to quickly write new songs, and we couldn't wait to share them with you." This statement underscores the band's deep connection with their fanbase and their desire to continue evolving their sound while maintaining the elements that their supporters have come to love.

The band has ensured that 'Universal Tales' is available in multiple formats to suit different collector preferences. These include a black vinyl gatefold edition for audiophiles, a standard CD digipak for traditional collectors, and an exclusive 2CD mediabook bundle through Napalm Records' mailorder service that includes the complete 'The Wonders Still Awaiting' album as a bonus. This variety of formats demonstrates Xandria's understanding of their diverse fanbase and their commitment to providing high-quality physical products in an increasingly digital age.

Xandria's dedication to their craft extends beyond the recording studio, with an ambitious touring schedule planned across Europe in November and North America in March. These live performances will give fans the opportunity to experience the new material in its most powerful form, with the band expressing particular excitement about bringing these Celtic-inspired epics to the stage. "We can't wait to play these new songs live for you!" the band enthuses, highlighting their passion for live performance and connection with their audience.

The EP's orchestral versions of the new tracks provide yet another dimension to the release, allowing listeners to experience the intricate arrangements and compositional complexity that underlies Xandria's music. These versions strip away the metal elements to reveal the classical foundations of the songs, demonstrating the band's sophisticated approach to composition and arrangement.

'Universal Tales' stands as a defining moment in Xandria's career, proving that even after achieving significant success, the band continues to push boundaries and explore new musical territories. By incorporating Celtic elements, orchestral arrangements, and powerful social messages into their

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Xandria

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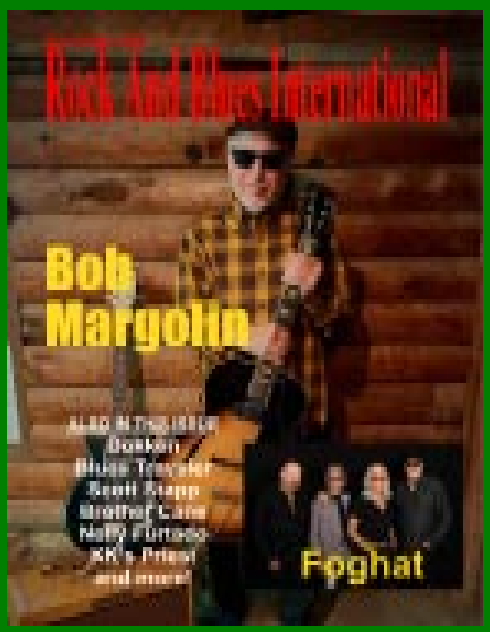
established symphonic metal framework, they have created a compelling musical journey that bridges fantasy and reality while staying true to their metal roots.

The release of this EP marks another significant chapter in Xandria's ongoing evolution, demonstrating their commitment to artistic growth and their ability to remain relevant in the ever-changing landscape of modern metal. Through their willingness to experiment with new sounds and themes while maintaining the epic, symphonic core that has earned them their place among metal's elite, Xandria continues to set new standards for what symphonic metal can achieve.

With 'Universal Tales,' Xandria has not only delivered a collection of powerful new music but has also made a statement about the continuing evolution of symphonic metal as a genre. The EP serves as both a celebration of the band's past achievements and a bold step forward into new musical territory, suggesting that Xandria's best chapters may still lie ahead.



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Duran Duran's Halloween Spectacular: MSG Show and 'Danse Macabre' Expansion Mark New Era for New Wave Icons

Watch The Performance Video Of Duran Duran's ELO Cover Here AT https://youtu.be/9CEE1rvpGU0

Released Alongside *DANSE MACABRE – DE LUXE*

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By Robert Wilkins

In a masterful blend of theatrical horror and classic rock artistry, Duran Duran has unveiled a captivating live performance video of their ELO cover "Evil Woman," captured during their sold-out Madison Square Garden extravaganza on Halloween night 2024. The release, helmed by legendary Swedish director Jonas Åkerlund, known for his groundbreaking work with music industry titans like Madonna, Beyoncé, and Lady Gaga, represents another milestone in the band's recent embrace of gothic

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Duran Duran

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theatricality.

The video release arrives alongside "Danse Macabre - De Luxe," an ambitious expansion of their Halloween-themed album that has now reached its first anniversary. This enhanced collection demonstrates the band's continued ability to reinvent themselves while honoring their new wave roots, offering fans an expanded musical journey with three new bonus tracks, including the newly released "Evil Woman" performance.

Nick Rhodes, the band's founding keyboardist and visual architect, speaks with enthusiasm about the Madison Square Garden production: "We wanted to invite a wider audience inside a venue to experience a Duran Duran performance, so where better to capture that on film than Madison Square Garden on Halloween." His comments suggest that the "Evil Woman" video merely scratches the surface of Åkerlund's complete live film documentation of the event.

The seeds of this Halloween-themed creative direction were planted during the band's groundbreaking performance at Las Vegas' Encore Theatre in 2022. That show, which featured Simon Le Bon, John Taylor, Nick Rhodes, and Roger Taylor in full costume, surrounded by towering 20-foot skeletons and elaborate gothic stage design, set a new standard for theatrical rock performances. The Madison Square Garden show took this concept to new heights, transforming the iconic New York venue into a supernatural spectacular that Brooklyn Vegan dubbed "a total blast."

The deluxe edition of "Danse Macabre" offers fans multiple ways to experience the music. The limited-edition three LP vinyl box set stands out as a collector's dream, featuring seven exclusive tracks, four of which cannot be found in any other format. The package includes an array of Halloween-themed collectibles that blur the line between music merchandise and occult artifacts: a spirit board complete with metal planchette, custom-designed tarot cards, art prints, and a detailed booklet. Adding to the album's authentic gothic atmosphere, Rhodes personally sourced vintage séance photographs at auction to create the package's striking visual elements.

The musical content itself represents a bold creative vision, featuring unexpected collaborations and innovative covers. The album includes haunting interpretations of contemporary hits like Billie Eilish's "Bury A Friend" alongside classic tracks such as The Rolling Stones' "Paint It Black" and The Specials' "Ghost Town." Guest appearances by producer and guitar legend Nile Rodgers, Måneskin's Victoria De Angelis, and former band members Andy Taylor and Warren Cuccurullo create a bridge between Duran Duran's past and present.

In a nod to modern technology and changing music consumption habits, the band has also released an innovative KiTalbum



version. This unique format, developed in collaboration with South Korean tech company KiTbetter, comes in an elaborately designed coffin-shaped box and includes physical collectibles while offering access to an extensive digital experience. Through a specialized mobile app, fans can access exclusive content including music videos, behind-the-scenes documentary footage, and a VIP fan hub, creating an immersive multi-platform experience.

The "Secret Oktober" film, directed by longtime collaborator Gavin Elder, provides additional context to the project. Available through the StagePlayer+ platform, the film offers fans an intimate look at the creative process behind the album and comes with a digital download of the deluxe edition.

Critics have embraced this new chapter in Duran Duran's evolution. Billboard praised the album as "delightfully devilish," while American Songwriter called it "a treat for the senses." The Associated Press highlighted the band's "playfully dark original tunes," and Under The Radar specifically praised the "haunting harmonies." Rolling Stone's observation that "Duran Duran are feeling the spooky energy" perfectly encapsulates the project's successful merger of horror aesthetics with the band's signature sound.

This ambitious undertaking demonstrates Duran Duran's continued ability to evolve while maintaining their artistic integrity. By embracing theatrical elements and gothic themes while incorporating modern technology and collaboration, the band has created a multi-faceted experience that honors their past while pushing boldly into the future. The Madison Square Garden performance and accompanying releases serve as testimony to their enduring creativity and willingness to explore new artistic territories, even after four decades in the music industry.

DANSE MACABRE – DE LUXE BOX SET TRACKLIST:

2LP (Original "Danse Macabre" album)
NIGHTBOAT
BLACK MOONLIGHT
LOVE VOUDOU
BURY A FRIEND
SUPERNATURE
DANSE MACABRE
SECRET OKTOBER 31ST
GHOST TOWN
PAINT IT BLACK
SUPER LONELY FREAK
SPELLBOUND
PSYCHO KILLER (feat. Victoria De Angelis)
CONFESSION IN THE AFTERLIFE

BONUS LP
A1.EVIL WOMAN*
A2. NEW MOON (DARK PHASE)*
A3. SPOOKY - [Brides of Duracula track]*
B1. THE VISITOR - [Instrumental]*
B2. INSTRUCTIONS FOR A SÉANCE - [Spoken word track from Nick Rhodes]*
B3. MASQUE OF THE PINK DEATH - [Instrumental]*
B4. DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD - [Instrumental]*
**NEW TRACK*



Cage The Elephant Earns Fourth Grammy Nomination, Announces Major Tour with Oasis Amid Series of Career Milestones

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By Troy Wilson

In a remarkable continuation of their critical success, alternative rock powerhouse Cage The Elephant has received a prestigious Grammy® Award nomination for Best Alternative Music Performance for their song "Neon Pill." This recognition from the Recording Academy marks the band's fourth nomination, building upon their impressive track record that includes consecutive wins for Best Rock Album with "Tell Me I'm Pretty" (2015) and "Social Cues" (2019).

The nominated track serves as both

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Cage The Elephant

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the title song and emotional cornerstone of their sixth studio album, released on May 17, 2024, via RCA Records. “Neon Pill” represents a significant artistic evolution for the Kentucky-bred six-piece, who have consistently pushed the boundaries of their sound while maintaining their signature uncompromising creativity and explosive live performances.

The creation of “Neon Pill” emerged from one of the band’s most challenging periods, marking a profound journey of personal transformation and healing. Nine months into the pandemic, brothers Matthew and Brad Shultz faced the devastating loss of their father, a tragedy that coincided with the deaths of several close friends. The period proved particularly challenging for frontman Matthew Shultz, who experienced a severe bout of depression that ultimately led to hospitalization following a mental breakdown. However, it was precisely in this storm’s eye that “Neon Pill” took shape, with the title track chronicling Matthew’s path to healing.

The album has garnered widespread critical acclaim, with major publications praising its sophisticated approach and emotional depth. Rolling Stone highlighted Matthew Shultz’s continuing evolution as “a high-octane frontman, one of the most exciting in rock,” while noting how “Neon Pill mixes deeply personal vignettes with abstract lyrics.” SPIN Magazine characterized the work as “an album of deeply personal, sophisticated garage rock,” while the Associated Press dubbed it “a kaleidoscope of rock.” The Boston Globe praised their ability to craft “pop-rock pearls from pain.”

The Grammy nomination arrives during a period of remarkable achievements for the band. They recently celebrated their twelfth Number 1 song on Billboard’s Alternative Airplay Chart with “Rainbow,” which they showcased in a powerful performance on NBC’s The Tonight Show starring Jimmy Fallon. Adding to their impressive list of accomplishments, their single “Cigarette Daydreams” has surpassed the monumental milestone of one billion streams, further cementing their status as one of modern rock’s most enduring forces.



Since their formation in 2006 in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Cage The Elephant has evolved into one of the most influential rock bands of their generation. The current lineup consists of brothers Matthew Shultz (vocals) and Brad Shultz (guitar), alongside Daniel Tichenor (bass), Jared Champion (drums), Nick Bockrath (lead guitar), and Matthan Minster (guitar, keys, backing vocals). Their collective musical journey has yielded impressive statistics: dozens of Gold, Platinum, and Multi-platinum certifications, over 5 billion total streams, ten Number 1 records on Alternative Radio, and five Number 1 records on Triple A Radio.

The band’s impact on popular culture continues to expand beyond traditional music channels. Their song “Cigarette Daydreams” recently enhanced the soundtrack of Marvel’s Spider-Man 2 video game, while “Goodbye” found a home in The Summer I Turned Pretty, and “Trouble” powered a global Amazon Prime campaign. Their versatility as artists is further demonstrated by successful collaborations with music legends like Iggy Pop and Beck.

Looking ahead, Cage The Elephant is set to embark on an exciting new chapter as they join legendary British rock band Oasis for their highly anticipated North American 2025 World Tour. The tour, which kicks off on August 24, 2025, will see the band performing in major venues across Toronto, Chicago, New Jersey, Los Angeles, and Mexico City, promising fans an unforgettable live experience that showcases their renowned energetic performances.

The Grammy nomination for “Neon Pill” represents more than just industry recognition; it stands as a testament to the band’s ability to transform personal struggles into universal art. As PASTE magazine observed, the album demonstrates “the delicate care for their craft, healing and the community all funneled into its making.” From their humble beginnings in Kentucky to their current status as alternative rock stalwarts, Cage The Elephant continues to prove that authentic, emotionally resonant music still has the power to connect, heal, and inspire.

The 67th Grammy Awards ceremony will provide another opportunity for Cage The Elephant to add to their impressive collection of accolades. As they prepare for this milestone event and their upcoming tour, the band stands as a shining example of how raw talent, perseverance, and artistic integrity can evolve into sustained success in the modern music landscape.



Christopher Cross

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Grammy and Oscar Winner Christopher Cross Unwraps Holiday Classic for 2024

By Robert Wilkins

In a delightful announcement that's sure to bring joy to music lovers and holiday enthusiasts alike, legendary singer-songwriter Christopher Cross is set to re-release his cherished holiday album, "A Christopher Cross Christmas." The album, which has become a seasonal staple since its original release in 2007, will be available on CD starting December 6, 2024, with a special edition white vinyl hitting stores on November 29 for Record Store Day Black Friday.

Cross, whose velvet voice and masterful songwriting have earned him both Grammy and Oscar accolades, first burst onto the music scene in 1979 with his self-titled debut album. That groundbreaking release included timeless classics like "Ride Like the Wind," "Sailing," and "Never Be the Same," which not only dominated the charts but also secured Cross a place in music history. His debut earned him five Grammy Awards in 1981, a feat that remained unmatched by a new artist until Billie Eilish's sweep nearly four decades later.

"A Christopher Cross Christmas" was originally recorded in 2007, a collaboration with producer Danny O'Lannerghty (known for his work with Amy Grant and Phil Keaggy) and the acclaimed Michael Omartian, who produced Cross's debut album and has worked with industry giants like Donna Summer and Rod Stewart. The album features a mix of original compositions and Cross's unique takes on beloved holiday classics such as "Do You Hear What I Hear," "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas," and the Charlie Brown Christmas favorite, "Christmas Time Is Here."

The re-release of this holiday gem comes at a perfect time, allowing a new generation of listeners to experience Cross's smooth, sophisticated sound in the context of beloved Christmas melodies. For long-time fans, it's an opportunity to revisit a treasured album that may have been difficult to find in recent years.

Omnivore Recordings and Seeker Music are behind this special re-release, ensuring that the album will be widely available for the 2024 holiday season. The decision to include a special white vinyl edition for Record Store Day Black Friday is particularly exciting for vinyl enthusiasts and collectors, offering a unique way to experience Cross's holiday magic.

Christopher Cross's journey in the music industry is a testament to his enduring talent and adaptability. From his meteoric rise in the early 1980s with hits like "Arthur's Theme (Best That You Can Do)" - which earned him an Academy Award - to his continued touring and recording in recent decades, Cross has maintained a dedicated fanbase and a respected position in the music world.

While the spotlight of MTV and changing musical tastes may have shifted the landscape of popular music in the mid-1980s, Cross's commitment to his craft never wavered. He has consistently released new material and toured, with albums like "Doctor Faith" (2011), "Secret Ladder" (2014), and "Take Me as I Am" (2017) showcasing his evolving artistry.

The re-release of "A Christopher Cross Christmas" is not just a nod to nostalgia; it's a celebration of timeless music that continues to resonate with listeners. As Cross himself playfully notes in one of his original holiday compositions, "Does It Feel Like Christmas?" With this album spinning on turntables and playing through stereos this upcoming holiday season, it certainly will.

Music lovers and holiday enthusiasts alike can mark their calendars for this special release. Whether you're a long-time Christopher Cross fan or discovering his music for the first time, "A Christopher Cross Christmas" promises to be a warm and melodic addition to any holiday music collection. As the winter chill sets in, Cross's smooth vocals and heartfelt performances are sure to bring a cozy glow to homes across the country.

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Liverpool's Genre-Defying Trio Exploring Birdsong Returns with Captivating New Single

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By Troy Wilson

In an era where musical boundaries are increasingly fluid, Liverpool's innovative trio Exploring Birdsong continues to carve out their own distinctive niche with their latest single "Stitch." The piano-led, guitar-less ensemble has once again demonstrated their unique ability to weave together threads of pop sensibility, experimental prowess, and carefully crafted heaviness into a tapestry entirely their own.

The release of "Stitch" marks another milestone in the band's remarkable journey, which has already seen them garner critical acclaim from prestigious publications like Kerrang! Magazine, who noted the band's remarkable ability to "both hit upon and fully deliver on their genuinely idiosyncratic vision so early on." This sentiment has been echoed by PROG Magazine, who praised the band's meticulous approach to their craft, describing their work as "an enticing, many-layered listen."

Discussing their latest offering, the band revealed the creative spark behind "Stitch": "The song came together really

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Exploring Birdsong

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quickly for us. In a moment of borderline crazed inspiration, many of the key elements have existed more or less since the very first demo." They went on to explain their unconventional approach to influence-gathering, including an unexpected reference to the Davy Jones organ scene from Pirates of the Caribbean. Despite the track's heavier leanings, the band emphasized its underlying message of mutual support in relationships, describing it as "essentially about teamwork in a relationship, trying to feel strong in the face of adversity because someone you have helped to carry in the past is now carrying you."



At the heart of Exploring Birdsong's distinctive sound is frontwoman Lynsey Ward, whose extraordinary vocal capabilities have become one of the band's defining features. Her powerful, controlled, and emotionally resonant delivery has drawn comparisons to various legendary artists, with the band's overall sound evoking elements of London Grammar, Kate Bush, and Everything Everything. Ward's dual role as vocalist and keyboardist is complemented by the remarkable talents of Matt on drums and percussion, and Jonny, who displays remarkable dexterity in simultaneously handling bass and second keyboards duties.

The trio's journey began at Liverpool's prestigious Institute of Performing Arts, where they developed their unique approach to composition and performance. Since then, they've consistently pushed the boundaries of contemporary progressive music, earning themselves two Progressive Music Awards nominations and high placement in the Prog Readers' Poll - remarkable achievements for such a young band.

Their debut EP, "The Thing With Feathers" (2019, Long Branch Records), immediately established them as a force to be reckoned with in the progressive music scene. This was followed by 2023's "Dancing in the Face of Danger," which further cemented their reputation for creating music that defies easy categorization. Their track "The Downpour," which the band describes as "our Great Gig In The Sky," particularly showcases their ambitious approach to composition and arrangement.

Exploring Birdsong's live performances have been equally impressive, recently earning them a coveted support slot with KATATONIA. This follows successful tours supporting acclaimed acts like Sleep Token and Thank You Scientist, demonstrating their ability to captivate audiences across the progressive music spectrum.

What sets Exploring Birdsong apart is not just their unusual instrumental configuration - the absence of guitars is notably rare in contemporary rock - but their ability to create rich, full-bodied compositions that never feel lacking. Their music demonstrates that innovation doesn't necessarily mean abandoning accessibility; rather, it's about finding new ways to connect with listeners while pushing creative boundaries.

The release of "Stitch" represents another significant step forward for a band that has consistently refused to be confined by genre expectations. Their ability to blend progressive complexity with pop sensibility, experimental fearlessness with emotional authenticity, has earned them a unique place in the contemporary music landscape.

As they continue to evolve and expand their sonic palette, Exploring Birdsong stands as a testament to the continuing vitality of progressive music in the 21st century. With "Stitch," they have once again demonstrated why they're considered one of the most exciting and innovative young bands in the UK music scene, suggesting that their journey of musical exploration is far from over.

Rock And Blues International



Alabama Metalcore Upstarts No Cure Challenge Southern Stereotypes with Brutal New EP 'I Hope I Die Here'

By Albert Schwartz

In the heart of Alabama, where church steeples dot the skyline and traditional Southern values reign supreme, a fierce musical resistance is brewing. No Cure, Birmingham's explosive metalcore quintet, is preparing to unleash their most ambitious work to date with their SharpTone Records debut EP, "I Hope I Die Here," set for release on December 6, 2024. The eight-track collection serves not only as a musical statement but as a passionate declaration of Southern identity that challenges preconceptions about their home state.

No Cure—comprised of vocalist Blaythe Steuer, guitarists Aesop Mongo and Kyle Ray, bassist Jake Murnane, and drummer Duncan Newey—has rapidly emerged as one of the most compelling voices in contemporary hardcore since their formation in 2022. Their approach melds the technical precision of death metal with the raw intensity of basement-bred hardcore, creating a sound that's both sophisticated and savagely authentic.

"Whether it's justified or not, we have a little chip on our shoulder by virtue of being a band from Alabama," admits Steuer, addressing the geographic stigma that often accompanies Southern bands. "We saw all of the cool bands skip over our state on tour. We witnessed how hard it was to be heard if you weren't a group from the East coast or the West coast. Our scene isn't a part of the American hardcore conversation. This is something we're trying to change."

The new EP, recorded in a remote cabin deep in the woods of North Central Alabama with engineer Kevin Langley, represents a significant evolution in No Cure's sound. The band consciously pushed their boundaries, incorporating more metal elements while maintaining their hardcore roots. "From day one, our goal was to musically take Dying Fetus and mix it with Foundation and some Hatebreed," Steuer explains, describing their artistic vision.

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No Cure

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"I Hope I Die Here" opens with the explosive "Hang Me From the Bible Belt," featuring Daniel McWhorter of Gideon. The nearly four-minute track serves as a powerful commentary on growing up in a deeply religious region while existing outside its spiritual mainstream. The song's length and complexity signal No Cure's willingness to expand their sonic palette while maintaining their characteristic intensity.

The EP's lead single, "Don't Need Your Help," emerges as a defiant statement against coastal elitism. The track features guest vocals from Nick Chance of Beautiful Child of God and Jesse Clark of Wielded Steel, creating a unified front of Alabama-based artists. With its squealing guitars, syncopated grooves, and alternating vocal styles, the song encapsulates the band's technical prowess while delivering a clear message to those who might look down on their scene.

Perhaps the EP's most intriguing track is "The Basement Beneath the Fountain," which takes aim at conspiracy theories that have taken root in their community. The song's paranoid atmosphere and manically repeated lyrics create a satirical yet pointed commentary on the spread of misinformation in their region. Meanwhile, "Your Children Will Drown In The Burning River," featuring Matthew Hasting of MychildrenMyBride, addresses environmental devastation in Alabama, particularly focusing on the pollution of the Tennessee River.

The EP showcases an impressive array of guest appearances from across the Southern heavy music scene, including JT Anderson of Cold Hard Steel, Kayhan Vaziri of Wretched Blessing and Yautja, Lance McLaughlin of Bareknuckle, Michael Collier of The Slam Brigade, and Hollan Chapman of Living Tragedy. These collaborations serve to highlight the depth and interconnectedness of Alabama's hardcore community.

No Cure's rise has been meteoric since their inception. Their previous releases, "For The Stainless Steel..." (2022) and "The Commitment To Permanence" (2023), earned them acclaim from prominent publications like Brooklyn Vegan and NO ECHO, with the latter declaring them "without a doubt one of the standout straight edge hardcore bands." They've shared stages with genre heavyweights including The Acacia Strain, Boundaries, Orthodox, and Judiciary, proving their ability to hold their own among established acts.

The title "I Hope I Die Here" serves as both a declaration of pride and a statement of intent. "I'm just trying to tell a story you may not have heard before from a place you don't know," Steuer reflects. "I do hope I die in Alabama. I'd like to live my life out here for whatever that is." It's a powerful sentiment that underscores the band's commitment not just to their music, but to their community and region.

With this release, No Cure is poised to shatter preconceptions about Southern hardcore while establishing themselves as a formidable force in the broader metal and hardcore scenes. "I Hope I Die Here" stands as a testament to the vitality and creativity of Alabama's heavy music community, proving that groundbreaking, forward-thinking hardcore can emerge from any corner of the country, even those often overlooked by the mainstream music industry.

The EP "I Hope I Die Here" arrives December 6 via SharpTone Records, marking a significant milestone not just for No Cure, but for the entire Alabama hardcore scene they proudly represent.

Rock And Blues International



Swedish Hard Rockers Seventh Crystal Make Powerful Statement with New Album "Entity"

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By Greg Fontaine

Swedish melodic hard rock outfit Seventh Crystal has made a powerful statement about our modern digital age with their third studio album, "Entity," released on November 8th, 2024, via Frontiers Music Srl. The album stands as their most ambitious work to date, tackling themes of social media influence, artificial intelligence, and the growing disconnect between human experience and digital reality.

The Gothenburg-based band, which burst onto the melodic rock scene in 2021 with their debut album "Delirium," has evolved significantly since their inception as a solo project by vocalist Kristian Fyhr in 2019. What began as a personal venture has transformed into a full-fledged band, with the current lineup featuring Anton Roos on drums, Olof Gadd on bass, and the dual guitar attack of Gustav Linde and Emil Dornerus. Each member brings their own

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Seventh Crystal

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unique perspective and musical background to the table, contributing to the band's rich and diverse sound.

The progression from solo project to full band has been nothing short of remarkable. When Fyhr first conceived the project, he couldn't have anticipated how quickly it would grow into something much larger. The addition of Johan Älvsång and Olof Gadd early in the band's formation helped establish the foundation for what would become Seventh Crystal's signature sound. The subsequent joining of Anton Roos and Emil Dornerus completed the initial lineup, setting the stage for their impressive debut.

"Entity" represents a bold step forward for the band, both musically and thematically. The album delves deep into contemporary issues surrounding technology and human connection, as evidenced by their latest single, "Path of the Absurd." Speaking about the track, the band offered a pointed critique of modern behavior: "Have you ever been to a concert, or maybe visited a beautiful natural monument and thought, 'Am I the only one experiencing this right here and now?' Everyone's looking at the world through a camera- or a smartphone screen, trying to get online affirmation, likes and reactions. No one is really living in the moment. Path of the Absurd is about getting caught in that web, pun intended. Addictive, quick impulses that trigger the reward system and then you're stuck. You become an asset to the system, and not the other way around...

"

This thoughtful observation about our relationship with technology extends throughout the entire album. The concept behind "Entity"



is particularly relevant in today's digitally dominated world. The band explained, "We live in an age of social media, AI, filter bubbles and sensational headlines by unknown writers. Disinformation controls the masses and creates multiple truths where the reality remains unknown. The development of technology is largely about solving problems and fulfilling human needs. But can it also lead to the opposite and become its own master with humans as its subjects? A kind of being, an 'Entity'."

The band further elaborated on the album's concept, stating "'Entity' is a depiction of past and present in which this particular development is at the centre. 'For good or bad?', 'Under or out of control?' - the listener is the one who gets to decide." This exploration of technology's double-edged nature forms the thematic core of the album.

The release spans thirteen carefully crafted tracks, each contributing to the larger narrative while standing strong on its own. Opening with the powerful "Oathbreaker," the album immediately establishes its ambitious scope. The provocatively titled "404" directly references the digital age, while "Architects of Light" suggests hope amidst the technological chaos. The inclusion of an "Interlude" provides a thoughtful break in the album's pacing, allowing listeners to process the weighty themes being presented.

Other standout tracks include "Blinded by the Light," "Siren Song," and the emotionally charged "A Place Called Home." The album closes with the powerful "Song of the Brave," a fitting conclusion to the 52-minute journey. Each song has been meticulously produced to balance the band's signature melodic approach with their increasingly progressive leanings.

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Seventh Crystal

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The road to "Entity" has been paved with significant milestones. Following their successful debut with "Delirium" in 2021, the band quickly realized that their guitar-heavy material demanded expansion for live performances. This led to the crucial addition of Gustav Linde, whose friendship with drummer Anton Roos made him a natural fit. Linde's integration into the band proved transformative, influencing their more guitar-oriented second album, "Wonderland," released in 2023 alongside the EP "Infinity."

The band's evolution continued when original member Johan Älvsång decided to step aside, leading Seventh Crystal to proceed as a five-piece outfit for the recording of "Entity." Rather than viewing this as a setback, the band used the transition as an opportunity to refine their sound and strengthen their musical connection. The resulting chemistry is evident throughout the new album.

With "Entity," the band has taken everything up a major level - or two, as they've noted. The album sees them exploring and expanding different genres, bringing their melodic rock formula into progressive rock fields, sometimes venturing into heavier territory before returning to their unique rock style. This evolution demonstrates their commitment to pushing boundaries while maintaining their core sound.

Drawing from an impressively wide range of influences spanning soft rock to heavy metal, Seventh Crystal has crafted an album that challenges listeners while maintaining the melodic sensibilities that have earned them a dedicated following. Their sound, characterized by bombastic productions, catchy hooks, and dramatic emotional melodies, has only grown more refined with each release.

The production of "Entity" maintains the band's reputation for creating rich, layered soundscapes while pushing into new sonic territory. The band's goal has been clear: to serve as an inspiration, outlet, and escape for their audience, providing authentic musical expression in an era of digital saturation.

The recording process for "Entity" was approached with meticulous attention to detail. Each member's contributions were carefully considered and integrated into the whole, resulting in the band's most cohesive work to date. The dual guitar work of Linde and Dornerus creates a rich tapestry of sound, while Gadd's bass work and Roos's drumming provide a solid foundation for Fyhr's emotive vocals.

The significance of this release extends beyond just the music. In an age where artificial intelligence and digital technology are increasingly integrated into every aspect of our lives, "Entity" serves as both a warning and a reflection of our times. The band poses important questions about control, autonomy, and human connection in the digital age, while leaving space for listeners to draw their own conclusions.

For a band that began as a solo project just five years ago, Seventh Crystal's rapid evolution and growing ambition speak to their dedication to their craft and their willingness to tackle big ideas through their music. Their journey from Gothenburg upstarts to one of Sweden's most promising hard rock bands demonstrates the power of authentic musical expression in an increasingly artificial world.

"Entity" has cemented their position as one of Sweden's most exciting contemporary hard rock bands, proving that melodic rock can be both entertaining and thought-provoking in the digital age. The complete thirteen-track album includes powerful numbers such as "Oathbreaker," "Thirteen to One," "404," "Path of the Absurd," "Architects of Light," "Blinded by the Light," "Siren Song," "Versus," "Mayflower," "Push Comes to Shove," "A Place Called Home," and "Song of the Brave," with an "Interlude" providing a thoughtful break in the journey.

The album's release through Frontiers Music Srl, a label known for its support of melodic rock and metal, has ensured that "Entity" reaches a global audience ready to embrace its ambitious scope and meaningful message. With a total runtime of 52 minutes and 32 seconds, the album provides a comprehensive exploration of both musical creativity and contemporary themes that resonate deeply in our digital age.

Seventh Crystal, with Kristian Fyhr on lead vocals, Anton Roos on drums and percussion, Olof Gadd on bass and backing vocals, and both Gustav Linde and Emil Dornerus on guitars and backing vocals, has delivered an album that stands as a testament to their growth as artists and their ability to address complex themes while creating compelling, melodic hard rock. As they continue to push boundaries and explore new territory, they remain true to their core mission of creating music that resonates on both an emotional and intellectual level.

1. Oathbreaker
2. Thirteen to One
3. 404
4. Path of the Absurd
5. Architects of Light
6. Interlude
7. Blinded by the Light
8. Siren Song
9. Versus
10. Mayflower
11. Push Comes to Shove
12. A Place Called Home
13. Song Of The Brave

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Melodic Rock Veterans Sunstorm Return with Hard-Hitting New Album ‘Restless Fight’

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By Robert Wilkins

In what promises to be one of 2024’s most anticipated releases for melodic rock enthusiasts, Sunstorm is set to unleash their latest album “Restless Fight” on November 22nd via Frontiers Music Srl. The record marks a bold new chapter for the band, featuring the powerhouse vocals of Ronnie Romero and a refreshed lineup that brings a heavier edge to the group’s signature AOR sound.

Originally conceived by Frontiers Records president Serafino Perugino as a vehicle to showcase classic melodic rock styling, Sunstorm has evolved considerably since Romero took the helm in 2021. The acclaimed vocalist, known for his work with Rainbow, Michael Schenker Group, and Elegant Weapons, has helped steer the project into more dynamic territory while main-

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Sunstorm

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taining its melodic core. This evolution represents a significant milestone in the band's journey, marking their third album with Romero at the microphone.

"I really love the new album!" Romero enthuses. "It keeps the Sunstorm essence with an AOR base, but brings a fresh more guitar-oriented and heavier sound." The singer's excitement is particularly evident when discussing the album's lead single, "I'll Stand For You," which he describes as "the perfect example" of the band's evolved sound, where strong melodies remain front and center. This enthusiasm reflects the careful balance the band has struck between honoring their roots and pushing into new territory.



The new iteration of Sunstorm brings together some of the most talented musicians in contemporary rock. At the forefront is Ronnie Romero, whose powerful vocal presence has earned him recognition across multiple high-profile projects. His versatility as a vocalist is well-documented through his work with Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow, where he stepped into the considerable shoes of vocalists like Ronnie James Dio and Joe Lynn Turner. Romero's journey with Sunstorm began with the release of "Afterlife" in early 2021, which marked the beginning of the band's current musical direction.

On guitars, the band welcomes Aldo Lonobile, a respected musician, songwriter, and producer whose credentials include work with Geoff Tate's Sweet Oblivion and Archon Angel featuring Zak Stevens. Lonobile's guitar work on "Restless Fight" channels the spirit of '80s guitar heroes like Jake E. Lee and Steve Stevens, bringing a perfect blend of technical prowess and melodic sensibility to the album. His production expertise has also played a crucial role in shaping the album's sound, ensuring that each instrument finds its proper place in the mix while maintaining the raw energy of the performances.

The rhythm section features the impressive talents of Andrea Arcangeli on bass, known for his work with Italian progressive metal band DGM, and drummer Alfonso Mocerino, whose previous experience with Temperance and Virtual Simmetry brings a solid foundation to Sunstorm's evolved sound. Their chemistry as a rhythm section adds a new dimension to the band's sound, providing both the groove and heaviness needed to support the more aggressive direction of the new material. The intricate interplay between bass and drums creates a dynamic foundation that allows the rest of the band to soar.

Rounding out the lineup is keyboardist Antonio Agate, one of Italy's most accomplished keyboard players and arrangers for symphonic orchestras, whose contributions add depth and texture to the band's sonic landscape. Agate's expertise in orchestral arrangement brings a sophisticated layer to the compositions, with keyboard parts that enhance rather than overwhelm the guitar-driven nature of the songs. His work with symphonic orchestras has clearly influenced his approach to arranging, resulting in keyboard parts that seamlessly blend with the heavy guitars while adding their own distinctive voice to the mix.

The album's eleven tracks showcase the band's commitment to evolution while honoring their melodic rock roots. Opening with the powerful lead single "I'll Stand For You," the album immediately establishes its intention to deliver high-energy, melody-driven rock with a modern edge. The song's immediate

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Sunstorm

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impact and memorable chorus set the tone for what follows, demonstrating the band's ability to craft songs that are both heavy and accessible.

As the album progresses, tracks like "Love's Not Gone" and "Hope's Last Stand" demonstrate the band's ability to balance heavy riffs with soaring melodies, while "Shot In The Dark" and "Without You" showcase the emotional depth of Romero's vocal delivery. Each song has been carefully crafted to maintain interest while showcasing different aspects of the band's musical capabilities. The production emphasizes the natural chemistry between the musicians, capturing performances that feel both polished and spontaneous.

The title track "Restless Fight" serves as a perfect encapsulation of the band's new direction, featuring intricate guitar work from Lonobile and dynamic interplay between all band members. The song's arrangement demonstrates the band's sophisticated approach to composition, with multiple sections that flow naturally into each other while maintaining a sense of urgency and purpose. The title track exemplifies the album's overall approach: respectful of tradition while unafraid to push boundaries.

Other standout tracks include the energetic "Running To You," which features some of the album's most aggressive guitar work, and the dramatic "Against The Storm," where Agate's keyboards play a more prominent role in creating atmosphere and tension. The rhythmically complex "In & Out" showcases the rhythm section's technical capabilities while maintaining the album's melodic focus. The album closes strong with the emotional "Dreams Aren't Over" and the powerful "Take It All," ending the journey on a high note that leaves listeners wanting more.

For Romero, this release follows an incredibly productive period that has included two acclaimed cover albums, "Raised On Radio" and "Raised On Heavy Radio," as well as his first original solo album, "Too Many Lies, Too Many Masters," released in September 2023. His work with Sunstorm represents yet another facet of his impressive vocal abilities, demonstrating his versatility as a singer and his commitment to maintaining high standards across multiple projects.

The production of "Restless Fight" was approached with a clear vision: to maintain Sunstorm's classic AOR foundation while incorporating modern production techniques and '80s-inspired arrangements. This careful balance has resulted in an album that sounds both fresh and familiar, with particular attention paid to the guitar and keyboard arrangements that give the record its distinctive character. The production team worked diligently to ensure that each instrument could be clearly heard while maintaining the power and impact necessary for modern hard rock.

At forty-three minutes in length, "Restless Fight" offers a concise yet complete musical journey that should satisfy both longtime fans and newcomers to the band's music. The album demonstrates that Sunstorm isn't content to rest on their laurels, instead pushing forward with a reinvigorated sound that bridges classic AOR sensibilities with modern rock energy. The sequencing of the tracks has been carefully considered to provide an engaging listening experience from start to finish.

The album's artwork and packaging also deserve mention, as they effectively communicate the band's evolved image while maintaining connections to their past. The visual elements complement the music perfectly, creating a complete package that should appeal to collectors and casual fans alike.

As the November 22nd release date approaches, anticipation continues to build for what could be one of the year's standout releases in the melodic rock genre. With this powerful new lineup and a fresh approach to their signature sound, Sunstorm appears poised to make a significant impact on the contemporary rock scene while honoring the timeless appeal of melodic hard rock. The band's willingness to push boundaries while maintaining their melodic core suggests that "Restless Fight" could mark the beginning of an exciting new chapter in their musical journey.

For fans of melodic rock and AOR, "Restless Fight" promises to be an essential addition to their collection, offering a perfect blend of classic influences and contemporary energy. The combination of Romero's powerful vocals, Lonobile's masterful guitar work, and the rest of the band's impressive musicianship has resulted in an album that stands as a testament to the continuing evolution of the genre. As 2024 unfolds, Sunstorm seems well-positioned to cement their place among the leading lights of modern melodic rock.

"Restless Fight" Tracklist:

1. I'll Stand For You
2. Love's Not Gone
3. Hope's Last Stand
4. Shot In The Dark
5. Without You
6. Restless Fight
7. Running To You
8. Against The Storm
9. In & Out
10. Dreams Aren't Over
11. Take It All


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Bella Rios Captivates Audiences with Debut EP "Sincerely" and Empowering Single "Options"

By Sheena Johnson

In the ever-evolving landscape of the music industry, it's rare to come across an artist who possesses the perfect combination of raw talent, lyrical prowess, and emotional depth. Enter Bella Rios, a rising star who is taking the music world by storm with the release of her highly anticipated debut EP, "Sincerely," and its lead single, "Options." Currently a junior at the prestigious Princeton University, Bella has been crafting her unique sound and honing her songwriting skills, resulting in a collection of songs that are both deeply personal and universally relatable.

"Options," the powerful and empowering lead single from "Sincerely," is a testament to Bella's ability to create music that resonates with listeners on a profound level. The track, which explores the aftermath of a relationship and the realization that one always has the power to choose a different path, is a rallying cry for anyone who has ever found themselves at a crossroads in life. With its infectious melody, catchy hooks, and lyrics that pack an emotional punch, "Options" is poised to become an anthem for a generation.

The EP, "Sincerely," is a stunning showcase of Bella's versatility as an artist, featuring six tracks that delve into the complexities of relationships, personal growth, and the challenges of navigating mental health in the modern world. From the sassy and confident "Ever After," a breakup anthem that calls to mind the works of Olivia Rodrigo and Reneé Rapp, to the introspective and haunting "Walking in the Rain," Bella's lyrics are a testament to her ability to capture the full spectrum of human emotions in a way that is both accessible and deeply moving.

"I write to self-reflect," Bella says of her songwriting process. "It helps me work through feelings I've chosen to ignore. Like a lot of people today, I have struggles: OCD, anxiety, body image. Until relatively recently, I had just accepted some of them as a given. I am only now learning how to deal with them and take better care of myself."

This honesty and vulnerability are the threads that tie "Sincerely" together,

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creating a tapestry of experiences and emotions that listeners can't help but connect with on a personal level. In tracks like "In The Dark," which tackles the subject of mental health head-on, Bella fearlessly delves into the depths of her own struggles, offering a beacon of hope and understanding to anyone who has ever felt alone in their own darkness.

Beyond her talents as a songwriter, Bella is also an accomplished musician, with a natural affinity for the piano and guitar, as well as a penchant for experimenting with other instruments like the saxophone and bass. Her musical prowess is on full display throughout "Sincerely," with each track showcasing a different facet of her artistry and highlighting the depth and range of her abilities.

As an experienced performer who spent her adolescence rocking the stage with cover bands, Bella is no stranger to the power of live music and the connection it can forge between artist and audience. "Music has given me a voice and a confidence that nothing else has," she says. "I've never thought, 'I'm a badass,' but that's how I feel every time I'm on stage."

It's this confidence and passion that shines through in every note of "Sincerely," making it clear that Bella Rios is an artist who is not only here to stay but one who is poised to make a lasting impact on the music industry. With her unique blend of authenticity, relatability, and undeniable talent, Bella has already earned a dedicated fanbase, and as more listeners discover her music, it's evident that her star will only continue to rise.

"I'm just so excited to share what is uniquely mine with other people," Bella says, "and hope that it does for them what it does for me."

As Bella Rios continues to create music that resonates with audiences on a profound level, helping them navigate the complexities of life and find solace in the power of self-expression, it's clear that she is more than just another rising star – she is a voice for her generation, a beacon of hope and understanding in a world that can often feel overwhelming and isolating.

With the release of "Options" and "Sincerely," Bella Rios is inviting listeners to join her on a journey of self-discovery and empowerment, one song at a time. As she continues to grow and evolve as an artist, there's no telling what heights she will reach, but one thing is certain: the world is eager to see what this remarkable young talent will do next.

For more information on Bella Rios, her groundbreaking debut EP "Sincerely," and her empowering lead single "Options," visit her official website and follow her on social media. With a voice like hers, and a message that resonates with so many, it's only a matter of time before Bella Rios becomes a household name, and a guiding light for a generation in search of hope, healing, and the power of self-expression.



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The Bloody Beetroots Unleash Electrifying New Release, Pushing the Boundaries of Electronic Rock

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By Robert Wilkins

In a world where music genres often blend and evolve, one artist has consistently stood at the forefront of the electronic rock revolution: The Bloody Beetroots. The brainchild of the visionary Sir Bob Cornelius Rifo, The Bloody Beetroots has once again captivated fans and critics alike with their latest release, showcasing the project's signature fusion of punk rock intensity, classical sophistication, and cutting-edge electronic music.

Rifo's musical journey began in

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Bloody Beetroots

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the early 2000s, fueled by his lifelong passion for punk rock and comics. Drawing from these influences, he created The Bloody Beetroots, an artistic endeavor that would go on to redefine the landscape of electronic music. With an uncompromising approach to his craft, Rifo has masterfully blended his classical training with his punk rock obsession and love for electronic music, resulting in a groundbreaking rock-meets-dance hybrid sound that has captivated audiences worldwide.



The Bloody Beetroots first rose to international prominence with the release of their critically acclaimed debut LP, 'Romborama.' The album, which featured the iconic track "Warp 1.9" in collaboration with Steve Aoki, played a pivotal role in launching the American EDM boom of the late 2000s. This groundbreaking release not only showcased Rifo's innovative musical vision but also established The Bloody Beetroots as a force to be reckoned with in the electronic music scene.

Building upon the success of 'Romborama,' Rifo continued to push the boundaries of his unique sound with the release of his sophomore LP, 'Hide.' This album saw The Bloody Beetroots collaborating with legendary rock and alternative icons such as Paul McCartney and Tommy Lee, further cementing the project's reputation for bridging the gap between electronic music and rock. The seamless integration of these seemingly disparate genres is a testament to Rifo's unparalleled ability to create music that transcends traditional boundaries.

In 2017, The Bloody Beetroots unveiled their third LP, 'The Great Electronic Swindle,' which continued the electronic-rock narrative through collaborations with an array of talented artists, including Perry Farrell, Jet, Gallows, and Deap Vally. This album further solidified Rifo's position as a trailblazer in the music industry, showcasing his unwavering commitment to pushing the limits of what is possible in the realm of electronic rock.

More recently, The Bloody Beetroots have continued to captivate audiences with a series of groundbreaking releases. In 2019, Rifo revisited his classic electro style with the 'Heavy' EP, which featured collaborations with Zhu and Dr. Fresch, as well as three solo originals that showcased his undiminished creative prowess. The EP served as a reminder of The Bloody Beetroots' ability to constantly evolve and innovate, while still staying true to their core musical identity.



The year 2021 saw yet another exciting development in The Bloody Beetroots' journey, as Rifo joined forces with the legendary guitarist Tom Morello to release 'The Catastrophists' EP. This collaboration marked a new chapter in the electronic rock saga, bringing together two musical titans who share a passion for pushing the boundaries of their respective genres. The EP was met with critical acclaim, further cementing The Bloody Beetroots' status as a leading force in the world of electronic rock.

In addition to their studio work, The Bloody Beetroots have also made a name for themselves through their electrifying live performances. Rifo's boundary-pushing full live band shows and DJ sets have captivated audiences at major music festivals around the globe, including Coachella, Lollapalooza, Prima Vera, Pink Pop, and Fuji Rock. These performances serve as a testament to the raw energy and unparalleled showmanship that define The Bloody Beetroots' live experience.

As The Bloody Beetroots continue to push the boundaries of electronic rock with their latest release, it is clear that Sir Bob Cornelius Rifo's creative vision knows no bounds. With each new album, EP, and live performance, Rifo reaffirms his position as a pioneering force in the music industry, constantly challenging the status quo and inspiring countless artists along the way.

For fans of electronic music, rock, and everything in between, The Bloody Beetroots' latest release is an unmissable milestone in the ever-evolving landscape of music. As Rifo continues to blend genres, collaborate with groundbreaking artists, and push the limits of his own creativity, one thing remains certain: The Bloody Beetroots will continue to shape the future of electronic rock, one groundbreaking release at a time.



Skinlab Signs with WURMgroup, Releases Hard-Hitting Single "Flesh Wounds" Produced by Ulrich Wild

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By Albert Schwartz

San Francisco-based groove metal pioneers Skinlab are back with a vengeance, announcing their signing to WURMgroup and the release of their new single, "Flesh Wounds." The track, produced and mixed by legendary producer Ulrich Wild (Static-x, Dethklok, Pantera), marks the band's first new material in nearly four years and showcases their signature heavy sound and uncompromising intensity.

Formed in 1994, Skinlab has been a driving force in the groove metal scene, drawing comparisons to genre giants like Sepultura, Hatebreed, and Machine Head. Despite lineup changes and the ever-shifting musical landscape, the band has remained true to their roots, consistently delivering powerful rhythms and biting lyrics that resonate with fans around the world.

"Flesh Wounds" is no exception, with vocalist and bassist Steev Esquivel describing the track as "coming hard straight out the gates." Co-written by Esquivel himself, the song features the talents of guitarists Marcos Medina and Scott Sargeant, as well as drummer Fabian Vestod. "When you hear it, you know it's Skinlab," Esquivel proudly states.

Producer Ulrich Wild expressed his excitement about the collaboration, having previously worked with Skinlab on their album "Venomous." "I'm thrilled to add Skinlab to our WURMgroup roster," Wild said. "'Flesh Wounds' is unmistakably Skinlab and a great song to continue where they left off. It's powerful groove metal you'd expect from a band with eyes trained on the future."

To celebrate this new chapter, Skinlab is embarking on a series of European and North American tour dates. The European leg will see the band sharing the stage with Pro-Pain, kicking off on November 13 in ?eské Bud?jovice, CZ. North American fans can catch Skinlab starting December 12 in Sacramento, CA, with additional dates in major cities through early 2025.

The tour will feature some exciting lineup changes, with Steve Lujan from Sacramento's Cemetery Legacy and Oscar "Wakaras" Lugo of San Jose's Way II Stoned stepping in for guitarist Marcos Medina on the European dates. "Both guitarists have been killing it in rehearsals, and we can't wait to bring our music to the fans," Esquivel enthused.

New guitarist Oscar "Wakaras" Lugo shared his enthusiasm, saying, "I'm really excited to announce that I will be part of this European Tour, playing guitar for Skinlab, one of the bands I looked up to when I was in high school."

With a career spanning nearly three decades, Skinlab has proven their staying power and unwavering commitment to their craft. "Flesh Wounds" is a testament to the band's enduring legacy and a promise of more hard-hitting music to come.

Fans can catch Skinlab on their upcoming U.S. tour, with dates running from December 12, 2024, to January 12, 2025, hitting major cities like Sacramento, Los Angeles, Brooklyn, and more. As Skinlab continues to push the boundaries of groove metal, one thing is certain: they're back, and they're here to stay.





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WEDNESDAY 13 Unveils 2025 North American Headline Tour, Promising a Haunting Journey Through Horror Punk History

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By Albert Schwartz

In a thrilling announcement that has sent shockwaves through the horror punk community, the legendary WEDNESDAY 13 has revealed his plans for a monumental North American headline tour set to take place in 2025. Dubbed the "There's No Such Thing As Monsters" tour, this highly anticipated event will see the Duke of Spook himself taking the stage in cities across the continent, bringing his signature blend of macabre theatricality and hard-hitting punk rock to eager audiences.

The tour, which is slated to begin on March 14 in the glittering city of Las Vegas, NV, will make its way through a series of iconic venues in major cities such as Los Angeles, Dallas, Atlanta, New York City, and Toronto. This haunting journey will conclude with a final performance in Colorado Springs, CO on May 3, leaving fans in a state of euphoric exhaustion after witnessing the spectacle that is a WEDNESDAY 13 live show.

Joining WEDNESDAY 13 on this unforgettable tour will be a carefully curated lineup of some of the most exciting names in the genre. Stitched Up Heart, known for their powerful vocals and infectious melodies, will be bringing their unique brand of hard rock to the stage. Dead Rabbits, a band that has been making waves in the underground scene with their raw, unapologetic sound, will also be along for the ride. Rounding out the lineup is I Ya Toyah, an electronic rock project that promises to add a mesmerizing visual element to the show.

For WEDNESDAY 13, this tour represents a triumphant return to his solo material after spending the past year and a half celebrating the music of his former band, the Murderdolls. "We are thrilled to announce our upcoming 2025 tour," the frontman expressed in a statement. "After spending the last year and a half celebrating the music of my former band Murderdolls, I'm excited to get back to my solo music. The debut album, Transylvania 90210, was released 20 years ago and the upcoming live set will reflect that album and the earlier WEDNESDAY 13 material. Also, you can expect to hear new music from our forthcoming Napalm Records release due in early 2025. We can't wait to see you all on tour!"

The announcement of the "There's No Such Thing As Monsters" tour comes hot on the heels of WEDNESDAY 13's critically acclaimed 2022 album, Horrifier. This latest offering saw the artist revitalizing his sound, infusing his trademark horror punk aesthetic with a newfound intensity and a heavy metal edge. Produced and recorded by WEDNESDAY 13 himself, with mixing and mastering duties handled by Brent Clawson, Horrifier

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WEDNESDAY 13

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features stunning album artwork by Jonny Bush and serves as a testament to the artist's unwavering commitment to his craft.

WEDNESDAY 13, born Joseph Poole, has been a driving force in the horror punk scene since the late 1990s. His rise to prominence began with his role as the frontman of the Murderdolls, a supergroup formed in collaboration with Slipknot drummer Joey Jordison. The band's debut album, Beyond the Valley of the Murderdolls, garnered worldwide acclaim and cemented WEDNESDAY 13's status as a true innovator in the genre.

Following the success of the Murderdolls, WEDNESDAY 13 embarked on a solo career that has seen him release a string of groundbreaking albums, each one pushing the boundaries of horror punk and showcasing his unique fusion of influences. From his debut solo offering, Transylvania 90210: Songs of Death, Dying and the Dead, to his most recent masterpiece, Horrifier, WEDNESDAY 13 has consistently proven himself to be an artist who refuses to be confined by the limitations of genre.

With a discography that spans over two decades and includes numerous classic albums, WEDNESDAY 13 has established himself as a true icon of the horror punk scene. His upcoming North American tour promises to be a celebration of his illustrious career, featuring a setlist that will delight longtime fans and newcomers alike. Attendees can expect to hear classic tracks from the early days of WEDNESDAY 13's solo career, as well as brand new material from his highly anticipated forthcoming Napalm Records release.

As the "There's No Such Thing As Monsters" tour draws nearer, horror punk fans across North America are buzzing with excitement at the prospect of witnessing WEDNESDAY 13 in his element. Known for his high-energy performances and visually stunning stage shows, the Duke of Spook never fails to deliver an unforgettable experience for his audience. With a lineup of talented supporting acts and a setlist that promises to be a journey through the annals of horror punk history, this tour is shaping up to be one of the most talked-about events of 2025.

For those who have followed WEDNESDAY 13's career from the beginning, the "There's No Such Thing As Monsters" tour represents a chance to celebrate the artist's legacy and the indelible



mark he has left on the genre. For newer fans, it offers an opportunity to experience firsthand the magic that has made WEDNESDAY 13 a beloved figure in the world of horror punk.

As the tour dates approach, fans are encouraged to secure their tickets early, as shows are expected to sell out quickly. With anticipation building to a fever pitch, the horror punk community is poised to embrace WEDNESDAY 13 as he embarks on this monumental journey, ready to once again prove that there truly is no such thing as monsters – only legends.

WEDNESDAY 13
There's No Such Things As Monsters North American Tour
w/ Stitched Up Heart, Dead Rabbits, I Ya Toyah

03/14/25: Las Vegas, NV @ Count's Vamp'd
03/15/25: Los Angeles, CA @ The Whisky
03/16/25: Berkeley, CA @ Cornerstone
03/18/25: Portland, OR @ Bossanova Ballroom
03/19/25: Seattle, WA @ El Corazon
03/21/25: Roseville, CA @ Goldfield Trading Post
03/22/25: Pomona, CA @ Glass House
03/23/25: San Diego, CA @ Brick By Brick
03/25/25: Mesa, AZ @ The Nile Theater
03/26/25: Albuquerque, NM @ Launch Pad
03/28/25: San Antonio, TX @ Paper Tiger
03/29/25: Dallas, TX @ Trees
03/30/25: Houston, TX @ Warehouse Live
04/01/25: Birmingham, AL @ Saturn
04/02/25: Knoxville, TN @ Open Chord
04/04/25: Atlanta, GA @ The Loft @ Centerstage
04/05/25: Raleigh, NC @ Chapel Of Bones
04/06/25: Greenville, SC @ Radio Room
04/08/25: Baltimore, MD @ Zen West
04/09/25: Leesburg, VA @ Tally Ho
04/10/25: Sayreville, NJ @ Starland Ballroom
04/12/25: Hampton Beach, NH @ Wallys
04/13/25: Montreal, QC @ Foufounes Electrique
04/15/25: Toronto, ON @ Lee's Palace
04/16/25: Buffalo, NY @ Rec Room
04/18/25: New York, NY @ The Gramercy
04/19/25: Stroudsburg, PA @ Sherman Theater
04/20/25: Lititz, PA @ Mickey's Black Box
04/22/25: Pittsburgh, PA @ Crafthouse
04/23/25: Cleveland, OH @ Mercury
04/25/25: Columbus, OH @ The Kings Of Clubs
04/26/25: Flint, MI @ Machine Shop
04/27/25: Cadillac, MI @ Venue Event Center
04/29/25: Joliet, IL @ The Forge
04/30/25: Madison, WI @ The Annex
05/02/25: Denver, CO @ Oriental Theater
05/03/25: Colorado Springs, CO @ Black Sheep

Rising R&B Group FLO Unlocks New Chapter with Star-Studded Mini-Deluxe Album Release



By Deshaun Phillips

In a bold move that reinforces their status as R&B's most promising new voices, London-based trio FLO has unveiled "Access All Areas: Unlocked," a mini-deluxe edition of their debut album that showcases their versatility through collaborations with some of music's most compelling artists. The release, which arrives on the heels of their critically acclaimed debut album "Access All Areas," demonstrates the group's commitment to pushing creative boundaries while honoring the rich tradition of girl group excellence.

The enhanced collection features carefully curated collaborations that bring new dimensions to FLO's already impressive sound. R&B sister duo Chloe x Halle, known for their intricate vocal arrangements and ethereal harmonies, have breathed new life into the fan-favorite track "Soft." Their contribution adds layers of vocal complexity that complement FLO's already sophisticated harmonies. Meanwhile, contemporary R&B powerhouse Kehlani brings their signature emotional depth and edge to "IWH2BMX," creating a compelling dialogue between their distinctive vocal style and FLO's dynamic delivery.

Rising star Bree Runway, celebrated for her genre-defying approach to music, adds her bold artistic vision to "Nocturnal," while innovative producer-artist DIXSON brings a fresh perspective to "Bending My Rules." The latter track has already garnered additional attention through its acclaimed VEVO live performance, which showcases the group's impressive live vocals and stage presence.

"Access All Areas: Unlocked is finally out and we can't wait for everyone to listen!" the group shared enthusiastically. "We really admire these artists and couldn't be happier to have them feature on our new music. From the lyricism, to the harmonies to the sweet melodies and flows they all delivered!" Their excitement is palpable, and they've teased fans with the promise that this mini-deluxe release is just the beginning, suggesting more surprises are in store.

The original album itself, "Access All Areas," represents a significant milestone in FLO's artistic journey. Opening with narration from Academy Award-nominated actress Cynthia Erivo, the 16-track collection serves as a manifesto for the group's artistic vision. Executive produced by MNEK, known for his work with industry heavyweights, the album masterfully bridges the gap between R&B's rich history and its future possibilities. The production seamlessly integrates classic soul elements with contemporary sounds, featuring pitched-up original samples and forward-thinking production techniques that create a sound both nostalgic and revolutionary.

Critics have been quick to recognize the album's significance. DAZED praised it as "a debut that delivers on the promise of their hype," while Rolling Stone declared it "makes an airtight case for their position in the pantheon of great girl groups." The Times and NME's four-star reviews highlighted the album's ability to bring "a sense of fun and glamour that has been missing from modern pop," with DIY going even further by awarding an impressive 4.5 stars and dubbing it "a definitive debut."

The release of "In My Bag" featuring GloRilla marks another highlight of FLO's expanding artistic repertoire. The track, described as an

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FLO

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"energised humble brag," pairs bass-heavy rhythms with sophisticated vocal arrangements. Its accompanying video, directed by Troy Roscoe and featuring choreography by the renowned Sean Bankhead, showcases the group's ability to blend compelling narratives with impressive visual aesthetics. The collaboration with GloRilla came naturally, as the group explains: "GLO is such a deserving, incredibly talented and sweet artist who we really admire... We've loved working with her and are looking forward to everyone watching the video we shot together in Atlanta."

Fresh from completing their supporting role on Kehlani's Crash World Tour, where they commanded arena stages across North America, FLO is preparing for their most ambitious headline tour to date. The Access All Areas Tour, scheduled for early 2025, will see the group performing across major European cities, including Copenhagen, Stockholm, Paris, and multiple UK venues. The tour's announcement has already generated significant buzz, with shows in Paris and Cologne selling out immediately, and their headline show at London's iconic O2 Academy Brixton promising to be a landmark moment in their career.

The trajectory of FLO—comprising members Jorja Douglas, Stella Quaresma, and Renée Downer—has been extraordinary since their formation in 2019. They've achieved what no other group has done before, winning both the BRITs Rising Star Award and the BBC Sound Poll in the same year. Their impact extends beyond these accolades, with their music resonating with both audiences and fellow artists. Their debut EP "The Lead" and its breakout single "Cardboard Box" have accumulated nearly half a billion streams, while their television appearances on shows like Jimmy Kimmel LIVE!, Later... with Jools Holland, and performances at prestigious events such as the Soul Train Awards and MOBOs have consistently demonstrated their exceptional talent.

Their appeal crosses traditional genre boundaries, earning them admiration from an impressive array of artists including Brandy, JoJo, SZA, Victoria Monét, Missy Elliott, and Destiny's Child's Kelly Rowland. Their versatility is evident in their ability to collaborate effectively with artists as diverse as UK rap star Stormzy while also engaging in meaningful conversations with music legends like Sir Elton John.

The group's focus on authenticity and relatability is particularly evident in their songwriting. "Access All Areas" delves deep into themes of love, sisterhood, and the experiences of young Black women navigating contemporary life. Their candid, relatable lyricism, combined with their impressive vocal abilities and modern production values, creates a sound that speaks directly to their generation while maintaining broad appeal.Looking ahead, FLO appears poised to continue their ascent in the music industry. With "Access All Areas: Unlocked," they've demonstrated their ability to evolve and collaborate while maintaining their distinctive sound. As they prepare for their upcoming tour and hint at future releases, it's clear that FLO isn't just following in the footsteps of the great girl groups that came before them—they're charting a bold new course for the future of R&B, one that honors its roots while fearlessly embracing innovation and authenticity.

Their journey represents more than just commercial success; it signals a revival of the girl group format for a new era, one that combines traditional vocal harmony excellence with contemporary production and messaging. As they continue to expand their artistic horizons with releases like "Access All Areas: Unlocked," FLO is proving that they're not just participants in the current music landscape—they're actively shaping its future.

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11/02 Spokane, WA	11/19 Cleveland, OH	12/06 Albuquerque, NM
11/03 Boise, ID	11/20 Pittsburgh, PA	12/07 Tempe, AZ
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Legendary Cat Stevens Concert Album ‘Saturnight’ Gets First U.S. Release After 50-Year Wait

By Greg Fontaine

A piece of music history is finally making its way to American shores as Yusuf / Cat Stevens’ rare 1974 concert album, “Saturnight: Live from Tokyo,” receives its first-ever U.S. release. The legendary recording, previously available only in Japan due to contractual restrictions between A&M and Island Records, arrives as a special Record Store Day Black Friday release on November 29th, marking its 50th anniversary with a meticulously remastered edition that promises to transport listeners back to a magical night in Tokyo.

Captured at Tokyo’s Sun Plaza Hall in Nakano on June 22nd, 1974, during the Japanese leg of Stevens’ ambitious “Bamboozle World Tour,” this concert recording represents the artist at the height of his creative powers. The performance, which has achieved almost mythical status among collectors, has been remastered from the original production master and pressed on 180-gram Orange Splatter color vinyl at the prestigious Abbey Road Studios, ensuring the highest possible audio quality for this historic release.

The “Bamboozle World Tour” was a massive undertaking, encompassing 50 shows across North America, Europe, Australia, and Japan. The tour was organized to support the release of “Buddha and the Chocolate Box,” and the Japanese dates held special significance for Stevens, who had long felt a deep connection to Japanese culture, particularly its emphasis on meditation, reflection, and spiritual awareness – elements that would later play crucial roles in his personal journey.

The new release features carefully considered packaging that includes a gatefold sleeve with complete lyrics and fresh liner notes from two key figures from the era: the band’s 1974 tour manager, Carl Miller, and bassist Bruce Lynch. This attention to detail provides fans with valuable historical context and

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Cat Stevens

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insider perspectives on what proved to be a pivotal moment in Stevens' career, offering intimate insights into both the performance and the artist's state of mind during this transformative period.

The setlist reads like a carefully curated greatest hits collection, featuring beloved classics from his most celebrated albums. The performance includes the haunting "Lady D'Arbanville" from "Mona Bone Jakon" (1970), the iconic "Wild World," the environmentally prescient "Where Do The Children Play?" the soulful "Hard Headed Woman," and the touching father-son dialogue "Father & Son" from "Tea for the Tillerman" (1970). The spiritually charged "Peace Train" and energetic "Bitterblue" from "Teaser and the Firecat" (1971) also make appearances, alongside the contemplative "Sitting" from "Catch Bull at Four" (1972).

The concert also showcases material from Stevens' then-latest album, "Buddha and the Chocolate Box," including the timeless "Oh Very Young," the environmental anthem "King of Trees," and the introspective "A Bad Penny." A particular highlight is the debut live performance of his soulful interpretation of Sam Cooke's "Another Saturday Night," recorded in Tokyo with local brass musicians just days before the concert. This version, capturing the raw energy of its first-ever live performance, would later become a hit single for Stevens later that year.

The timing of the concert was particularly significant, as 1974 marked a transformative period in Stevens' life and career. Earlier that year, he had become a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and visited Ethiopia and Kenya, experiences that would profoundly impact his worldview and eventually lead to his temporary departure from the music industry to focus on humanitarian work. The devastation he witnessed



during these visits, coupled with the remarkable resilience of the human spirit he encountered, would forever change his perspective on his role as an artist and public figure.

In keeping with his growing commitment to charitable causes, Stevens arranged for the original Japanese release's proceeds to benefit UNICEF. This decision reflected his increasing dedication to using his platform for humanitarian purposes, a path that would eventually lead him to step away from the music industry entirely to focus on charitable work and spiritual development.

The album captures Stevens at a creative peak, following a remarkable journey that began in London's folk scene. His path to stardom started in July 1964 at the Black Horse pub near Hammersmith Art College, where he made his first folk music performance. By 1965, he had secured a publishing deal and adopted the name Cat Stevens, soon after selling what would become one of his most famous compositions, "The First Cut is the Deepest," to P.P. Arnold for just $40.

His early career saw rapid success with hits like "I Love My Dog," "Here Comes My Baby," and "Matthew and Son," but it was his post-illness renaissance beginning with "Tea for the Tillerman" that truly established him as a global superstar. The success of singles like "Wild World" in America opened new horizons for Stevens, leading to a string of gold albums and beloved hits including "Moon Shadow," "Peace Train," and "Morning Has Broken."

The release of "Saturnight" provides a valuable snapshot of an artist in transition. While Stevens was still riding high on the success of albums like "Catch Bull at Four," which had topped the charts for three weeks, he was already beginning to feel the pull toward spiritual and humanitarian pursuits that would eventually lead him away from

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CAT · STEVENS
Saturnight







Cat Stevens Concert Album 'Saturnight'

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the music industry. This concert recording captures him at this crucial juncture, still performing at the peak of his powers but with new awareness of the world's deeper needs.

The concert's recording in Japan was particularly fitting given Stevens' deep appreciation for Japanese culture, especially its traditions of meditation and reflection. These elements would later influence his spiritual journey and eventual conversion to Islam in 1977. The respect and connection he felt for Japanese cultural traditions are evident in the warmth and engagement of his performance throughout the concert.

The historical significance of this release cannot be overstated. It captures a pivotal moment in Stevens' career, bridging the gap between his commercial peak and his eventual departure from the music industry. The quality of the performance, combined with the historical context and the sophisticated remastering process, makes this release essential for both longtime fans and newcomers to Stevens' music.

"Saturnight: Live from Tokyo" stands as more than just a concert recording; it's a document of an artist at the crossroads of commercial success and spiritual awakening, captured in a performance that showcases both his musical mastery and his growing awareness of a calling beyond the entertainment world. As this recording finally reaches American audiences after five decades, it offers a unique opportunity to experience a crucial moment in the evolution of one of popular music's most distinctive voices.

The album will be available exclusively through participating Record Store Day retailers, offering fans a chance to own a piece of music history that has remained tantalizingly out of reach for half a century. This release not only preserves a remarkable performance but also provides crucial context for understanding the artistic and spiritual journey of one of the most influential singer-songwriters of his generation.

***Saturnight* Tracklist**

SIDE I

1. Wild World
2. Oh Very Young
3. Sitting
4. Where Do The Children Play?
5. Lady D'Arbanville
6. Another Saturday Night (Sam Cooke)

?SIDE II

1. Hard Headed Woman
2. Peace Train
3. Father & Son
4. King of Trees
5. A Bad Penny
6. Bitterblue



Iron Maiden Celebrates 40 Years of 'Powerslave' with Revolutionary Zoetrope Vinyl Release

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By Albert Schwartz

In a groundbreaking celebration of heavy metal history, Iron Maiden and BMG have unveiled a spectacular 40th-anniversary edition of the legendary album "Powerslave," featuring the band's first-ever zoetrope picture disc. This innovative release transforms one of metal's most iconic albums into a mesmerizing visual and audio experience, combining vintage artistry with modern technology in a way that's never been attempted before in the band's extensive catalog of releases.

The anniversary edition showcases unique zoetrope artwork paired with the album's pristine 2015 remaster, offering fans both visual and sonic enhancement of the classic record. Adding to its collectible appeal, the original sleeve has been extensively expanded to include new artwork and exclusive "Powerslave at 40" liner notes penned by Iron Maiden founder and bassist Steve Harris himself. For dedicated collectors, Walmart is offering an exclusive version featuring a special Lenticular 3D Album Art sized print, making this release a must-have for completists and casual fans alike.

When "Powerslave" first stormed the global charts in September 1984, it marked Iron Maiden's fifth studio venture and solidified their position as metal titans. The album achieved remarkable international success, securing impressive chart positions worldwide: #2 in the UK, #3 in Switzerland, #4 in Norway, #5 in both Germany and Sweden, and strong showings across New Zealand (#11), Austria (#15), and North America (#21 in both Canada and the US). These achievements were backed by multiple Gold and Platinum certifications, cementing the album's commercial triumph and establishing Iron Maiden as a global force in heavy metal.

The album represents a pivotal moment in Iron Maiden's evolution, featuring some of their most beloved tracks that continue to electrify audiences nearly half a century later. The album's singles, "2 Minutes to Midnight" and "Aces High," have become eternal staples of the band's repertoire, with both songs representing different facets of the band's songwriting prowess. "2 Minutes to Midnight," crafted by vocalist Bruce Dickinson and guitarist Adrian Smith in a remarkably brief twenty-minute writing session, drew its inspiration from the Cold War's Doomsday Clock and Ronald Reagan's famous "Evil Empire" speech, capturing the political tension of the era in a masterful blend of heavy metal thunder and poetic commentary.

Meanwhile, "Aces High," penned

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Iron Maiden

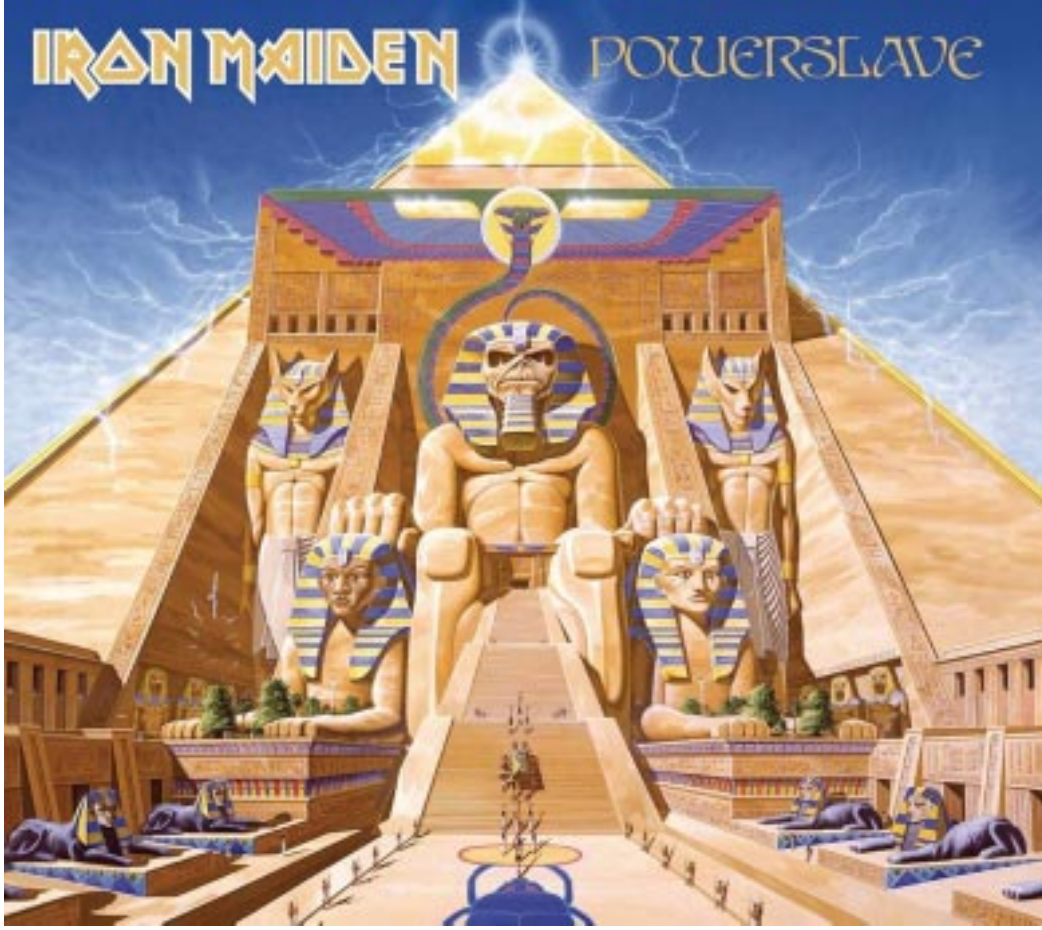
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by Steve Harris, paid tribute to the Battle of Britain, with live performances traditionally preceded by Winston Churchill's iconic "We shall fight on the beaches" speech. This combination of historical gravitas and musical intensity became a blueprint for future metal bands attempting to tackle serious historical subjects while maintaining their musical edge.

Perhaps the album's crowning achievement is "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," a mammoth 13-minute-45-second epic that would stand as the band's longest track for over three decades until the release of "Empire of the Clouds" in 2015. This ambitious piece, based on Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem of the same name, showcases the band's literary influences and progressive tendencies in a way that had never been attempted in heavy metal before. Steve Harris's adaptation of the classic poem, complete with direct quotations including the famous "Water, water everywhere – nor any drop to drink," demonstrated the band's ability to merge classical literature with heavy metal's raw power, creating a template for progressive metal that countless bands would follow in the decades to come.

The album holds several unique distinctions in Iron Maiden's discography. It was their first album to feature the same lineup as its predecessor, a consistency that would continue for two more studio releases, marking one of the most stable and creative periods in the band's history. It also stands as their last album to include an instrumental piece until 2021's "Senjutsu," and uniquely features no songwriting credits from longtime guitarist Dave Murray, making it a fascinating outlier in their catalog.

The creation of "Powerslave" came at a crucial moment in the band's career. Following their highly successful World Piece Tour in December 1983, during which Iron Maiden had finally headlined large venues and arenas in the US, the band took a brief three-week break in January 1984. They then regrouped at Le Chalet Hotel in Jersey for six intensive weeks of rehearsal and writing. The album was recorded at the



legendary Compass Point Studios in Nassau, Bahamas, before being mixed at Electric Lady Studios in New York, a process that helped craft the album's powerful, distinctive sound.

The album's release sparked what many consider Iron Maiden's most grueling and ambitious tour. The World Slavery Tour, which began in Warsaw, Poland, on August 9, 1984, and concluded in California in July 1985, was unprecedented in its scope and ambition. The band performed behind the Iron Curtain, marking the first time a heavy metal act had done so, breaking new ground for the genre and helping to spread heavy metal's influence to new territories. The tour reached new audiences in South America, including a landmark performance to 350,000 fans at Rock in Rio alongside Queen, establishing Iron Maiden as global ambassadors of heavy metal.

The tour's elaborate stage design mirrored the album's Ancient Egyptian theme, featuring monumental pedestals that towered several stories high. This spectacular production filled even New York's massive Radio City Music Hall and led to the release of the celebrated "Live After Death" album and video, which captured the band at the peak of their powers. The tour touched 28 countries over eleven months, setting new standards for what a heavy metal band could achieve on the road.

Beyond the singles and the epic "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," "Powerslave" showcases the band's versatility through tracks like "Flash of the Blade," inspired by Dickinson's passion for fencing, and "Back in the Village," a sequel to their earlier song "The Prisoner" based on the British science fiction TV series. The title track itself, "Powerslave," narrated from the perspective of an Egyptian pharaoh contemplating mortality, was written by Dickinson as a partial allegory of his life as a rock star, adding another layer of depth to the album's thematic richness.

The instrumental "Losfer Words (Big 'Orra)" demonstrates the band's musical prowess even without vocals, maintaining the energy and complexity that had become their trademark. Originally intended to have lyrics, the band ultimately decided the music spoke for itself, creating what would be their last instrumental piece for nearly four decades.

"Powerslave" has stood the test of time, earning its place among metal's

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Iron Maiden Celebrates ‘Powerslave’

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greatest achievements. Rolling Stone magazine ranked it #38 on their “100 Greatest Metal Albums of All Time” list in 2017. According to band members Nicko McBrain and Adrian Smith, the album accelerated Iron Maiden’s global fame, particularly in markets like Brazil, where the band’s popularity reached fever pitch, with hundreds of fans waiting outside hotels and restaurants just to catch a glimpse of the band.

This 40th-anniversary zoetrope edition serves as both a celebration of “Powerslave’s” enduring legacy and an innovation in vinyl presentation. The combination of the 2015 remaster’s enhanced sound quality with the groundbreaking zoetrope visual effect creates a unique collector’s item that honors the album’s historical significance while pushing the boundaries of physical media presentation. For fans and collectors alike, this special release offers a new way to experience a landmark album that helped define heavy metal’s golden age.



As Iron Maiden’s influence continues to resonate with new generations of metal fans, this anniversary edition of “Powerslave” stands as a testament to the band’s enduring legacy and their commitment to innovation. The album’s themes of war, power, mortality, and literary exploration remain as relevant today as they were four decades ago, while the new zoetrope format brings these classic songs into the modern era with a fresh visual dimension that pays tribute to the iconic Derek Riggs artwork that has become synonymous with Iron Maiden’s visual identity.

The “Powerslave” 40th Anniversary Zoetrope edition is available now, providing both longtime followers and new disciples of Iron Maiden the opportunity to own a piece of metal history reimagined for the modern era. This release not only celebrates one of heavy metal’s most important albums but also demonstrates Iron Maiden’s continuing ability to surprise and innovate even after four decades at the forefront of the genre.

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Eagles Co-Founder Don Henley Marks 40 Years of 'Building The Perfect Beast' with Special Anniversary Edition

By Nathan Pugh

In a year that has already seen the Eagles reaching new heights with their revolutionary Sphere residency in Las Vegas, founding member Don Henley is commemorating another significant milestone in his storied career: the 40th anniversary of his groundbreaking solo album "Building The Perfect Beast." UMe has unveiled a special edition of the triple-platinum record, now available as a first-ever 2-LP set, accompanied by a newly remastered digital version for modern streaming platforms and digital download.

The anniversary edition, which debuted on November 15, marks a historic moment for vinyl enthusiasts and Henley devotees alike. For the first time in the album's four-decade history, the complete track listing is available on vinyl, including the previously vinyl-absent "A Month Of Sundays" – a song that had been confined to CD, cassette, and digital formats. Audio engineers have painstakingly remastered the album from the original analog tapes, pressing it onto audiophile-grade 180-gram vinyl, ensuring that every nuance of the original recordings is preserved and enhanced for contemporary listening systems.

When "Building The Perfect Beast" first emerged from the studio in 1984, it represented more than just Henley's sophomore solo effort – it was a definitive statement of artistic independence from a musician already renowned as a founding member of one of rock's most successful bands. The album's sophisticated blend of personal narratives and social commentary demonstrated Henley's evolution from Eagles drummer and vocalist to a fully-realized solo artist with a distinct creative vision.

The album's creation brought together an extraordinary assemblage of musical talent, representing a who's who of 1980s rock royalty. At the core of the project was Henley's collaboration with guitarist Danny Kortchmar, whose partnership proved instrumental in crafting the album's signature sound. The recording sessions were further enhanced

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Don Henley

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by significant contributions from members of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers – guitarist Mike Campbell, keyboardist Benmont Tench, and drummer Stan Lynch, the latter of whom would later reconnect with Henley to co-write the Eagles' "Learn to Be Still."

The album's rich musical tapestry was further embellished by an impressive roster of guest artists. Fleetwood Mac's guitar virtuoso Lindsey Buckingham, the Go-Go's charismatic lead vocalist Belinda Carlisle, and the legendary Randy Newman all left their distinctive marks on the record. Additional contributions from acclaimed musicians Jim Keltner, Waddy Wachtel, Pino Palladino, Steve Porcaro, and Ian Wallace helped create the album's uniquely layered sound.

The commercial impact of "Building The Perfect Beast" was immediate and substantial. The album reached #13 on the Billboard 200 and achieved triple-platinum status, certified by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). But it was the album's singles that truly showcased its broad appeal, with four tracks reaching the Billboard Hot 100's top forty.

"The Boys of Summer" emerged as the album's crown jewel, becoming one of Henley's most beloved and enduring songs. The track's success extended beyond radio play, as its innovative music video dominated the 1985 MTV Video Music Awards. Henley's four Moonman trophies from that night, including the prestigious Video of the Year award, testified to the song's cultural impact. The recording industry further validated the album's artistic merit with five Grammy nominations, with "The Boys of Summer" securing the award for Best Rock Vocal Performance, Male.

Contemporary critics recognized the album's significance immediately. Rolling Stone's Kurt Loder praised its meticulous craftsmanship and thematic depth, noting how the record skillfully balanced personal reflection with social commentary. The album's first side explored matters of the heart, exemplified by the nostalgic longing of "The Boys of Summer," while the second side tackled weightier societal issues, from genetic engineering to American foreign policy.



The album's centerpiece, "Sunset Grill," showcased Henley's masterful songwriting with its vivid portrayal of urban decay and personal alienation. The song's stark imagery and emotional resonance highlighted Henley's ability to weave complex narratives within the constraints of popular music. Rolling Stone later acknowledged the album's lasting significance by ranking it #73 on their "100 Best Albums of the Eighties" list.

Henley's journey to solo stardom began in the unlikely setting of a small East Texas town, where distant radio signals brought an eclectic mix of musical styles into his young life. The blues, bluegrass, gospel, jazz, and rock and roll broadcasts from New Orleans, Nashville, and Ciudad Acuna, Mexico, helped shape his musical sensibilities and laid the groundwork for his future artistic endeavors.

This diverse musical foundation served him well both in the Eagles and his solo career. As a founding member of the Eagles, Henley helped pioneer a distinctively American musical style that blended elements of country, folk, R&B, rock, and pop. The band's phenomenal success – including more than 150 million albums sold worldwide, six Grammy Awards, and induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame – established a high bar that Henley would need to clear with his solo work.

Forty years after its initial release, "Building The Perfect Beast" stands as a

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Don Henley's 'Building The Perfect Beast'

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testament to Henley's artistic vision and craftsmanship. The album successfully bridged the gap between the Eagles' country-rock foundations and the synthesizer-driven sound of the 1980s, creating a template for sophisticated, adult-oriented rock that many would attempt to emulate.

The 40th-anniversary release comes at a particularly poignant moment, as the Eagles continue to demonstrate their enduring appeal through their innovative Sphere residency in Las Vegas. The band's continued success – including their Greatest Hits 1971-1975 maintaining its status as the best-selling album in history with 38-times platinum certification – provides a fitting backdrop for the celebration of this solo milestone.

For both longtime fans and newcomers to Henley's solo work, the 40th-anniversary edition of "Building The Perfect Beast" offers an opportunity to experience this pivotal album with unprecedented clarity and completeness. The inclusion of "A Month Of Sundays" on vinyl for the first time, combined with the meticulous remastering process, ensures that this release will serve as the definitive version of an album that helped define an era of American music.

As Don Henley continues to perform with the Eagles, delighting audiences worldwide with their timeless catalog, this anniversary release serves as a reminder of his significant contributions to popular music, both as a band member and as a solo artist. "Building The Perfect Beast" remains a powerful testament to Henley's artistic vision – a perfect beast indeed, now restored and preserved for future generations to discover and appreciate.

TRACKLISTING:

SIDE ONE
THE BOYS OF SUMMER
YOU CAN'T MAKE LOVE
MAN WITH A MISSION

SIDE TWO
YOU'RE NOT DRINKING ENOUGH
NOT ENOUGH LOVE IN THE WORLD
BUILDING THE PERFECT BEAST

SIDE THREE
ALL SHE WANTS TO DO IS DANCE
A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

SIDE FOUR
SUNSET GRILL
DRIVIN' WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED
LAND OF THE LIVING

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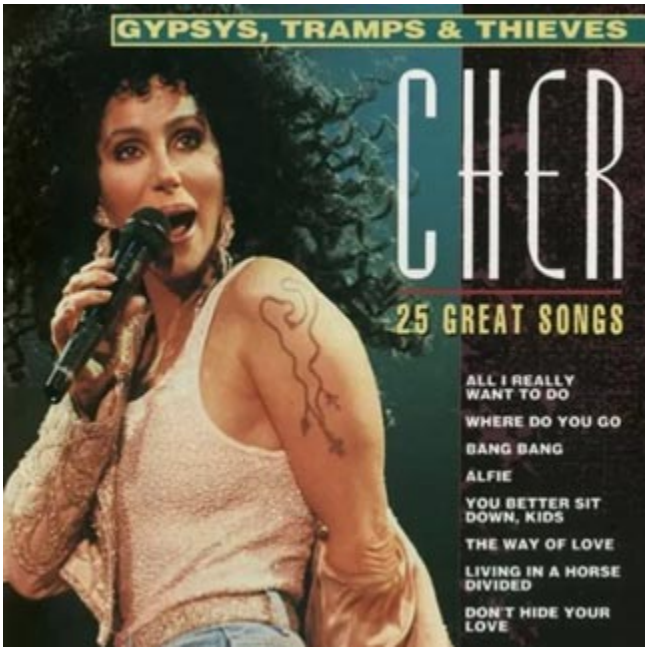




The Biker, The Blues, Cannibis Karen and the Dysfunctional Magnet







I had just arrived at an RV campground in northern California, really nice traveler's park up near the sequoias just outside of San Francisco. If you have ever been up that way then you know environmentally the area is cool to the max. I paid my money and was shown a road map of the park regarding where I could park my bike and set up camp. When I arrived at my campsite it was quiet, remote with only a white Mercedes extended van parked in the space next to mine. No one was around or so it seemed and as I opened my kickstand it became obvious that the ground wasn't going to support the weight of my bike. I needed to find something to go under it so I looked around to find something. Right beside the white van there was this flat stone. I walked briskly so that I could get back to my bike fast before it could fall over. As I leaned down to pick up the rock the sliding door on the van flew open and this determined young lady asked, "What you are doing to my van?" I told her I wasn't doing anything I just needed a rock that was right beside her van. She asked me what were my plans with the rock, to smash her windshield or something? I said no I just need to get back to my bike before it falls over. Her eyebrows furled in a questioning manner and I kept moving toward the rock. I picked it up and moved rapidly back to my bike. She was right to be suspicious as it had to look bad from her point of view. In my haste I never once thought that someone might open the van door and spook me like she did. So, and forgive me for this pun, we were off to a rocky start. The flat stone worked and then I began to remove the bungie cords holding my sleeping bag on to the front tubes. There was a picnic table at the campsite and I used it as a table to unpack. I don't know why but I began to think about the lady in the van and an image of Cher came to mind singing "Gypsies, Tramps & Thieves". When I got to my Beats sound tube I picked up my phone and found the song. The lyric came around "She was born in the wagon of a travelin' show her mama had to dance for the money they'd throw" I thought man that is all I need some gypsy ass goof ball coming at me with a carving knife.

But that's not what happened, well sort of what didn't happen. Eventually she came out of the van and went to her picnic table. After a wipe down of the area she went back inside her van and came out with a pretty good size cut of meat carrying a large chef's fork and a carving knife. That caused me to laugh, how appropriate me having this gypsy

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The Biker, The Blues, Cannibis Karen and the Dysfunctional Magnet





train of thought going on and here we are out in the middle of nowhere. What the hell we all got to die sometime right? Now if you are reading this then you know that all ended well but it was certainly an interesting situation to say the least. Anyway, she was doing her thing and I was doing mine. Mine included sitting at the picnic table and downing one of those little bottles of airplane size scotch while firing up a fifty ring single leaf Connecticut wrapped cigar. I decided to play some tunes just to while away the hours. I opened my handy, dandy iTunes library and started at the bottom moving up. Immediately I came across ZZ Top's "A Fool For Your Stockings" which has a killer intro and leads into a marvelous back beat while Billy lays down his licks and the lyrics. So I was off and running. Fine smoke, fine scotch, fine music in a laid back setting out among the tiny bunnies and big ass black bear. It seemed appropriate to break into another little bottle and fire up some Van Halen. "Eruption" one of the greatest solos of all time with a touch more volume plus the song leads right into "You Really Got Me" and of course you got to add even more volume to this baby. I began to smell a smoked meat aroma in the air. I looked over at the lady I had frightened earlier and she was grilling a piece off the larger piece of meat on her campsite grill. I couldn't place the spice aroma but it seemed sweet with a hint of hickory. Then it hit me no wait a minute that's pot right? Was the gypsy woman wasting good marijuana on a piece of meat or was she just doing a doob? Hmmm, well one would never know because a woman alone armed with a carving knife is not my way to return to the scene, no way, no how. Then an amazing thing happened she started walking toward me with the knife in hand carrying a paper plate in the other. She was either going to feed me or slice me up for her next meal. It was about to get interesting real quick. She approached me and stood maybe ten feet away and said she had extra meat, it was deer meat cooked the way her Mom used to cook it. Good looking gal too. She had the facial features of an American Indian princess and short stature like a Hispanic female. Although she didn't have a tomahawk in her hand she did have that carving knife coming my way. She said if you want this you are welcome to it. Hmmm, interesting. So I asked her what's with the cannabis smell, is it in the meat or were you just burning some for recreational use? She said neither I work at a cannabis plantation and those were just stems that I burned up in the fire. Ok, that made sense. I thanked her for the meat and told her I didn't have anything other than a Mounds Bar I could share back but if she wanted to join me we could call it dessert. She smiled and I thought ok this isn't so bad. She said she would be right back and placed the meat on the table. I told her I would play some music and she came back with I know I can hear you all the way over there.

She returned with two more slices of meat, some crackers and a little baggie with green stuff in it. It looked like oregano but obviously we all know what that was of course. She told me that from my bike plates she could see I wasn't from California and wanted me to know that possession was legal in the Bear state. Then she asked me a dumb question "So you have hit pipe with you?" I said no because a long hair with a beard riding a chopper is sure to get stopped every fifty feet if you get my drift. However, if you take the core out of a roll of toilet paper, cut a hole on the cardboard tube on one side then make a thimble out of some foil paper you can make it into a pipe of sorts. She said

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The Biker, The Blues, Cannibis Karen and the Dysfunctional Magnet





hey we don't need to do all of that although that's interesting I have one in the van. I changed her name from Gypsy Lady to Cannabis Karen although I had no idea what her real name was at this point in time. With the music off and a gentle wind whispering through those big ass trees you could hear twigs snapping and feel the breeze. Reminiscent of the music by Seals & Crofts back in 1972. Their Summer Breeze song was all over the radio from coast to coast with its melodic smooth flow but today was not the day as Cannabis Karen might take it the wrong way. Then the knife would come out and that would ruin a perfectly good late afternoon so I chose not to punch up anything. She came back with a plain Jane pipe, you know the ones without any detailing on them. She said we should dig in before the meat gets cold and while I agreed I also thought you know maybe gaining the munchies first would a better idea? Then again she was the carving knife murderer so I just let it go. (my macabre sense of humor at work) So here we were deep in one of the coolest outdoor places on earth with a perfect afternoon surrounding us. She began to tell me how men had always slowed her dreams down and I thought oh my God please no God not an afternoon of woman hates men stories. This gal was clever though she got right off of that subject and switched it to the environment. She told me how the smallest thing like a warm cigarette butt can burn a whole cool place like this one down in nothing flat. I agreed. I replied that was why managing a campsite is crucial as well, she nodded. Nice lady, infectious smile with a tongue in cheek approach using humor to embellish a conversation. She was curious about the bike and my lifestyle which I thought was a bit weird being that she is living the lifestyle too. I didn't tell her too much as I am not one to talk about myself. I just told her in effect that I had been through the desert on a horse with no name. She furled her eyebrows again like she did when I first startled her. I told her that basically those were the words from a song by a group named America. She said she never heard of them and I thought man am I ever getting old. She loaded the doob pipe and we fired that puppy up. Whatever it was it was damn good. You talk about being at peace, now I had really arrived being in a laid back setting taking it all in. The food was filling, the environment way cool and a new friend. I don't know that life gets any better. I am lucky, I made my choice to get away. I didn't know what I would find while discovering America but something was drawing me to this life. Today was a good day. I thought now if it just does not rain tonight. To make sure I placed my bed roll under the picnic table. It didn't. In the morning her van motor started purring early. I got out from underneath the picnic table just in time to see a smile and wave goodbye. Life on the road, more than one person gets it. I had just met one.

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