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# WELCOME

ISSUE K!1814  
MARCH 07, 2020



Every huge band has an album like this – the one that broke the glass ceiling against which they'd been continuously and frustratingly bumping their head. The one that moved them from big fish in the small pond of their

particular corner of music to become, well, just a *fucking massive band*, full stop, no qualifiers. For Neck Deep, that record is *All Distortions Are Intentional*. As frontman Ben Barlow says himself in this week's world exclusive cover feature, "I want people to think Neck Deep don't sound like anyone else – they sound like Neck Deep." Consider this album, then, their bid for the big time – and for the past few months, we've been there with them every step of the way, to bring you unparalleled access behind the creation of the world of *Sonderland*. K! writer James Hickie's brilliant cover story begins in deepest Wales on page 24, so dive on in...

Enjoy the issue, and I'll see you next week!

SAM COARE, EDITOR

**SAM**



**NECK DEEP** YOUR ONE-WAY TICKET TO SONDERLAND IS HERE, AS NECK DEEP LAY DOWN THE NEW SOUND AND NEW RULES OF ALL DISTORTIONS ARE INTENTIONAL



**GREG PUCIATO** THE BLACK QUEEN, KILLER BE KILLED AND HIS DEBUT SOLO LP



**BUSH** SURVIVING FAME, HOLLYWOOD AND THE TABLOID PRESS WITH GAVIN ROSSDALE



**BABYMETAL** ACCESS ALL AREAS AS SU-METAL AND MOAMETAL STORM THE UK



**CODE ORANGE** A METAL GAME-CHANGER HEADS UP THE WEEK'S ESSENTIAL REVIEWS



**PVRIS** LYNN GUNN AND CO. SET UP THEIR NEW ERA WITH A LONDON RIOT

**FACT!** DARKTHRONE DRUMMER FENRIZ IS ON THE OSLO CITY COUNCIL, IRONICALLY AFTER POSTING PICTURES WITH HIS CAT SAYING, "DON'T VOTE FOR ME"





**UP CLOSE**

# SHINE ON

**ALL TIME LOW** hit the UK to launch new album **WAKE UP, SUNSHINE** at tiny shows...

It's hard to think of a better way to announce an album than the All Time Low method. To unveil the details of their new record *Wake Up, Sunshine* last month, the Baltimore gang returned to the cover of *Kerrang!*, before releasing pop-punk banger *Sleeping In*, attending an hmv signing, and hosting a coffee shop in London. Oh, and playing two tiny UK shows. Here the band are at the 400-capacity Brudenell Social Club in Leeds, blasting out a hit-filled 12-song setlist, including three tracks from *Wake Up, Sunshine*. It's been so brilliant having them here, in fact, that we might even forgive frontman Alex Gaskarth for wearing All Time Low's own merch at the gig. Tsk, tsk. **K!**

PHOTO: TRACEY WELCH







Greg Puciatto: "This album is about owning every part of yourself..."





# ONE-MAN

# ARMY

Despite **THE DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN** calling it a day three years ago, frontman **GREG PUCIATO** has been busier than ever. And now he's set to go it alone on debut solo LP, **CHILD SOLDIER: CREATOR OF GOD...**

**G**reg Puciato is becoming a force of nature. Since mathcore revolutionaries **The Dillinger Escape Plan** disbanded in 2017, the Baltimore-born vocalist has not only completed two albums with the sensual and brooding electro-trio **The Black Queen**, but also published a collection of poetry and photography entitled **Separate The Dawn**. Now, he's preparing to release his first-ever solo album, **Child Soldier: Creator Of God**.

The 15-track release, recorded with producer Nick Rowe (Lamb Of God, Vampire Weekend, Sky Ferreira), sees Greg in firebreathing form, backed by different drummers, including Chris Hornbrook (Poison The Well), Ben Koller (Converge) and Chris Pennie (The Dillinger Escape Plan). First track **Fire For Water** was premiered on Sunday, a brutally heavy and malicious-sounding grind that belies a message of self-forgiveness.

"You know, it's not up to you to constantly give and give of yourself to other people, to your own detriment," says Greg. "And that, I think, is something that a lot of people feel guilt over. Putting themselves in a place where you can say, 'I've tried to help you, but you're not trying to help yourself – and I've got to let this go, for my own health.' That's exactly what **Fire For Water** is about."

The prolonged period of hyperfocus that birthed **Child Soldier** also resulted in several other high-profile activities, including his own label, **Federal Prisoner** – which will release the album – and a forthcoming second album by his group with Max Cavalera and Troy Sanders, **Killer Be Killed**. And if that weren't enough, Greg was invited to sing alongside Jerry Cantrell of **Alice In Chains** at Pico Union Project in Los Angeles in December. Here, he gives us the lowdown on all this, and more...

**Where has Child Soldier: Creator Of God sprung from?**

"Last March or so I sat down to write what I thought was going to be the next **Black Queen** record. And then, when I was writing, I realised it wasn't **The Black Queen**. I kind of went, 'Well, what is this?' And I just kept going. And that's been the basis for the start of every other thing that I've done, too – very need-based. It wouldn't have fit in **Dillinger Escape Plan**, it doesn't fit in **The Black Queen**, it doesn't fit in **Killer Be Killed**. This was sort of stunning for me, the way the book was. I didn't sit down and plan to write a book. I didn't sit down and say to myself, 'Okay, strategically, now it's time for me to write a solo record.' I just wrote a bunch of things that didn't have any other home."

**Fifteen tracks and 70 minutes is an incredible quantity of music...**

"It was a big outpouring. When I tried to whittle some of it down, I couldn't. This record just is what it is. Contractually, an album only has to be 10 songs – that's why bands only do 10 songs now. Nobody wants to put more on their record because they don't want to give labels things for free. But I don't care. I want the record to be complete."

**Did you write everything yourself and record every instrument?**

"Everything except for the drums. Some of it is electronic and doesn't have drums – in which case I've programmed them or had Nick Rowe help me. But I've known Chris Hornbrook since we were 23. He knows how

to hit a drum. For a lot of the songs on this record, I knew he was the guy. And then Ben Koller – who drums in **Killer Be Killed**, **Converge** and **All Pigs Must Die** – is on a track. Chris Pennie, the original **Dillinger** drummer, is on a track, too. He's also done some orchestration and additional instrumentation on a few tracks as well."

**Fire For Water is a ferocious first single. What's the story behind it?**

"That song was kind of a barrage. I didn't think anything like that was going to be coming out of me. Once I made the decision to do the solo record, it felt really liberating. Maybe because it was the time of year when we'd be working on a **Dillinger** record, if we'd been working on a **Dillinger** record – though, obviously, we weren't – that **Dillinger** sentiment started to grow in me. I got rid of a lot of toxic energy with

the book, and then I started to feel really aggressive again, but in a positive way – in a way that felt very empowering. Not enough, maybe, to write 10 or 11 of those kinds of songs, but I definitely had enough in me to sit down and inject the record with some of that. **Fire For Water** is pretty ferocious – as ferocious as anything

I think I've done vocally, and it just came out in a burst."

**How did you reconnect with Dillinger's first drummer, Chris Pennie?**

"Chris and I didn't talk for, like, 10 years. After the band was over, we reconnected. I said to him, 'Hey, man, I don't know how much you're playing drums these days,

"I STARTED TO FEEL REALLY AGGRESSIVE AGAIN, BUT IN A POSITIVE WAY..."

GREG PUCIATO



but I've got a track I think you would fucking kill,' and then sent it his way. Not even a day later he sent me back demo drums. The lyrics really came out fast, too. I know you probably can't hear everything I'm saying, but it's mostly about getting rid of toxic people or toxic energy, or drawing a hard line and saying, 'Hey, I'm not dealing with this energy anymore. It's not my job to help everyone in my life, if, after a certain point, they're not helping themselves.'"

**A lot of Dillinger lyrics seemed to be about the difficulty of intimacy, whereas Black Queen celebrates the hope of connection. Where does Child Soldier fall between the two?**

"That's interesting. This record is post-Black Queen, but it's hard to tell. When I read these lyrics they do feel a little bit like Dillinger, but they also feel like Black Queen, too. Those two bands are almost like two different aspects of my personality. I think this record has merged them in a way that they don't feel like either band, but they do have hints of both. There are songs that sound like nothing people have ever heard me do. And that's saying a lot, because Dillinger did a lot of different stuff. But the whole record is sort of celebrating integration, which is something I had a really hard time with in the past, and celebrating owning every aspect of your personality. There's a lot of newness on this record. It's not Black Queen meets Dillinger."

**Are you nervous about putting this out under your own name?**

"You know what? I was. And that's why I was hiding behind a moniker for a while. I was gonna call it all Child Soldier. Really, the turning point for me was becoming good friends with Jerry Cantrell. Me and Jerry Cantrell are really close now, from those December shows. I said, 'Was it weird for you to put out those solo albums of yours, because they'd just say your name on them?' And he was like, 'Kind of, well, yeah – but you've got to own your shit.' And, to me, this whole album is about the integration of everything into one, and owning every part yourself. So to hide under a moniker suddenly felt weak to me. If I'm owning my own path as I get older, like, 'Yeah, that is what it is.' It's a solo record. It's my fucking name. Why wouldn't I want to say proudly, like, 'Hey, this is mine?'"



Greg Puciato: "There is no endgame... I'm just excited for the thing that's immediately in front of me"

**What has making the album taught you as an artist?**

"If every band I'm in ceases to exist, I now know that I can make a record from front to back with just a producer. If I can't play the drums, I'll hire a drummer. If I need a violinist, I can get a violinist. To me, that was very empowering: to be able to do that and have it sound just as good to me as anything else I've done. The sky's the limit creatively now. I don't have to sit around and hold on to anything. It feels like now I'll have a home for anything I come up with."

**The album will come out via Federal Prisoner, the label you've set up with visual artist Jesse Draxler. What are your wider plans for it?**

"Jesse is one of my best friends. We feel the same, as people, when we're talking to one another. To me, that becomes very important. When you find chemistry with another human on this earth, every time, it kind of reinvigorates you, and then you're like, 'Shit, what can we do with this?' He's had just as big a hand in it behind the scenes. A lot of things haven't been revealed to the public. There's gonna be a few releases coming out within the next 12 months that I obviously can't say things about yet. But three or four, probably."

**What stage of development is a new Black Queen album at?**

"Oh, really early – I can't imagine that record coming out until 2021. And then we've been working on the second Killer Be Killed record for years now, too. I'm

guessing that'll be out before the Black Queen record. Federal Prisoner has all the stuff happening besides my release. But that's good. When the universe gives you an opening, and when it gives you work to do, you've got to do that work. This solo record was a massive outpouring that took a lot out of me. I kind of need a minute to let the Black Queen stuff start coming from a place of want instead of feeling like, 'Oh my God, I have to write a Black Queen record right now.' Steve can work on his end, and start compiling stuff. When I feel naturally recharged, I'll hop back in."

**Back in April 2018, Max said Killer Be Killed were rehearsing and writing new material. What have you done since then?**

"We've done a lot, man (*laughs*). That's its own thing, and I don't want to muddy the waters, because we've all made a pact that none of us are going to be the person who fucks up and says more than we should say. I will tell you this: it's not done. And until a record is done, it's like counting the cheque before it's cashed. All of us have been burned by this before. We are significantly further along than we were back then. But we've definitely said we're not going to make any claims as to when it'll come out or when it's gonna be done."

**How has going from Dillinger to The Black Queen to the solo record changed your relationship with yourself?**

"I just see it as part of this long artistic trajectory. Since Dillinger, I've become way more integrated. By the end, all I wanted to do was get away. I was like, 'I gotta get away from this kind of music, I gotta get away from this emotional energy. I can't be around this intensity all the time. It's fucking draining me as a person.' Now, because I've already done so many things... I move forward. Getting done with [The Black Queen's 2018 album] Infinite Games, move forward. Getting done with the book, move forward. Getting done on the solo record..."

**What are your ultimate hopes for the Child Soldier record?**

"Every time I've put something out in the past, I've never believed there was going to be another thing. I'm always like, 'That's it – I can't even imagine doing another record. I can't imagine coming up with another song. I don't think I have anything else.' So I think what I finally have done is just trust the process. There is no endgame to me. I don't have some long plan. I'm just excited for the thing that's immediately in front of me. And it's been going that way since I picked up a guitar at nine years old or so. I just want to keep following that, see where it goes and keep doing things for reasons of passion and excitement. Hopefully those things keep coming." *K!*

**GREG PUCIATO'S CHILD SOLDIER: CREATOR OF GOD WILL BE RELEASED THIS YEAR VIA FEDERAL PRISONER. FIRE FOR WATER IS OUT NOW**

## OFF THE CHAIN

**GREG on his new, unlikely friendship with ALICE IN CHAINS legend JERRY CANTRELL**

■ "Jerry and I have become really good friends. We're so similar as people that it's uncanny! It's helped me to have someone that's older than me that I see is a lot like me. Talking to him about the solo output on my end has been like, 'You've gotta own your shit. Don't run from it.' "Performing with him taught me a lot, too. Dissecting those

songs, he's a harmonic wizard. People talk about him as a guitar player, but you really start to understand that he wrote almost every song that you think of when you think of Alice In Chains. He didn't just write the music, he also wrote the vocals, and to me, he's as good as [Chris] Cornell or [Kurt] Cobain – one of the best songwriters of his generation."





MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup>

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**TALKING LOUD**

# REAL POLITICAL CHANGE STARTS WITH US...

It's time people lived  
by example and  
stopped complaining  
on the internet, says  
**BOSTON MANOR's**  
**HENRY COX**

**"E**verybody I know was so angry about the results of the last general election, but you can't yell and always point your finger at other people being the problem. We need to begin doing things at home ourselves before we can take down everything else – you've got to start somewhere and, really, it all starts with you.

"You have got to have all your shit on lock first, and then start grappling with the bad stuff that's happening in the world. I hate people who will sit on Twitter all day and complain about everything, but never go to a protest rally, or do things like start to eat less meat to help tackle climate change. They won't recycle and they won't spend any of their free time working with local charities, but they'll post about that stuff online. We can't keep using the internet to just talk and debate about this stuff. We actually have to start doing things, because this is literally the decade that will make or break what happens to our generation – and everyone – as far as I'm concerned.

"With that in mind, I don't think that anyone can afford not to be political anymore. I think the days are gone when people could say, 'Leave politics out of the conversation,' because politics isn't just who you vote for anymore. It's everything. It's how the world works, and it's what's causing a lot of problems. I think in the past I've shied away from the world of politics, especially when it comes to music, because I didn't – and I still don't – want to be the guy who says he has

the answers and who is ramming his opinions down your throat.

"But I honestly think that you can't afford not to do that now. It's not like I'm telling anyone who to vote for on our new record [GLUE] or anything – I'm just saying vote for *somebody*. Because that's fucking imperative, you know? So I think it is political in a lot of senses, and I think some people with a platform are using it to talk about this stuff, because people can't bury their heads in the sand anymore. You can hear that in a lot of the bigger albums at the moment, things like [IDLES' 2018 second record] *Joy As An Act Of Resistance* and *PSYCHODRAMA* [the 2019 debut album by Brit rapper Dave], and we want to add our voices to that. Because, like I said, it starts with you." **K!**

**BOSTON MANOR'S NEW ALBUM GLUE IS DUE OUT ON MAY 1 VIA PURE NOISE RECORDS. THE BAND TOUR THE UK FROM APRIL 30 – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION**



**"THIS DECADE WILL  
MAKE OR BREAK  
WHAT HAPPENS TO  
OUR GENERATION"**

**HENRY COX**



**INSTANT EXPERT**

# WAKE THE DEAD

**TRIVIUM** are back with a new album, **WHAT THE DEAD MEN SAY!** Here's everything we know so far...

1

## IT ENCAPSULATES EVERYTHING YOU LOVE ABOUT TRIVIUM

"What The Dead Men Say is everything that is Trivium," enthuses Matt Heafy of the group's ninth album, due out on April 24 via Roadrunner. "One can hear the proper ingredients of past, present, and future Trivium. The Trivium sound is having everything the band does – on one album."

2

## AND IT FOLLOWS UP THE SIN AND THE SENTENCE PERFECTLY

"With the new album, we took what worked on [2017 full-length] *The Sin And The Sentence* and dialled it up to 11," reveals bassist Paolo Gregoletto. Guitarist Corey Beaulieu agrees: "We wanted to build on the foundation that we established with the last album."

3

## THE RECORDING PROCESS WAS HUGE BENEFICIAL

Corey describes Trivium's writing and recording process as "highly-inspired" and "fast-paced", born of the band's desire to push themselves as far as possible. "The record has all the elements that are Trivium," he says, adding that it "really captures the energy of the band".

4

## THE FIRST SINGLE, CATASTROPHIST, SERIOUSLY CRUSHES

All together now: 'Neeeeever had a chance!' True to their word, lead single *Catastrophist* promises great things to come, with Trivium firing on all cylinders. It's truly got everything: soaring melodies, brilliantly heavy moments. And riffs. Lots and lots of riffs.

5

## AND IT COMES ACCOMPANIED BY AN EPIC VIDEO

The seven-minute *Black Mirror*-esque clip was not only filmed in the band's native Orlando, but also here in the UK in Tehidy, Cornwall. But if you're expecting relaxing and beautiful scenery... well, just think again.

6

## TRIVIUM WILL BE ON THE ROAD A LOT IN 2020

Joining metal big guns *Lamb Of God* and *Megadeth* throughout America this year, Trivium will be spending a whole lot of 2020 on tour. We are crossing everything we have that this bill makes its way across the pond...

WHAT THE DEAD MEN SAY IS DUE OUT ON APRIL 24 VIA ROADRUNNER RECORDS

## PANDORA BY RAY ZELL





**ACCESS ALL AREAS**

# AS RIGHT AS RAIN

**ISSUES** get symbolic in their brilliantly colourful new video for **RAIN**







**W**hen Issues launched their new album *Beautiful Oblivion* last year, they did so with a trippy yet cinematic video for *Drink About It*, its peculiar aesthetic blending *50 Shades Of Grey* with *Midsommar*. As bizarre as that might sound on paper, it *really* worked. And now the Atlanta R&B metalcore crew are back at it once more, with the equally impressive *Rain*.

As has seemingly now become the norm when it comes to Tyler Carter and the gang, *Rain* is yet another visual treat, with symbolic layers to unpack amongst the snazzy suits and hypnotic storyline. Oh yeah, and there's an owl.

"*Rain* is simply about people who always drag the fucking mood down," says Tyler. "We all have our days... but if someone is always bitching, leave them at home! Y'all life is too short; cup half full, not half empty..."

Indeed, as the frontman croons, '*Why the hell is it raining so much? / I'm just tryna have a good time*,' while performing elatedly with his bandmates, it's clear very little is going to stop him.

Always keep doing you, Issues. **K!**

**BEAUTIFUL OBLIVION** IS OUT NOW VIA RISE RECORDS. **ISSUES** RETURN TO THE UK IN MAY FOR SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL - SEE THE GIG GUIDE



PHOTOS: TRAVIE POSTON



# NEW NOISE

Bad//Dreems didn't think much of our 'At The Gates' joke...



## BAD//DREEMS

Meet the Adelaide rockers determined to use music to make a difference...

**F**or Bad//Dreems, being in a band comes with certain responsibilities. Using your brain, for example, is something that is crucially important to the Adelaide quintet, both when it comes to crafting music, and what they're using it to say.

"In Australia, there's a lot of pub-rock bands," vocalist/guitarist Ben Marwe says. "That carries with it certain notions of blokeishness and laddy behaviour, which are things we don't subscribe to. With Bad//Dreems we're focusing on strong songwriting, lyrics with meaning, and playing music we love. We're not interested in labels."

There's certainly a great deal of meaning that can be drawn from the band's excellent third album, *Doomsday Ballet*. A groovy collection of charismatic rock songs, it's

a record whose dark heart belies its surface sheen.

"We wanted to create imagery that evoked the dystopian nature of the world we live in," Ben says. "There's a track called *Piss Christ*, which was inspired by an art

piece which depicts a crucifix being dipped in a jar of urine. In the song, however, we interpret the crucifix as being Donald Trump, and talk about how he's like

a drunk ventriloquist pulling all the strings."

Bad//Dreems recently demonstrated their socially-conscious outlook when they helped to organise Fire Aid,

**"WE WANT  
TO EVOKE OUR  
DYSTOPIAN WORLD"**

BEN MARWE

### GET TO KNOW

Your quick  
guide to  
**BAD//DREEMS...**

#### THEY ARE:

Intelligent Aussie rockers intent on doing their bit for the world.

**HEAR:** Their brilliant, buoyant third album, *Doomsday Ballet*, which dropped last year.

**SEE:** The chilled-out video for breezy single *Sonny*.

**MORE INFO:** [Facebook.com/badbaddreems](https://www.facebook.com/badbaddreems)

a benefit concert, which raised over \$200,000 to support bushfire relief in Australia. For Ben, such events are what being in Bad//Dreems is all about.

"It was the best thing we've ever done as a band, and a very surreal day," he remembers. "Watching our friends play and being with everyone who chipped in was amazing. But the best thing was raising money to help out our firefighters, residents and animals affected by the fires."

With a storming record and admirable approach to band life, expect Bad//Dreems to blaze a trail of their own as 2020 rolls on. **K!**

**BAD//DREEMS' LATEST ALBUM DOOMSDAY BALLET IS OUT NOW VIA BMG. THE BAND TOUR THE UK THIS WEEK - SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFO**



# NOW HEAR

## THIS **DAN CAMPBELL** from **THE WONDER YEARS** on the new music you need now...



**H**ey guys! We're currently on tour in the States, and everybody is starting to get sick – a couple of the guys in Spanish Love Songs have caught flu. But I'm going to battle through the coughing to bring you some great new music that I've been checking out, and that I think you definitely need to hear as well.

First up, I want to tell you about **Future Teens**, who are a great new band from Boston, Massachusetts. They're on Triple Crown Records, they've recently put out a record called *Breakup Season*, and they're just fucking awesome. They write songs that sound like you're talking to an old friend about what an awful week you've had, and it's really easy to get drawn in by the directness of their lyricism. A lot of people write lyrics with modern references that quickly sound dated, like how a lot of bands have songs that mention "dial tones" when they're not a thing anymore. But all of the references in Future Teens' music feel timeless, even when they're singing about dating apps.

My second recommendation are a really cool band called **Macseal** from Long Island. It's hard to name bands they sound similar to, because they've got these low-distortion, finger-picky guitars going on, which bring a Midwest vibe, but there's plenty of energy, too. Their album *Super Enthusiast* came out last year, and it's got a great song called *Graduating Steps* that reminds me of *The Get Up Kids*.

Next, you really have to check out Oakland natives **Just Friends**. They're a nine-piece band who make indescribable music. They've got two vocalists, a big horn section, and they go through loads of different styles – every song of theirs is truly unique. Just Friends are the most fun live band I've seen in ages, and they definitely make a show into a party when they're performing.

You should also be investigating **Origami Angel**, who are a two-piece band I discovered after a friend of mine sent me their track *Ruby*. I listened to it and I was just blown away immediately.

The energy they have is so palpable, and you can hear in their music that they're doing this because they just love to play. I get a great vibe whenever I listen to them.

Finally, I'd like to give a big shout-out to Ireland's **The Winter Passing**, who are going to be supporting on my Aaron West And The Roaring Twenties UK tour in May. I'm really happy about that because they're really good, and I'm looking forward to seeing them every night. They've put a couple of new songs out recently, my favourite of which is *Patience, Please* – their vocalist Kate Flynn sounds amazing on that track.

And that's all from me! Thanks for letting me share some awesome bands with you – I hope you've found some new music you like here. **K!**

**THE WONDER YEARS' EP BURST & DECAY (VOLUME II) IS OUT NOW VIA HOPELESS. THE BAND PLAY SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL IN MAY – SEE THE GIG GUIDE**

### "I GET A GREAT VIBE FROM ORIGAMI ANGEL"

DAN CAMPBELL



Origami Angel: get some chairs, lads...



Future Teens: again, get some chairs, folks



Macseal: no chairs either. We'll all just stand, yeah?

**KERRANG!**

## ROCK CHART

**BIFFY CLYRO** are still sitting pretty at the top. Now, make with the album, gents – chop chop!



Biffy Clyro: the "spring collection" was looking good

|    | ARTIST        | TITLE                        |     |
|----|---------------|------------------------------|-----|
| 1  | BIFFY CLYRO   | INSTANT HISTORY              | ↔   |
| 2  | TRIVIUM       | CATASTROPHIST                | NEW |
| 3  | CODE ORANGE   | SWALLOWING THE RABBIT WHOLE  | ▼   |
| 4  | BOSTON MANOR  | EVERYTHING IS ORDINARY       | ▲   |
| 5  | ENTER SHIKARI | { THE DREAMER'S HOTEL }      | ▼   |
| 6  | D.R.U.G.S.    | KING I AM                    | NEW |
| 7  | NOVA TWINS    | TAXI                         | ▲   |
| 8  | ALL TIME LOW  | SOME KIND OF DISASTER        | ▲   |
| 9  | OZZY OSBOURNE | IT'S A RAID                  | ▼   |
| 10 | VIDEO NASTIES | HANGING TREE                 | NEW |
| 11 | LAMB OF GOD   | CHECKMATE                    | ▼   |
| 12 | COLD YEARS    | NIGHT LIKE THIS              | ▲   |
| 13 | KVELERTAK     | FANDEN TA DETTE HULL!        | ▼   |
| 14 | CARCASS       | UNDER THE SCALPEL BLADE      | NEW |
| 15 | PEARL JAM     | SUPERBLOOD WOLFMoon          | ▼   |
| 16 | YOU ME AT SIX | OUR HOUSE (THE MESS WE MADE) | ▼   |
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## THE FIRST SONG THAT I REMEMBER HEARING



### RIVERS OF BABYLON BONEY M. (1978)

"I remember hearing this in my grandpa's car. He had two cassettes in it, Willie Nelson Live and Boney M.'s Greatest Hits, and as a kid I always found the Boney M. tape so exciting. In actual fact, we took influence from the vocal harmonies in this song while making [latest Twin Atlantic album] *Power*. When Volcano goes all gospel-ly – that's basically Rivers Of Babylon."

## THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF BEING IN SCHOOL



### ANTHEM PART 2 BLINK-182 (2001)

"Oh my God, man, this song is tattooed on my fucking soul. [1999 album]

*Enema Of The State* was the first CD I'd ever bought, so to then hear new music from a band that I was telling everyone about felt really special. That palm-muted sound that Tom Delonge uses on the verses... I still do that to this day."

## THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO PLAY GUITAR



### HELICOPTER BLOC PARTY (2004)

"I started playing guitar quite late – around 18 years old – but Helicopter did it."

It had a mix of that blink-182 melody and the thrashiness of Nirvana on the drums, yet it also had quite a British sensibility. For the first time, I was like, 'Fuck, I can do that! I am going to fucking do that!' So I went out and financed a white Telecaster, because that's what Russell Lissack, the guy with the swoopy hair in Bloc Party, played. I even had his haircut, too!"

## THE FIRST EVER SONG THAT I CROWDSURFED TO



### THE MIDDLE JIMMY EAT WORLD (2001)

"Me and my friend managed to blag our way into Jimmy Eat

World when they played in Glasgow, and I crowdsurfed when *The Middle* came on. At The Barrowlands there's this infamous bouncer, completely bald with a goatee, and I thought it would be funny to kiss him on the head like he was a crowdsurfing World Cup trophy! When I did it he

# LIFE IS HEAVY

# BIRTH.

# SCHOOL.

# ROCK.

# DEATH.

**TWIN ATLANTIC** frontman **SAM MCTRUSTY** explains what it's like to hear the voice of God, sing with Bill Murray and crowdsurf-kiss bald men...

took me aside into a corridor and gave me this Alex Ferguson-style bollocking. I've never forgotten it."

## THE FIRST TWIN ATLANTIC SONG THAT I HEARD ON THE RADIO



### WHAT IS LIGHT? WHERE IS LAUGHTER? TWIN ATLANTIC (2008)

"When Zane Lowe played

this on Radio 1, it was earth-shifting for me. Ross [McNae, bassist] used to be a delivery driver for a Chinese restaurant, and I worked at a supermarket during the day, so I would ride around with him in the passenger seat at night while we listened to Zane Lowe. As a joke I used to always say things, like, 'This is Twin Atlantic with...' in his Mid-Atlantic-meets-New Zealand accent. So when I actually heard him play us for the first time for real, it was like, 'Holy fuck, are we maybe a good band?'"



## THE SONG THAT ALWAYS MAKES ME CRY

### THE END PEARL JAM (2009)

"It's Eddie Vedder writing a song to his wife in the future, about how he could have been more present, I guess, and he's asking if he's been the best version of himself. I find that heart-wrenching, because *Backspacer* is a really playful, joyous album, but this comes out of nowhere and fucks me up every time. Because he's an older guy with a very masculine voice, it almost sounds like the voice of God!"

## THE SONG THAT BRINGS BACK INSANE MEMORIES



### THE POWER OF LOVE HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS (1985)

"This is crazy, but I've shared the mic with

Huey Lewis on this song – twice! In 2014 we both played in a golf tournament. Later on, we sang this, and Don Felder of the Eagles played drums, Bill Murray was on backing vocals and Andy Garcia, the actor, was playing bongos. I did it two years in a row – the second year, Ronan Keating was involved."

## THE SONG THAT I WISH I HAD WRITTEN



### IMAGINE JOHN LENNON (1971)

"It's a simple concept, written at a complicated time in history. I feel that Lennon

not only transcended genre, but the art of music itself. That's the ultimate goal. I want to affect musical culture, but you've got to prove that you've got the chops first. I'm very much still in fucking nappies over here!"

## THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF MY FAMILY

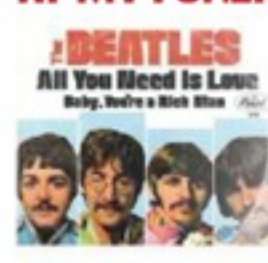


### OCEANS TWIN ATLANTIC (2014)

"I tried to put myself in the place of my wife's family, who moved to

the other side of the world. When my gran got cremated, she chose this as the final song of the service, and my little sister also has the lyrics tattooed on her ribs. So when I think of my family, I can't beat this song."

## THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL



### ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE THE BEATLES (1967)

"I think it would be really funny to use this at my funeral, with the

horns in the intro playing the French national anthem and all. Imagine going down to that! And then 'Love, love, love' comes in. It's like the end of a Hugh Grant film or something. It's unfuckably one of the most heartfelt songs of all time."

**TWIN ATLANTIC'S NEW ALBUM *POWER* IS AVAILABLE NOW ON VIRGIN EMI. THE BAND TOUR THE UK IN MARCH – SEE THE BIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION**





The name's McTrusty  
– Sam McTrusty...

---

**“EDDIE VEDDER SOUNDS  
LIKE THE VOICE OF GOD!”**

SAM MCTRUSTY

---



**NO-ONE KNOWS...**

# "I WISH I COULD FART LESS"

**SUICIDE SILENCE's EDDIE HERMIDA** is a tech whizz with an impressive ability to solve Rubik's Cubes. Both very helpful – as long as you can get past his farts...



## **I HAVE A HARRY POTTER SCAR**

"I have a proper lightning bolt scar on my forehead! It happened at the Whisky A Go Go in Los Angeles. I was up onstage headbanging and my bassist swung his bass up and we hit pretty hard. I took a two-minute break and then got back on with the show."

## **I'M TERRIFIED OF SNAKES**

"I've had a couple of encounters with snakes, but it was an innate fear before anything happened to trigger it in me. My most recent encounter was when I was on a hike and crossed paths with a California kingsnake, and it was absolutely the most terrifying thing that ever happened to me. I'm never hiking there ever again!"

## **I HAD A RAT'S TAIL HAIRCUT**

"At nine I thought having a rat's tail was the coolest thing ever – if you had the box cut up top. Looking back at the photos I looked absolutely awful. I can't believe my mom ever let me go outside looking like that!"

## **I CAN COMPLETE A RUBIK'S CUBE IN UNDER THREE MINUTES**

"I'm left-handed, and when I broke the humerus in my left arm, the Rubik's Cube helped me get through a lot of the time waiting for it to heal. I could still move my hands, so I was sat on the couch for about three months, and now I can complete it from any configuration every time."

## **I GEEK OUT OVER COMPUTERS**

"I'm a fan of all the hardware involved, and I've built two whole computers in my life. I love the intricacy involved, and it's also the closest I'll come to putting my hands on a human brain. It's fascinating to me how everything connects together."

## **MY FARTS ARE AN ISSUE**

"I wish I could fart less, and the people around me feel exactly the same way. It's a genuine problem, and I've taken steps to try and fix this issue. I've changed my diet a bunch of times – I've gone vegan, and I tried not eating burritos (which is like blasphemy), and that didn't work either!"

## **ONLY MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY CALL ME BY MY ACTUAL NAME**

"They're the only people allowed to call me Hernan. I've had some fans try, but I shut them down pretty quick. It's reserved just for the people I'm closest to. I started going by Eddie in middle school; it's an abbreviation of my middle name, and I feel comfortable being addressed as both."

## **MY BIGGEST REGRET IS NOT BEING IN A BAND SOONER**

"I feel I should have been writing my own songs and been in a rock band much sooner. I thought I was going to pursue a professional symphonic musical career as a trombone player, and it was only in high school I realised I wanted to be a singer in a band. I wish I'd gotten there earlier..."

SUICIDE SILENCE'S NEW ALBUM **BECOME THE HUNTER** IS OUT NOW VIA NUCLEAR BLAST RECORDS



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# TREES

CHELTENHAM

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PILE-UP

BOSTON MANOR the get up kids YOUNG GUNS SILVERSTEIN

KNOCKED LOOSE THE JOY FORMIDABLE DREAM STATE BEACH SLANG

The Wytches DEMOB HAPPY Beans on Toast WILL VARLEY

The World is a Beautiful Place & I am No Longer Afraid to Die ROAM SPANISH LOVE SONGS HOT

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INTECHNICOLOUR | GRIEF RITUAL | SUPERLOVE | SAPPHIRE BLUES | LANDE HEKT | KATIE MALCO | HOLIDAY OSCAR  
TEN TIMES A MILLION | RAIDERS | WE NEVER LEARNED TO LIVE | CASSELS | THE WINTER PASSING | GLOO  
ITHACA | FALSE ADVERTISING | LUCIA AND THE BEST BOYS | DREAM NAILS | HALFLIVES | CREATURE | REWS  
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The only things  
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Advertise your love for punk songs about being sad while alone in bars with this killer Spanish Love Songs shirt. You can even smile while wearing it...

**£15.99 Impericon.com**



It's a twenty one pilots, ahem, Trench coat. Awesome. Although, camo and high-vis bits – do you want to be seen or not?

**£99.99 Emp.co.uk**



Want tattoos like Ozzy, but too chicken to go under the needle? He's put them on a shirt, so you can have the ink without the pain.

**£45 Ozzy.com**



The eternal question: what was between the Ramones' Chuck Taylors and their feet? Brightly-coloured Ramones socks, it seems...

**£13.95 Happysocks.com**



Do one, Starbucks – we've got All Time Low cold coffee in a can now. Your morning routine just got many times more pop-punk.

**\$29.99 (£23.13) Alltimelowstore.com**



Motörhead undercrackers! Perfect for... well, the job of wearing underpants, while also saluting Lemmy. An important product.

**£19.99 Emp.co.uk**



Chains are, we'll be honest, not the first thing we'd put on a shoe. But we're glad designer Sandy Liang has, because it's actually very fetching.

**£115 Vans.co.uk**



We've all been there: you can't decide on a font for your logo, so you just use them all at once. No Comic Sans, though. For shame...

**£30 Dropdead.co**



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## WINNER! IERO WORSHIP

In full flight, Frank Iero is a magnificent sight. So good on [@galacticcoffee](#) for capturing the great man in all his onstage glory. While having an X-ray, it seems. Anyway, you've won yourself a pair of tickets to see Boston Manor on their UK tour! Well done. Email us on [Feedback@kerrang.com](mailto:Feedback@kerrang.com) to claim your prize.



## INVITE TO THE PALAYE

Here's [@dj24](#) with the lads from Palaye Royale. Observation one: that's a very big hat. Observation two: what plan for world domination is being cooked up on that blackboard behind you? Or is it just a really long Wi-Fi password?



## VERY PREQUELLE DONE

It's Papa from Ghost, as drawn by [@cestalfie](#). Even with minimal detail, you've properly got just how spooky he looks when he's doing this. Kudos!



## METAL WORK

Here's Lamb Of God singer Randy Blythe, sketched by [@pratmia](#). One thing we've never seen, Lamb Of God with lambs. Which is, in fact, the only thing keeping this drawing from perfection.



## ART LIKE A HAND GRENADE

So, [Holly Millwall](#) has drawn Green Day in very cool graphic novel style. Quite why they're sitting in front of the national flag of Guinea isn't explained, but we're intrigued.



## THE GREEN EMPEROR

"Fail to see the tragic, turn it into magic," are [@fruitsieart](#)'s words accompanying this Marilyn Manson drawing. Yeah, come on, Manson – turn that frown upside down!

## NEXT WEEK

# WIN A LOAD OF OZZY OSBOURNE SWAG!

If you're anything like us, you'll have been absolutely rinsing Ozzy's new Ordinary Man album. If you haven't got it yet, stop mucking around and get to it. Not only is it an absolute cracker, but it's got Elton-actual-John jamming on it! To help

you catch up, we've got a copy to give away, plus a load of other killer Ozzy stuff. To win this awesome prize, simply tweet us your pics and artwork using [#Kommunity](#), or email them over to us on [Feedback@kerrang.com](mailto:Feedback@kerrang.com). Good luck!



**KERRANG!**

# INSIDE TRACK

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greatest stories in rock – as told by the people who  
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EPISODE SIX

**SUM 41**

THE MAKING OF  
ALL KILLER NO FILLER

EPISODE FIVE

**METALCORE**

THE BIRTH OF A NEW  
WAVE IN AMERICAN  
HEAVY METAL

EPISODE FOUR

**FALL OUT  
BOY**

THE REBIRTH OF ROCK'S  
GREAT BELIEVERS

EPISODE THREE

**VANS  
WARPED TOUR**

THE FEST THAT FORGED A  
PUNK ROCK COMMUNITY

EPISODE TWO

**TOOL**

THE MAKING OF  
FEAR INOCULUM

EPISODE ONE

**KORN**

THE DEBUT ALBUM THAT  
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**COVER STORY**

# THE SONDER YEARS

First, they conquered the pop-punk world. Now, they're creating their own. From deepest Wales to the streets of England's capital, Kerrang! navigates four months in 'Sonderland' for the birth of ambitious new album **ALL DISTORTIONS ARE INTENTIONAL** – **NECK DEEP's** bid to see their name up in lights like never before...

WORDS: JAMES HICKIE PHOTOS: TOM BARNES







**I**t's a chilly November afternoon, and Ben Barlow's eyes are fixed on the countryside outside the kitchen window. Neck Deep have been living at this studio for three weeks, and will remain so for as many more, and have already grown immune to the charms of the 400 acres of fields that surround it, the nearby river that recently broke its banks, and the mysterious cats that watch the humans from the safety of the long, snaking driveway. The band's singer has something more pressing in mind right now – namely, the bonfire planned for this evening, and scouting for materials to build it, which need only satisfy one criterion: **"If it burns, we'll burn it."**

Encouraged by his bandmates, Ben, with a couple of strokes of a marker pen, makes these words the 10th of Neck Deep's "Album 4 Rewlz" – an ever-growing list of guidelines they're living by while making their similarly combustible follow-up to 2017's *The Peace And The Panic*. These "rewlz" are written on a large whiteboard, repurposed from its role recording the results of games of pool hampered by uneven floorboards beneath the table.

According to the board, rule number three is "Get it blown", a reference to Neck Deep having recently destroyed three amps in as many days, necessitating a seven-hour round trip to collect a replacement, only for that to also go boom within half an hour. The band can laugh about it now, thankfully, because rule number six is "Keep being comedy legends", a rule they don't struggle to observe, enjoying an easy chemistry characterised by self-deprecation, especially after a few beers. Alcohol doesn't make an appearance too early in these parts, though, as stipulated by the all-important ninth rule: "No bevs before quarter past piss". That's 6.15pm to the uninitiated.

Welcome to Monnow Valley, a remote studio in Monmouthshire, South-East Wales where, since 1974, bands have come to get away from the world and concentrate on the job of making *important* records that radically alter the trajectories of their authors. Black Sabbath visited here many times as they transformed themselves from the niche purveyors of darkness of their early days to the goliaths of metal they're known as today. Ozzy Osbourne even once reportedly used the bedroom currently occupied by Neck Deep guitarist Sam Bowden to summon spirits with a Ouija board.

Liam Gallagher might tell you Ozzy was successful in contacting the other side. His band Oasis were here in the autumn of 1993 to transpose the Manchester band's formidable live clout into their debut album, *Definitely Maybe*. Not only did the £800-a-day sessions prove fruitless, the usually cocksure Liam became

unsettled by witnessing overhead lights being manipulated by unseen forces. And while, ultimately, those "forces" turned out to be the singer's mischievous bandmates using fishing lines to simulate the work of a poltergeist, Neck Deep are in no doubt over the supernatural status of the place.

"It's 100 per cent haunted," confirms guitarist Matt West (or simply West), before revealing that Matt Squire, the producer for ND's fourth album and the man responsible for records by All Time Low, Panic! At The Disco and Ariana Grande, insisted on ceremoniously burning sage to purge bad energy after witnessing a crow's death.



**"WE'RE MORE THAN LOVEABLE IDIOTS – THERE'S A DEEPER LEVEL TO WHAT WE DO"**  
BEN BARLOW

Neck Deep are also clear about what they're here to achieve: an album that fundamentally shifts them from pop-punk's leading lights to a great band *full stop*, transferring these big fish from their small pond to the limitless oceans of the big time. Not because they think that's what they should be doing now, mind, but because it's a point they've arrived at organically.

"Pop-punk's where we came from, and the reason we're doing what we're doing now," says West, not wishing to discredit the world that birthed them. "We started out writing pop-punk songs because that's what we were listening to at the time. Naturally, over the years, we've grown and tastes have changed. On [*The Peace And The Panic*], we had songs like Parachute and In Bloom that wouldn't sound particularly out of place on the record we're making now. We enjoyed writing and playing those songs so much that the natural evolution was to do [last year's non-album single] *She's A God*, and that took us to where we are now. I don't think there's any

conscious effort to step away from where we were, it's just a natural thing that's happened."

"For me, the highest form of praise for this record would be people thinking it's been made by real artists rather than some everyday lads in a band," adds Ben. "We are more than loveable idiots – there's a deeper level to what we do. We've evolved into creative people with taste and a vision, who have carved out our own pocket within the music world. I want people to think Neck Deep don't sound like anyone else – that they sound like *Neck Deep*."

It's not alterations to the band's creative process that have brought about this evolution, because little has really changed from the early days of Ben and older brother Seb piecing together music in the attic of their childhood home. And while today they've got more space in which to play, the band still favour close confines and a production-line mentality. They record in the wood-beamed studio attached to the house, before Seb, ensconced in an upstairs bedroom, reviews what's been done, noting any tweaks required, or mixing the stuff that makes the grade.

It's a model of self-sufficiency young bands should aspire to. And Monnow, located 100 miles from their home base in Wrexham, seems a much better fit than the Los Angeles studios where Neck Deep worked on *The Peace And The Panic*, and began writing this one – experiences not necessarily to their tastes.

"It feels like we're here for the sole purpose of making a record, whereas in LA we were also having to shake hands and network and shit," says Ben, explaining the key difference between there and here, then and now. "We wake up here just a few footsteps away from the studio. Being close to home takes a big element of stress out of the situation, too. We don't have to constantly fly or live out of a suitcase. I know I'm not going to go home yet, because we're going to work on this until the final days. But psychologically, it's comforting to know I *could*."

Far from skipping out, Ben – ever the night owl – regularly stays up until dawn here, a glass of red wine in hand, recording vocal takes or listening back to his efforts. As a result





Seb Barlow



Sam Bowden



Dani Washington



Matt West



## (NOT REALLY) THE NEW GUY

**SEB BARLOW** speaks  
on finally becoming an  
'official' part of  
**NECK DEEP...**



■ "I feel like it was meant to happen. I felt more connected to this album than any other album we've done, and it's been the easiest process making it. Neck Deep as a four-piece has been the strongest the band has ever been in terms of getting on with

each other and running smooth, and without blowing my own horn I thought I could be the cherry on top to solidify the band as a unit. I've always been involved with everything, and they've always respected my opinion. I can say things to all of them that they might not be able to

say to each other because I've always been a bit removed. At Monnow, it was my room that people came to in order to decompress. I don't think I'll lose that now I'm playing with them. I've worked with bands for seven years, so am used to managing multiple people's ideas.

"I've not rehearsed with them at all yet. I'm a good singer and I'm good at bass, but combining those elements in front of 10,000 people is going to be the difficult thing! My first show is a big festival this summer, so I've still got a while yet."



Group hugs: the perfect solution to a cold photo studio



he's the last to rise each day. At 2pm, he hasn't been up long, sipping coffee and vaping as he explains how these dark nights of the soul provide the "total immersion" he craves when making an album, as well as time to piece together what this emerging opus is about.

"Having a lot of strong songs already is obviously a big boost," says Ben of material that, under the freewheeling stewardship of producer Matt – a creative kindred spirit for whom no idea is too experimental – kicks open the door to musical possibilities only hinted at by The Peace And The Panic. The new album draws influence from the aforementioned Sabbath and Oasis, as well as Weezer and Nirvana. "There's some stuff that's got a Smashing Pumpkins vibe, too," he adds, hitting his stride for the day ahead. "You wouldn't have been able to say that before, would you?"

**I**t weards me out that this is my life and I get to do this for a living,"

admits Ben that night, the bonfire thawing a reflective side he doesn't readily reveal. He's discussing whether the changing fortunes that he and his bandmates have enjoyed in recent years have altered their drive. Is it harder to leave the homes they've bought and domestic lives they've built to make and tour a new record? Or does knowing what Neck Deep has given them make them keener to reap and enjoy the rewards?

"Absolutely!" nods Ben, emphatically stoking the fire and sending embers soaring into the cold night. "My attitude is that this band has given me everything. So I have to continue to put everything I can offer back into it." That's truer than ever, given that Ben, a natural storyteller, has developed for the album a narrative framework to help channel his ideas and provide a landscape his bandmates navigate in weird and often wonderful ways.

"We're trying to present our sound, as individuals and as a band, in a way that's palatable to the biggest audience," explains drummer Dani Washington. "That may seem like an obvious idea, but it's not really. If you view music as a language, you want as many people to understand your language as possible, which isn't easy. You don't want to copy anyone else, so you're taking interesting, original ideas and channelling them into something bigger that brings people into our world."

Broadly speaking, the conceptual arc holding the album together concerns the life, love and existential questions contemplated by Jet, a complicated character the singer doesn't mind admitting is loosely based on himself. Jet resides in a place called Sonderland – a play on "Wonderland" the band are considering for the album title, despite Sam

joshing that it's a bit too much like Sunderland.

"'Sonder' is a German word for the realisation that every stranger you pass in the street has a life as vivid and complex as your own," explains Ben. "You're just an extra in their story, and they're just an extra in yours. A lot of this comes from the way I see the world, but told from the perspective of an accentuated character."

West, something of an accentuated character himself, is also no stranger to giving back to the band that's changed his life. The bearded guitarist, tending the fire from the opposite side

you'll find him glued to his laptop at the dining room table, working on another key element of the band's future. Having trained in animation as a younger man, he is dusting off skills he's not utilised in eight years to create visuals for a future tour, after baulking at an eye-watering quote from an agency to do the work. It's painstaking stuff, with each element of the flowers that will accompany In Bloom during shows created from scratch, while the online tutorials he uses for pointers remain at the mercy of an "absolute potato" Wi-Fi connection.

"Dividing and conquering is the best way to work because we're here for a finite time," explains West, who'll contribute musical ideas, but is happy to let Sam play the guitar parts in the studio. "If he can track better than I can, why would I slow things down? It's about focusing on our strengths."

West is currently showcasing another of his strengths, designing merch on his iPad while casting a confused glance at the others as they work on a song that's proving rather contentious. Lowlife started out as a riff Ben played on an acoustic guitar so often during last summer's U.S. tour with blink-182 and Lil Wayne that his bandmates grew sick of it. There are therefore some raised eyebrows that it's being fleshed into fuller form, particularly now that it features lyrics like 'I'm drinking coffee on a trampoline'.

"I just don't get it," West admits to K! later. "It's definitely a lot further out from our comfort zone than I'm personally used to."

**E**arly February. Two months have passed since Neck Deep left the studio, and they look relieved to be out the other side, quaffing beers much earlier than "a quarter past piss" in a London pub. Despite the calm setting the band were in when we were last with them,

sedentary living, comfort food and antisocial working hours became side effects of their focus and took their toll. When Dani returned home to Colwyn Bay on the North Wales coast, his girlfriend took one look at him and asked, "What the fuck happened to you?"

There are bigger questions now, though. Why, for example, is the 12-track album they've emerged with now called All Distortions Are Intentional, rather than Sonderland?

"We realised [Sonderland] pigeonholed the record a bit, putting too much of a focus on the fantastical setting than the characters involved," explains Ben, who's happy the name found a home fronting the opening track. "All Distortions Are Intentional came from the artist who ended up doing the cover [Tom Noon – see panel over the page]. We were flipping through his stuff, and he had a piece with that name, and I thought it sounded sick. It's a statement that plays into the record in a lot of ways. Our



Alas, Ben's cover of Three Blind Mice didn't make the final album cut



Guitarist West takes a break from designing to, you know, play guitar

**"THIS BAND HAS GIVEN ME EVERYTHING, SO I HAVE TO PUT EVERYTHING BACK INTO IT"**

**BEN BARLOW**

to Ben, is constantly using the knowledge he's accumulated from a lifelong curiosity with how things work to create efficiencies for Neck Deep. The busyness of his brain means he's generally the first up in the morning, though he doesn't spend those extra hours practicing guitar or jotting down ideas, instead enjoying some uninterrupted gaming before the work begins. When it does,



understandings and misunderstandings in life happen for a reason, and in our journey from point A to point B there are a lot of emotional fluctuations, which are all part of the bigger picture. This is an album of drastic juxtapositions and creative choices that might not all make sense right off the bat, but they are intentional."

This idea is best illustrated by the seismic lyrical and musical shift between tracks five and six. When You Know is the most traditional pop-punk song on the record, in which Jet realises he's in love, before giving way to the glacial Quarry, which finds him contemplating suicide. The bleakness of the latter, it turns out, came from a very real place.

"For a while that song was making me sweat," says Ben, of Quarry. "Because Jet is drawn from elements of my own personality and psyche, his admission that 'Yeah, I want to jump off a cliff,' is a dark realisation I'm sure we've all felt at times – what if it all ended right now? I did wonder if I'd gone in too deep with that. Then there's the stylistic choice – I wouldn't say it's *rapping*, but would describe it as spoken-word. I'm used to hearing my singing voice back, and I don't mind it, but hearing myself talking and my accent coming through didn't feel typically Neck Deep, because it was me as me. It took me a while to accept it, but we told ourselves at the start [of making the album] that we shouldn't fight what comes out, whatever it is."

For proof of the dividends this philosophy paid, note that Lowlife – a rather divisive composition in its infancy back in the studio – has blossomed into All Distortions Are Intentional's fascinating first single, which Ben describes as "a cornerstone". What's more, the lyric 'I like some purple with my tangerine', inspired by the intense colours of certain strains of weed, is directly referenced in the album's artwork.

"Who'd have fucking thought it?" laughs West. "Turns out that song is brilliant. So that's taught me to trust in the process."

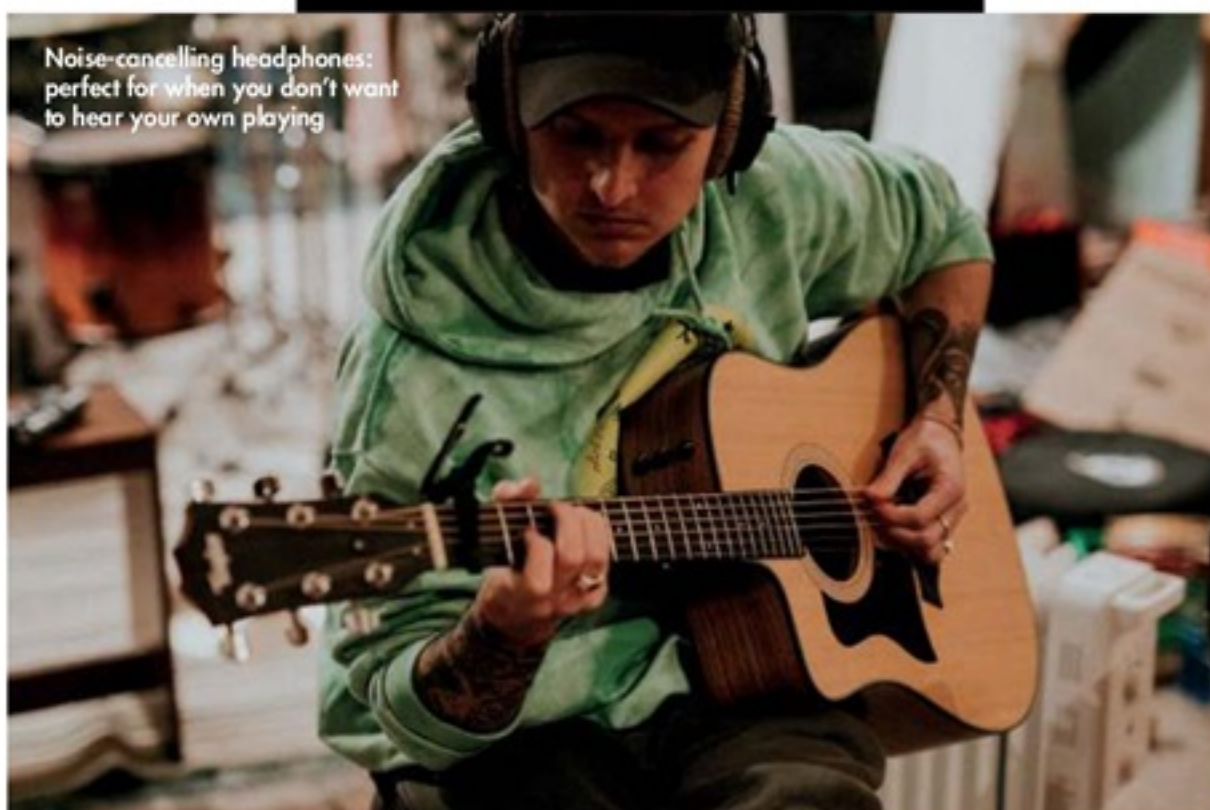
Another dramatic change is the fact that five men are sat here today instead of four, that fifth figure a slightly nervous-looking Seb. Always a behind-the-scenes member of Neck Deep, having co-written the songs, produced their early records and mixed this new one, the elder Barlow is officially ND's new bassist [see panel, previous page]. Speaking at their family home for the band's last Kerrang! cover back in 2017, Seb admitted he's more comfortable behind a laptop than in front of a crowd, so this news comes as something of a surprise. Given his importance to the band's story, however, there's no denying the appointment, agreed during a piss-up in Wetherspoons, carries

great symbolic weight – and says a lot about his belief in the band's new output.

"It did and it didn't come out of nowhere," says Ben, who gained his appetite for live performance watching his brother play local shows back in the day. "When we were first looking for a bassist,

**"THIS IS AN ALBUM OF JUXTAPOSITIONS THAT MIGHT NOT ALL MAKE SENSE OFF THE BAT..."**

**BEN BARLOW**



Noise-cancelling headphones: perfect for when you don't want to hear your own playing



Thankfully, Neck Deep had a long walk to decide who was responsible for not booking the cab

Seb threw his name into the hat. He's traditionally said he'd rather work with bands than be in one, so back then I thought, 'Whoa! Fuck!' It didn't work out, because I don't think he was at a place in his life where he could commit to it fully. A year later, with all of us in a better place and Seb along to write the record, things were different. What swayed it for me was his confidence in the idea, without any air of uncertainty at all. His confidence gave me confidence. If Seb says he's going to do something, he'll do it full on."

"It makes so much sense," adds Dani, who wasn't in Wetherspoons on that fateful night,

and wouldn't be here at all if it wasn't for Seb. "He's been part of every decision the band has ever made. He was the one who messaged me all those years back, asking if I'd like to join Neck Deep. Now I get the chance to perform with him, which is so special."

There's no doubt All Distortions Are Intentional is special, too – the kind of album that somehow manages to maintain the essence of the band you fell in love with, while altering its DNA so drastically you'll give up on guessing what to expect next. Is it a creative gamble? Given that it takes a leap as sizeable as the one from 2015's Life's Not Out To Get You To The Peace And The Panic, and then another, that's a yes. Will it please a fanbase who've come to expect the unexpected? Definitely. Will it earn new fans in people who would tell you Neck Deep aren't their cup of tea? Undoubtedly.

Given the boxes being ticked, and the new boxes added in for good measure, this was presumably the plan all along, right? Not according to West, who's so pleased with the album that even the news that the rollercoaster visuals he's spent two weeks designing are being scrapped doesn't spoil his mood.

"We've always said we just want to do the biggest things we can," he says. "We're hopefully doing some big rooms at the end of the year, but one of us just asked, 'What will we do after that?' Well, I want us to do a show at the Racecourse Ground [the 10,771-capacity home of Wrexham FC]. We owe a lot to the town; I wouldn't have met Ben and Seb if I hadn't gone to college there, and would still be working in a shop rather than getting to dick around on stage, so I'd like to give something back."

Ben, meanwhile, remains as modest as ever with his ambitions, despite all evidence suggesting his band are sitting on the record that will change their fortunes forever. For the singer, career progression and bigger shows, hometown or otherwise, are more than welcome – "We want to do the cool shit, because why the fuck wouldn't we?" – but less important than people understanding what Neck Deep have done on All

Distortions Are Intentional.

"I just hope people get it," laughs Ben. "That it makes some kind of sense. The best reaction would be for it to just click, as it has on the last couple of records, though obviously I realise this one's different. We got to witness it fall into place making it, which was a very exciting thing, so I want others to experience that feeling too." **K!**

**ALL DISTORTIONS ARE INTENTIONAL WILL BE RELEASED ON JULY 24 VIA HOPELESS RECORDS. NECK DEEP TOUR THE UK THIS SEPTEMBER – SEE THE GIG GUIDE**



## PEELING BACK THE LAYERS

**BEN** picks apart **ALL DISTORTIONS** ARE INTENTIONAL's fruity artwork

■ "We tried a lot of different things, with the initial brief that we wanted it to be different from anything we'd done before – less busy, less wacky. It's a simple image with quite a stripped-back colour palette, so it's subtle yet impactful. Someone at our management company is dating Tom [Noon], and there was a piece of his artwork in their offices we thought was really cool. I met with him in London to talk through the themes of the record to spitball ideas. We ended up with the purple tangerine, a lyric from Lowlife, with the world inside it. I see it as symbolising Jet, the main character, and as he unravels, he comes to terms with the world."



Finally, back in civilisation, where Just Eat will actually deliver



**KERRANG!**

SHOTS!



MYRKUR



# LOATHE

PHOTO: THOMAS BROOKER

**KERRANG!**  
SHOTS!







**KERRANG!**  
SHOTS!





BIEFY GLYR0



**KERRANG!**

SHOTS!

BEARTOOTH

CALEB SHOMO

PHOTO: ANDY FORD



KERRANG!

SHOTS!



DINOSAUR PILE-UP



## THE K! INTERVIEW

“WHEN YOU’RE  
*really successful*  
YOU GET  
*headbutted often,*  
AND WE GOT  
HIT A LOT!  
BUT I’M HALF-SCOTTISH.  
*I can take it...*”

## GAVIN ROSSDALE BUSH

WORDS: DAVID MCLAUGHLIN PHOTOS: JORDAN KNIGHT

**T**here was a time when Gavin Rossdale probably felt like he just couldn’t win. In the ‘90s, he had the world at his feet. He had achieved global fame and multi-platinum record sales with post-grunge heroes, Bush. He married superstar No Doubt vocalist Gwen Stefani in 2002, going on to raise a family with her, with Hollywood cameos and prime time television appearances along the way. In 2013 he was the recipient of a prestigious Ivor Novello songwriting award for his achievements. By rights, he should be thought of as a national treasure in the British rock scene, being one of the few UK artists to genuinely

break America and enjoy mammoth mainstream success. He *should* be thought of in such terms, and yet he has never been granted such grace.

For a man who could be forgiven for developing a sizeable chip on his shoulder about it all, he appears surprisingly unruffled. Today, he’s busy rounding off a globetrotting 25-year celebration of the band’s multi-platinum-selling debut album, *Sixteen Stone*. Soon, they’ll launch into the campaign for their new one, *The Kingdom*, which will see the band stop off at Download Festival this summer.

The London expat now lives in Los Angeles, where he has shared custody of his three sons, having divorced





Gavin Rossdale: shot  
for Kerrang! in Los  
Angeles, 2020



## ROOT AND BRANCH

All the *little things* you should know about **GAVIN ROSSDALE...**

**BORN:** October 30, 1967 in Marylebone, London.

**LIVES:** Los Angeles, California.

**EDUCATION:** He left the prestigious Westminster School in London at the age of 17 to pursue a life in rock.

**BANDS:** Bush, Institute.

**SPECIAL SKILLS:**

Songwriting, acting, cooking, tackling and long-range passing.

**MOST LIKELY TO SAY:**

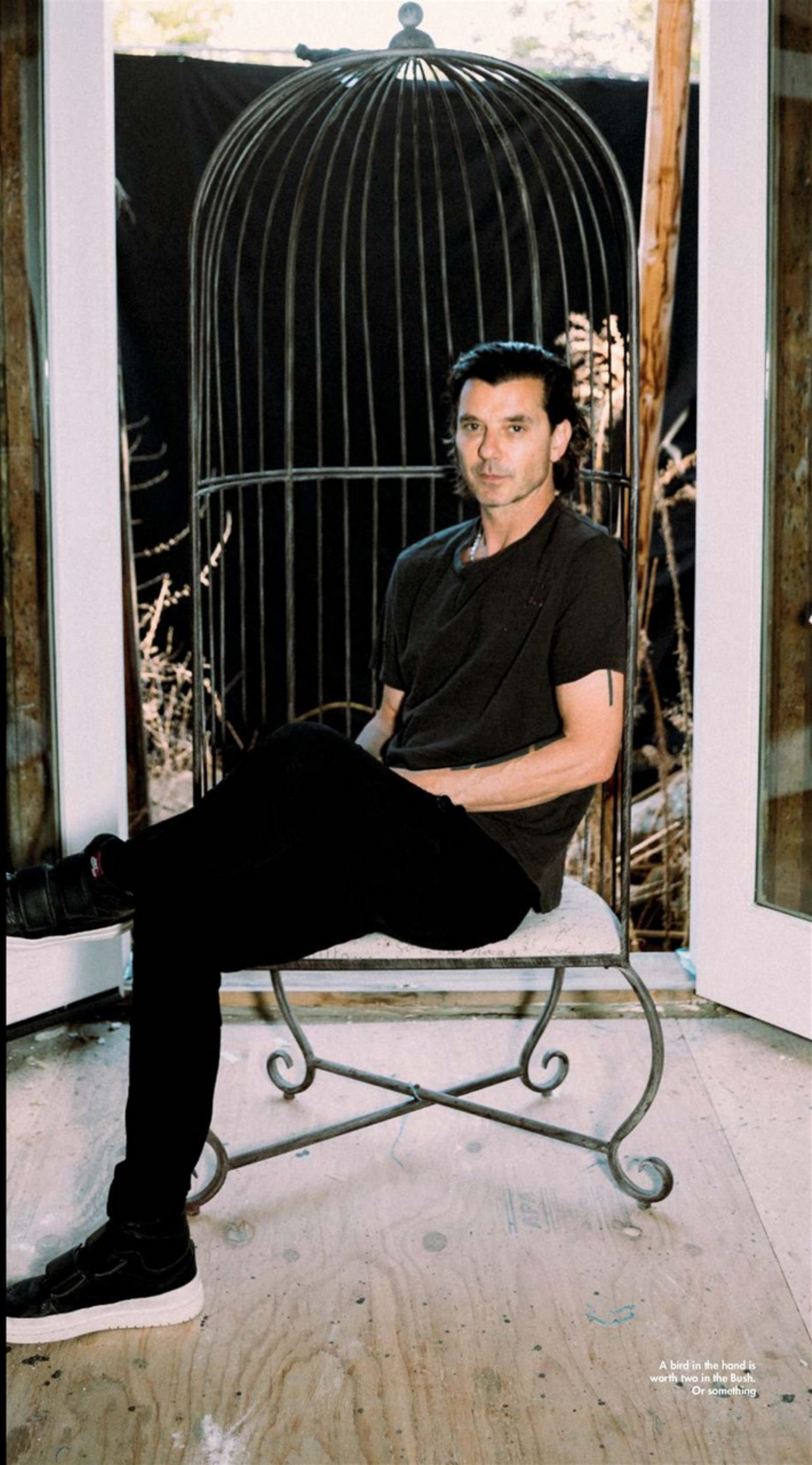
"Everything happens for a reason – don't sweat it."

**LEAST LIKELY TO SAY:**

"Hmm, I wonder what the papers are saying about me today..."

**HE'S A LEGEND**

**BECAUSE:** He picked up a guitar at a tough time for rock music and rose to prominence regardless, suffering the slings and arrows of negative press in the process. A quarter of a century on, he's still here and still loving it.



A bird in the hand is worth two in the Bush. Or something



from Gwen in 2016. Rather than focus on the accolades and dues that have evaded him, though, the Bush frontman prefers to count the blessings he does have.

There are many...

**How much truth is there to the rumour that you could have been a professional football player instead of a rock star?**

"I was pretty good and I played at some top clubs, but no, it was always about the music for me. I played in central midfield and I had trials for Chelsea, but I'm not sure I was ever destined to be professional. I got injured while we were recording *Sixteen Stone*. Someone elbowed me in the mouth during a game and my bottom lip was hanging off. So all the guide vocals for it were done without my bottom lip! That's when I thought, 'Maybe it's best that I follow the music thing...'"

**When did that musical spark first ignite?**

"I grew up in Swiss Cottage, Kilburn and West Hampstead. It was kind of rough, and no-one liked [David] Bowie, who my aunt had introduced me to, so music was like my secret passion. It was the perfect storm of getting introduced to good music and having access to a cool record shop where I'd spend all my pocket money. That's where I was getting lost in music, but not to the point of actually making it yet – I thought you had to be extraterrestrial to do that!"

**When did you start to believe you might possess such extraterrestrial qualities?**

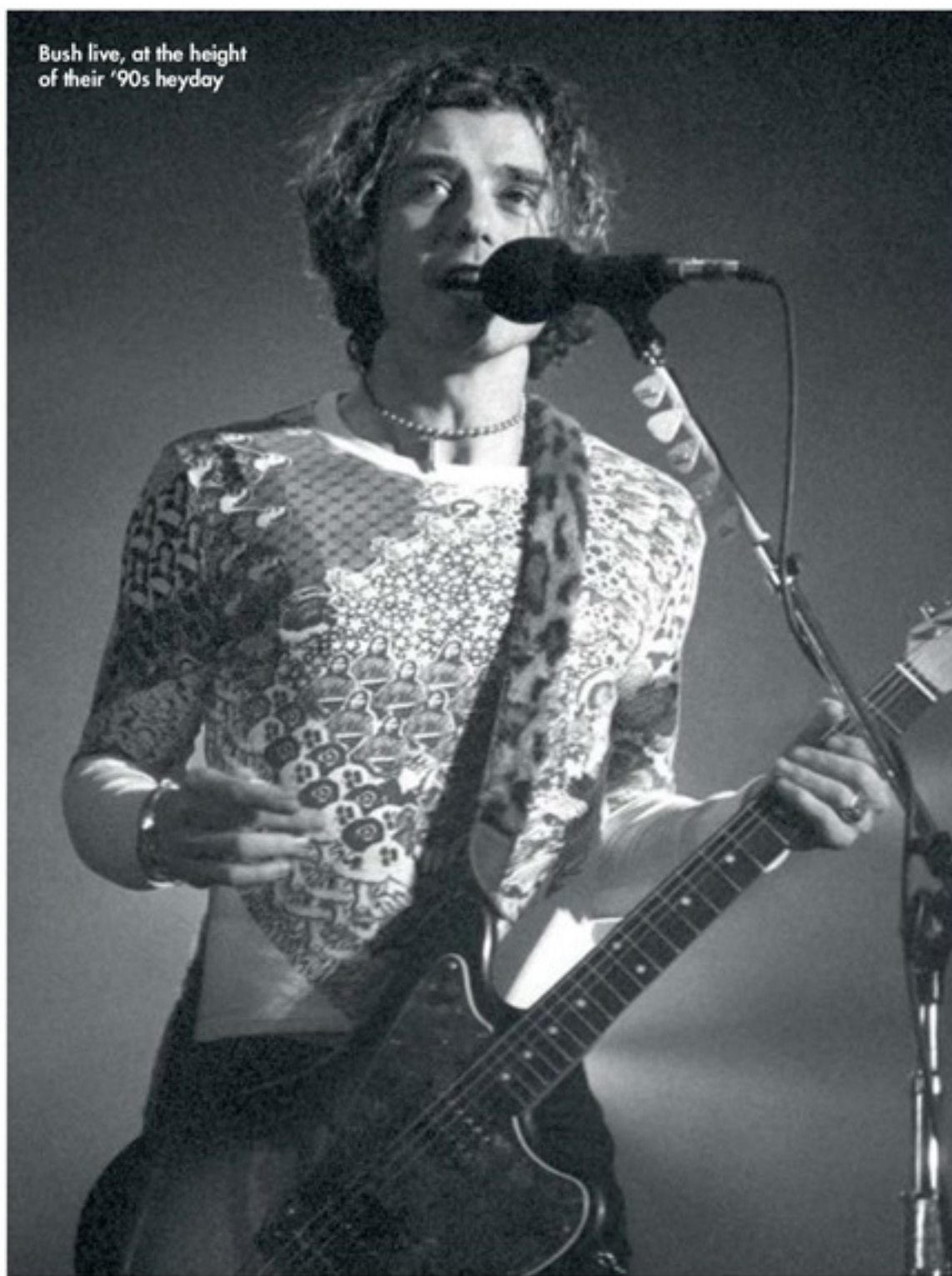
"Well, no-one in my family was musical. It was more of a great escape for me. I was in a couple of bands at school, spending more time talking about what covers we wanted to do than playing them, but I sang a bit and then, when I left school, it was really a case of, 'What can I do that isn't a real job?' So I tried singing in another band, and obviously I was terrible and learning on the job. I just stuck around long enough that I found a way through. But I had heart, and that beat everything else. I used to do some decorating and I worked on building sites to pursue the dream. That's the brilliant thing about youth – you feel like there are no horizons. I knew nothing, but I was so focused and I was hooked. I also loved books and writers. It's that romantic idea of giving yourself to something just because it feels right, as opposed to thinking it has any kind of future. Yet ironically, here we are, a little later."

**When did the first hints of a future in music become apparent?**

"When I began Bush. I was really just finding my way before. I looked for people to work with, but I was like, 'Everyone's such a twat!' I had been playing guitar, I just wasn't very good and I'm not that good now. Then I met Nigel [Pulsford, ex-Bush]. He was a great guitar player, but he didn't want to work with me too much. He was making real money off jingles. I took

some songs to him, and he was really good at making them sound way better than they were. He just had a way of playing fantastic guitar. I was lying in the bath listening to the demos, like, 'Fucking hell, this is great.' That's when I had the epiphany – when I heard *him*. I had lost all ambition, and had all but given up on getting a record deal. When I'd started making music in Bush it was liberating, because I thought, 'Well, the dream is kind of gone now.' I was also discovering bands like My Bloody Valentine, Gang Of Four and Pixies, so I figured, 'Just make music that makes you feel good.' Then it all went what I like to call 'peach-shaped'. The irony was that success came when I had let go of trying. Eventually, we got the Interscope deal when Jimmy Iovine heard *Sixteen Stone*. And the rest got me to this conversation!"

Bush live, at the height of their '90s heyday



**Given your low expectations, stardom must have come as a huge surprise. Did it fundamentally change you, did it freak you out, or did you handle it well?**

"A combination of all those things. The weirdest thing was that I'd been slaving for enough time that it felt like I was in the right place. Even though that sounds weird to me. I got a sense that something was going on. But it was only when we went to America after being on the radio for the first time and we played CBGB in New York that I was like, 'Whoa, what the fuck?!' All I can remember is all these cool dudes and tattooed girls there, and thinking, 'Oh my God, this is the best night of my life.' Then we stayed on tour forever, just grinding, grinding, grinding. I was so naïve, but it was all so thrilling. Then there's the juggernaut of being on MTV. It was otherworldly, like being in

a space shuttle. But you need all those things at once to make that nuclear fuel. I think we took it well. We had a laugh, and we got along great. I don't think we turned into divas or anything, because when you're successful you also get beaten up. When you're *really* successful you get headbutted often, and we got hit a lot. But I'm half-Scottish – I could take it! You need to kill me, or I'll just get back up and shake it off."

**Did it hurt when some sections of the press seemed to dismissively sneer at Bush's success?**

"Kerrang! was one of the few places we *didn't* get murdered. The ones that we had a harder time with were simultaneously peddling the whole Britpop thing. They were annoyed by us outselling all of their bands combined. So it was a little bitter. If you talk to anyone that's successful, the truth is they all think they get bad press, because the dumb thing about fragile egos in this world is that everyone focuses on the negative. That's like caring about what one person stood picking their nose and yawning thinks while 99 others are orgasmic while you're playing. Nothing really matters. The only thing is that some of that press did keep people away, and I believe we could have been even bigger in England. But you've got to look at your life on balance. It would be ridiculous to have any complaints. Of course there's some frustration, but so be it. I've lost friends along the way to suicide, drugs, illness, and people have had their lives ravaged by any number of things. So I stand here grateful."

**Did it require to you to develop a thick skin?**

"At the time, I think it was really hard and it stings, because you're so excited about it and all you've done is write a song. You're not a white-collar criminal, taking people's pension money. So sometimes it was hard and it gets a bit emotional, because people feel strongly about these things. I started getting way better reviews when streaming began and no-one bought records. It beats selling 12 copies and having the Album Of The Year awards from every critic."

**The 2013 Ivor Novello Award must have gone some way to redressing that balance?**

"Yeah, that was incredible, and it's great to have the certificates and things. It was a fun night. My mum came along with me, and she loved it."

**Rewinding a little, were you sad about how things came to a close with Bush in 2002?**

"That was never meant to be a permanent thing. I had recently got married, and it was a weird time. I wanted to do the Institute record, which was meant to be a three-month thing, but it turned into a couple of years. And then I tried to get the band back together in 2008, when I did my solo record. I didn't want to go solo, but Nigel didn't want to come back. And I never should have done a solo record. I never should have done the Institute record. I should have



just kept on making Bush records. But that's the way it goes. I begged the band to get back together, but Nigel and Dave [Parsons] didn't want to do it, so I had to get some new guys in, and we've had the same line-up since."

**You've had an on-off flirtation with Hollywood over the years. Do you enjoy acting?**

"I actually just did another little piece for a new movie last week. I seem to get killed off all the time – everyone wants me to die in these movies! But it's really fun. I love acting. The only reason I don't act more is because my three boys live with me half the time. I don't mind travelling for music when I'm away for a few months across the year, but if you're an actor, you've got to commit to making movies in Romania for four months or something, and I can't do that. But when the right jobs come up, I love it. It's really magical making words come to life up off the page."

**In another life you might have become a chef, is that true?**

"I've actually done some pilots for a cooking show that still might get made, but it's a bit uphill at the minute. I did a couple of episodes of it for myself, because I love cooking. I'm basically trying to figure out different ways of being able to stay home more. I'm still trying to figure out the single father thing."

**What has parenthood taught you about life?**

"Tolerance, patience, and how irrelevant I am. I'm just a stepping-stone. You have these new, improved versions of yourself, and you try to be as supportive as you can. I just want them to play my records and not have to be like, 'Uh, sorry about my dad' to their friends. You can't suck!"

**You've lived in the public eye for 25 years. What insights have you gained from that experience?**

"In a way, [new record] The Kingdom is based upon the self-righteous judgement of most people, especially of anyone in the public eye. One thing I teach my kids is: no judgement. Because you never know what someone's story is. To me, The Kingdom is this perfect place, free from PC nonsense and gang mentalities. There's a freedom of mind, spirit, creativity and expression. I find the voracious appetite of people who are fast to judge incredible. Human nature is fragile, because it's all based on everyone's insecurities. People love to see others feel bad, because it makes them feel better about themselves. That stuff I've found a bit tough over the years. But at the same time, I've met people who are incredible, who are interesting and smart, all because of my life. It's taught me that you can't take it all too seriously. It's just life."

**Is there an element of people not really knowing the real you because they only get a public persona version you present as a means of self-protection?**

"Of course. But we all get reduced to three sentences, and that is a little taxing sometimes, but it's nothing that I lose sleep over. If you read anthropology, societies are all based off of gossip. So I totally understand why it exists. But you have to have perspective on it. What are you going to do? For me, the focus has to be

on making great music and playing great shows. I never read about myself. I gave up doing that years ago. Your own contribution has to be as good as it can be. That's all you can control. I can't control what someone writes. I'd be in the loony bin if I tried to. The passion is what keeps you alive. It's infectious. That's the key to your own spirit."

**You were a judge on ITV's The Voice in 2017. How do you look back on that experience?**

"I look back at it fondly, but it didn't really work for me. The best thing about it by a million miles was befriending Tom Jones. He is a king."

**Do you have any regrets in life?**

"If you haven't got regrets, you've really haven't lived. My main regrets are the things I didn't do. I mean, obviously, if you could airbrush your life and not have let people down or not made bad decisions that hurt others, you'd take that opportunity. I'm from a family of six marriages, three for each of my parents, and that's not what I wanted in my life, so it's a bit weird being divorced. It's the last thing I ever wanted, and Gwen is an amazing girl. I'm not a Buddhist, but I relate to a lot of their old philosophies, and one is that there are no accidents. Even the terrible, awful things that happen to you, there's a lesson you're meant to learn from them. I think the

biggest regret would be to go through the fucking car crashes of life and not learn anything from them. I've had some pretty bad pileups down the years, but I've tried to learn from every one and be a better person. I'm way far from perfect. I'm full of flaws."

**Bush are here for Download this summer – will that be your first visit to Donington?**

"As a performer, yes. I actually worked at a hospitality tent there when I was working odd jobs. I snuck on stage to watch Aerosmith, but got thrown out by security!"

**This visit should be slightly different, then...**

"Well, not getting thrown out would be a start!"

**Finally, when it's your time to go, what epitaph would you like to have on your tombstone?**

"I don't buy into that burial stuff. When I'm gone, I'll be gone like dust. There will be the music, but no words from me. People can say what they like. They always do." **K!**

**BUSH'S NEW SINGLE FLOWERS ON A GRAVE IS RELEASED MARCH 6. NEW ALBUM THE KINGDOM FOLLOWS ON MAY 15 THROUGH BMG. THE BAND PLAY DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL IN JUNE – SEE THE GIG GUIDE**



Bush 2.0: disappointed at the decorators' lack of progress on their new studio



Gavin on set filming a horror cameo, or caught getting up to no good?



Well, if you will insist on wearing black you'll have to stay in the shade, lads



Gavin enjoying his fancy new designer armchair



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SU-METAL and MOAMETAL's  
invisible yo-yo tricks were  
a sight to (not) behold

**ON THE ROAD**

PLANETARY

GO!

There's no show on Earth quite as bonkers as a **BABYMETAL** show. Continuing to shoot for the stratosphere, the kawaii metal superstars' **METAL GALAXY** extravaganza touches down in the UK for the first time, and **SU-METAL** and **MOAMETAL** invite us along for an spectacular and exclusive access-all-areas front-row view...

WORDS: TOM SHEPHERD PHOTOS: ANDY FORD





**I**t's about an hour before BABYMETAL are due onstage at Hammersmith's historic Eventim Apollo. In a room deep within the venue's labyrinthine warren of backstage corridors, the pair have just been surprised with a blue, glittery cake so large that singer SU-METAL is struggling to hold it up on her own. Presented to the duo by their team to celebrate selling out tonight's show, it looks like it has landed straight from a bakery on Neptune.

The fact that they're moments away from performing to thousands of fans doesn't appear to have fazed SU-METAL or MOAMETAL in the slightest. Dressed in their black and silver space-age battle armour – featuring the kind of sharp shoulder pads you wouldn't want to mess with – the pair seem light and focused as they pose together for Kerrang!'s photographer, throwing their Fox God hand gesture like it's second nature. Despite being so young – SU-METAL is 22 and MOAMETAL is 20 – they have a cool,

relaxed air that reminds you that they've been captivating rooms as BABYMETAL for almost a decade now. Experienced professionals, they're less focused on nerves than on harnessing their excitement to ensure a successful show.

"I'm always excited about going onstage, as I'm eager to know what kind of audience is waiting for us," says MOAMETAL. "When I hear the fans making noise while we're backstage, impatient thoughts like, 'I want to see all of you as soon as I can!' go through my mind."

Outside the venue, the fans seem just as impatient, as a long line of distinctive figures snakes its way along the concourse. Some have been here for hours – unveiling homecrafted signs and big billowing flags. It seems like anyone who isn't dressed in black opts for entirely the opposite end of the spectrum. There are flashes of neon hair clashing with bright BABYMETAL T-shirts, while cosplayers appear in the group's kawaii-goth uniform or as members of their ghoulish KamiBand. At times, it feels like stepping into a slightly altered reality.



**S**uch vibrant scenes have played out before at BABYMETAL's previous London shows. Onstage later tonight, SU-METAL will even call the capital their second home. This past week, however, marks the first time that crowds like this have gathered across the country, as the Japanese band have taken their maiden headline tour across the UK, stopping off at Glasgow, Cardiff and Manchester.

"Every time we do a performance in London, fans welcome us with such amazing energy, and I'm always eager to do more shows there," says SU-METAL. "For this tour, we have been able to go to different parts of the UK, so I'm so grateful to visit new places and have so many people come see us perform."

This tour is also the first time that these shores have witnessed a full arrangement of songs from the group's third and most accomplished album, METAL GALAXY. When that record arrived late last year, it was likened by its creators to a spaceship visiting different faraway planets, due to its eccentric mix of styles. Given the colourful scenes surrounding the Apollo tonight, it's not hard to imagine that spaceship has just landed in London.

From the inside, the venue's art deco interiors mirror BABYMETAL's futuristic visuals. Enthusiastic fans huddle around several merch points. The band famously broke the record for selling the most apparel ever at Wembley Arena in 2016 and tonight there are tour shirts, flags, vinyl and winter hats on offer. Everything is black. Support comes from Southampton goth-punks Creeper, whose knack for twisted storytelling and theatrics puts them in smart alignment with the headliners, and they receive a toasty reaction from the early congregants.

Passing through the narrow corridors, it's clear there's no such thing as a typical BABYMETAL fan. There are metalheads in studded jackets, old-school rockers in Harley-Davidson bandanas, unmistakable emo kids, and theatrically made-up goths. You're just as likely to end up stood next to a lairy teenage couple in matching tie-dye outfits as you are a family with young children all wearing ear-protecting headphones. It shows the truly diverse following BABYMETAL have cultivated.

"I was extremely happy to see so many children and lots of girls!" says MOAMETAL about the tour. "I saw girls dressed up like us and I feel so blessed to have such warm fans. I also spotted a lot of hardcore metalheads, and seeing them singing and dancing along to our music is always such a fun sight. It makes me so incredibly happy."

Just as BABYMETAL's music appeals to a broad church, the range of styles and influences that the group have incorporated into their traditionally heavy metal sound has been growing exponentially. The diverse list of guests on last year's METAL GALAXY only scratches the surface of how adventurous things got on that record, with Joakim Brodén of Swedish power metal band Sabaton, Thai rapper F. Hero and Alissa White-Gluz of Swedish death metallers Arch Enemy all making appearances. It means that the band's set for this tour has become an extravagant pic'n'mix of daring flavours, visuals and performance styles.

"Each song has its own unique colour, so it's entertaining watching the differences in our fans'

reactions when we perform," says SU-METAL, comparing how this tour measures up to their previous UK performances. "I feel that this album has further widened the range of what BABYMETAL is all about."

As if preparing tonight's audience for their journey across these different worlds, the first visuals shown on the giant screen behind the stage are of a diamond spacecraft cruising beyond distant planets, backed by the emotional surge of intro track FUTURE METAL. Then the lights dramatically cut out, only to reveal three dark figures stood like statues when they turn back on – SU-METAL, MOAMETAL and one member of the Avengers, the group of dancers that have been drafted in on rotation since the

fireballs that carry heat all the way to the back of the room. Perhaps the most striking visuals accompany Distortion, where nightmare figures and a crumbling modern city shift against a blood-red backdrop, as SU-METAL's rapid delivery makes her sound as if she's warding off an evil spirit. It's genuinely unsettling.

But alongside these PG-13 moments come plenty of light-hearted laughs. The wonderfully silly Oh! MAJINAL, for example, is accompanied by dozens of CGI Joakim Brodén's (the Sabaton singer's vocals are piped in for the song) standing shoulder to shoulder and all performing a leg-kicking Russian Cossack dance, while BABYMETAL execute their own variation. It feels as bizarre as it does brilliant, and a reminder that

there are very few rock bands that can flip between tension and comic relief as perfectly as BABYMETAL.

In addition to the group's exhausting dance choreography, we witness SU-METAL and MOAMETAL carrying huge military-style flags during the epic closer Road Of Resistance, which they hold proudly behind their heads as heroic riffs wail out behind them. And while the ongoing story of the Fox God largely goes unmentioned this evening, the girls march around during Megitsune, holding up their animal deity's mask in front of their faces like they're about to perform an ancient ritual. "We want to have an amazing time with you!" says SU-METAL in English, and the crowd duly roars back.

**T**he connection BABYMETAL share with their fans is undeniable, which is all the more impressive as their music transcends language barriers. At times, it's simply organic. The expert players in the supporting KamiBand – whose identities remain hidden behind freakish masks as they line the back of the stage – help to provide the heavy ammunition for the frenzied pit, which, during songs like KARATE, swells like a

beast. Then there are moments when more *au fait* fans know the cues to follow – like when half the crowd start spinning items of clothing above their heads during the explosive PA PA YA!! It's a room that seems to be permanently ignited for the duration of the band's set.

"People have welcomed us back to London as if it's our home," notes SU-METAL afterwards.

As the final strains of Road Of Resistance draw proceedings to a close and BABYMETAL wave goodbye with genuine glee, there's the sense that, over years of touring, the band have built their shows to be true sense-baiting heavy metal spectacles, and also spaces founded on community, where fans can be themselves. There is a world free of pretension, where everyone is welcome.

"I sincerely hope that when people see BABYMETAL live," reflects MOAMETAL, "that they return home happier."

Judging by the joy on the faces of those leaving the venue tonight, it feels like mission accomplished. BABYMETAL continue to prove they're a band unlike any other. **K!**

**BABYMETAL'S NEW ALBUM METAL GALAXY IS AVAILABLE NOW THROUGH EARMUSIC. THE BAND RETURN TO THE UK FOR DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL IN JUNE – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION**



So that's why SU-METAL and MOAMETAL's grasp of English is so good!

**"I HOPE PEOPLE GO HOME HAPPIER AFTER SEEING US PLAY LIVE"**

**MOAMETAL**

departure of YUIMETAL in 2018.

Things kick off properly with the pinballing DA DA DANCE, which is backed by graphics that make it look as if the crowd is being launched into a dying sun. It's an opening that sees the energy in the room skyrocket to a level it never comes down from, as the band shift between their many different forms. No two songs are alike; the kaleidoscopic Shanti Shanti Shanti infuses traditional Indian musical elements into BABYMETAL's heavy make-up, swiftly merging into the bleak digital blast of BxMxC, all matched by a dizzying choreography that has the girls stomping around like giants.

The band's stage production is dished out in expertly measured doses, to ramp up the tension and emotions. The conventionally syrupy Gimme Chocolate!! opens instead with an eerie horror movie intro, complete with pyro



# RESISTANCE IS FUTILE

Don't just take our word for how epic these BABYMETAL shows were – hear their most dedicated fans weigh in on one of the tours of 2020...

**DAN**

SOUTH WALES

"I thought it was great. I've seen BABYMETAL in Saitama in Japan, and now I've seen them in Brixton, Cardiff and London. It's music for so many different fans and generations."

**JENNIFER**

SOUTH WALES

"That was absolutely amazing. The pyrotechnics were awesome, especially as I was so close. I've been listening to the new album at home a lot, and my kids are really into it as well."

**MARC**

COLORADO

"I flew in from the States especially for the four shows on this tour, and it's been a hell of a ride. I just love interesting bands, and BABYMETAL are completely unique."

**IWA**

TOKYO

"It was crazy. I've seen BABYMETAL 14 times before and they keep taking things higher and higher. In Tokyo people sing along, but in England there's great moshing."

**ADRIENNE**

HUNGARY

"That's the first time that I've seen BABYMETAL live and I'm not even sure how to describe what I've just witnessed. The performance was excellent, though."



SU-METAL spots the one person at the back daring to not have the best night of their life



Towels = metal



C'mon – who doesn't love to spread their arms and pretend they're an aeroplane?



SU-METAL and MOAMETAL were quite literally taken aback by UK audience reactions



"Hey, who fancies drying the dishes?"



SU-METAL contemplates the many mysteries of the universe for a brief moment





## THE INSIDE TRACK

# CONNECT FOUR

**FOUR YEAR STRONG's** new album **BRAIN PAIN** is the result of an identity crisis – not the first they've weathered during 20 years at the pop-punk coalface. This time, however, they're ready to own the private dramas that once drove them apart...

WORDS: MACKENZIE HALL PHOTOS: ALYSSA BYCHOLSKI

**D**an O'Connor's daughter has come down with pink eye. It's far from an emergency, but it's nonetheless a solid, instructive example of the kind of regular stay-at-home dad duties that dominate his life these days. "She's bummed out about it," he shrugs, with the nonchalant air of someone well-versed in things not running as smoothly as they could. "She was supposed to be handing out chocolates at school today, but she'll just have to wait until next week."

When Dan isn't carefully applying eye drops to school kids, he's one of the singers and six-stringers in Four Year Strong. He and the rest of his band – fellow vocalist and guitarist Alan Day, bassist Joe Weiss and drummer Jake Massucco – have been grinding and hustling in the pop-punk scene ever since they were just teenagers. This year marks their 20th together in fact, something they're celebrating alongside the release of new album *Brain Pain*. But unbeknownst to the wider world, they almost never made it this far. While they've previously publically denied

any problems within the camp, today, for the first time, they're ready to open up about what really happened behind the scenes.

"The reception wasn't what we expected," Dan says, taking a quick breather from parenting at his home in Worcester, Massachusetts to discuss the underwhelming response to the group's fifth album, 2011's *In Some Way, Shape, Or Form*. "Everybody had something different to blame and different thoughts about why things went the way they did. Which is why, for lack of a better term, we *broke up*. We didn't even have the conversation [about it]."

*In Some Way, Shape, Or Form* was supposed to represent a turning point for Four Year Strong. It was their first release on major label Universal Motown, who had deep pockets and high expectations. They worked with big-time producer David Bendeth (Paramore, *All Time Low*) who, Dan concedes with hindsight, wasn't a good fit. They had also freshly parted ways with keyboardist Josh Lyford. For the first time in their career, the group were afflicted by an identity crisis.

"We had a lot of different ideas of what we

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wanted the band to be," he says, of the underlying conflict. "We had just let go of a member, and that gave us a false sense of unity. It was a decision that all four of us made, which made us feel closer, like we had overcome our issues. When that record came out, we thought it was going to be something it wasn't."

Instead, reviews from fans and critics alike were lukewarm at best. In the aftermath, the band couldn't even face booking farewell shows or posting any kind of notice for fans.

"We came home from Warped Tour 2012 and didn't do anything for a year and a half," says Dan.

For the vocalist, it was a chance to be a full-time family man. A year prior, he had signed a lease on a new apartment with his wife, but had only slept in their bed for two weeks, so intense was the band's touring schedule. Breaking things up, or at least going on unofficial hiatus, seemed like sweet release.

"I was yearning for everything to slow down, even for just a little bit," he admits. "It was a really uncertain time, not knowing what we were going to be or what Four Year Strong was."

In the spring of 2013, Dan was working for a pharmaceutical company. At this point, Four Year Strong were still inactive. He hadn't even spoken to Alan in months. The job was a full-time gig, and his first real attempt at living a nine-to-five life since the band had taken off. Then, suddenly, he was offered a promotion. He relays the story seven years later with all the excitement of someone booking a root canal appointment. As serendipity would have it, though, that very same day Alan called him up out of the blue. Sure, they had all gone their separate ways, and of course Alan would understand if Dan wasn't interested but... what if they got together and tried writing again? For Dan, it was a no-brainer. "I quit my job and we went full-forward with the band from that time on," he says, of that sliding doors moment. He might have been a few short weeks shy of climbing the corporate ladder, but deep down he knew that what he really needed was for his best friend from eighth grade to invite him back to band practice. Four Year Strong went on to release 2014 EP *Go Down In History*, and the quartet haven't stopped since.

"We've had that typical band story of putting out an album that no-one liked, and then it all goes downhill," says Alan today, laughing off their crisis of faith. "Honestly, I'm glad that happened to us, because if we had stayed where we were right before all of that happened, I don't know if we'd be as strong as we are now."

He takes a deep breath and sighs. "We learned a lot from how bad things can be."

"We did a lot of growing up that we [previously] didn't have time to do," says Dan, of the break from the band. "We all did our own things.



Alan was fuming about missing that "bring a cap to the photoshoot" memo

## "WE LEARNED A LOT FROM HOW BAD THINGS CAN BE"

ALAN DAY

When I first started touring, I was living with my parents. So you want to be out on tour all the time, because that's where you have fun, and where you get to hang out with your friends. Now I have my wife, and I have my family. There's a greater pull to be home. It's about finding that life balance between everything."

Fast-forward to 2020. The quartet have just released their seventh album, *Brain Pain*, through Pure Noise Records. They've re-centred their vision as a band and forged ahead. But it's come, once again, as a result of tremendous soul-searching and self-examination. As Dan sings in the chorus of the title-track, 'I wish that I could focus my hopeless wandering mind / I'm losing perspective, tearing out all my insides / Looking in from the outside'. For him, it's about reconciling the two stark, opposing realities of being the arrow-straight family man and the nomadic, globe-hopping pop-punk musician.

"As a 35-year-old," he reflects, "becoming a full adult and having all of these responsibilities, am I actually the guy onstage who's going crazy and screaming? Or is that..."

He pauses, searching for the right words. "It's not an act, but how much of my actual personality is that? Am I just acting the way that I think an at-home family guy should, and I'm actually the guy onstage? Or vice versa? Who am I, in that spectrum of personality and character?"

Despite all this introspection, Dan admits that he doesn't have it all figured out yet. In fact, 20 years in, he still finds optimism hard to come by. "My gut feeling towards the

band is: prepare for the worst, hope for the best," he admits. "That's why I have all this questioning of my abilities running through my head. I think we all go through that when you're creating something from nothing."

Indeed, the creation of *Brain Pain* was, in a way, like starting from scratch. After the band's self-released, self-titled record of 2015 – one both Dan and Alan cite as a "return to form" – there was a 10th anniversary reissue of their first full-length, fan-favorite *Rise Or Die Trying*, followed by 2017's *Some Of You Will Like This, Some Of You Won't*, re-imagining songs from

each era of their career to date. So when they began work on *Brain Pain*, it had been at least five years since they had sat down to write new music together. And Dan says he has learned new lessons about what that process demands.

"There are people who are so confident that everything they're doing is perfect," he explains, "and there are people who question themselves consistently throughout the journey. I'm clearly one of the latter!"

For both Dan and Alan, it's less about trying to repeat the tricks of the past, and more about reconciling all aspects of who they've been and who they are right now – evoking the spirit of those same teenagers with the keys to a van and a handful of dreams, while embracing life as the grown-up family men in their mid-thirties, writing music that has now sustained them over two decades and counting.

"When people hear these new songs, we want them to feel the way they felt when they first heard *Rise Or Die Trying*," says Alan, of *Brain Pain*. "Not that they sound anything like those songs. We're different people entirely than we were back then. But there are pieces in there that are still the same."

And despite what detractors might sneer about perceived limitations of the pop-punk genre, Dan insists that the band's drive and passion for this music remains as strong and true as ever.

"Just because we're writing songs that are in this genre doesn't mean we can't have them be heartfelt and actually mean something to us. This is as artfully pure as a pop-punk record can be," he argues. "It actually represents who we are as people now, versus who we were as people when we started the band."

Identity crisis authoritatively dealt with, Dan goes back to the matter at hand and administers eye drops again. He can come back to *Brain Pain* another day. Today, it's all about eye pain. **K!**

**FOUR YEAR STRONG'S NEW ALBUM *BRAIN PAIN* IS AVAILABLE NOW THROUGH PURE NOISE RECORDS. THE BAND PLAY *SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL* IN MAY – SEE THE GIG GUIDE**

## TWENTY YEAR STRONG

**DAN and ALAN look back at their nascent first forays as a band...**

"There wasn't anyone at our shows," says Alan, reflecting on Four Year Strong's first cross-country tour of the U.S. almost two decades ago. "Most shows ended up being cancelled before they even happened. One venue in Florida was literally boarded up! So we ended up going to Disney World for the day instead."

Before they managed to hit the road, the band had fit their earliest steps in between doing homework and high school studies.

"We would walk to my parents' house and practice every day," says Dan. "We'd play every show that we could – which was usually just a gazebo in some small town outside of Worcester – just like everybody else did, but

it was awesome. It was exciting having that feeling in your gut when you find people you want to make music with, and writing music you want to play."

"Honestly, that was one of the most fun tours we've ever done," Alan smiles. "We were able to bond and laugh off those experiences, even if the shows were crap or didn't happen. We all enjoyed just being a real band."





**KERRANG!**

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# REVIEWS

KKKKK = CLASSIC KKKK = EXCELLENT KKK = GOOD KK = AVERAGE K = POOR



Does anyone know where we  
can get some really pissed off  
people? Anyone at all...?



# THIS IS NOT A DRILL...

Pittsburgh terrors **CODE ORANGE** create the new heavy on intense, game-changing third album

Jami Morgan likes to talk big. Describing Code Orange's third album to *K!* at the start of the year, he called it "our most psychotic shit". Proudly, he also predicted that at the band's forthcoming Coachella appearance, they would be "the best band in the world, just like every day". Most presciently, he made a promise that claws its truth into you throughout *Underneath's* intense three-quarters-of-an-hour: "You can't point to it and say, 'That's not hard.' It's some of the hardest shit that there is. Not just from us. *Period.*"

This statement may as well be a contract signed in the vocalist's own blood. Some of *Underneath* is nakedly aggressive, a running bodyslam into the frontiers of hardcore, metal, or whatever else you'd care to name these eruptions of aggro. Other moments are a grinding, stressful sonic migraine, in which meticulously manipulated digital embellishments scrape down the spine to cause genuine discomfort and, at times, a degree of intentional irritation. Conversely, some of it is intensely catchy, creepily sidling up to you and getting under your skin. But Jami is also absolutely correct about the effect of whatever sounds his band wrestle with at any given point: providing the next 10 months don't gift the world a nuclear conflict, *Underneath* is without doubt the hardest thing you will hear for a very long time.

Take *Swallowing The Rabbit Whole*, which opens the album properly after the intro of (deeper than before) establishes a powerful sense of dread. The beefy one-two riffs initially seem familiar territory, but almost immediately they're cut up by digital glitches and slashes, with the harsh buzzing of electronics rudely interrupting and jolting your brain like an unexpected slap to the face, bringing to life the underlying theme of what technology is doing to us. It continues through the similarly abrasive *In Fear* and brutally squalling *You And You Alone*. And



it's on the latter where the album starts its journey to a place where crawling, slimy atmospheres prove as caustic as the full-on metallic assaults. In these moments, echoes of Björk, Midsommar soundtrack genius The Haxan Cloak and Nine Inch Nails (whose electronics whiz Chris Vrenna helped CO's digital manipulator Shade realise their vision) can all be heard. But, just like these artists, Code Orange have created what they have here by searching for something that is resolutely their own.

This is what makes *Underneath* so thrilling and hard-hitting: you don't know where the blows are coming from next, because it ducks and dives like nothing you've come across before. Just when it's almost too much, they deliver *Sulfur Surrounding* and *The Easy Way*, two songs that use giant choruses to balance the intensity of *Autumn And Carbine* or the hateful *Back Inside The Glass*. Throughout, a singular focus on that hardness of which Jami spoke, on pulling themselves up by their bootstraps – in terms of creativity, darkness, musical skill and blunt force – gives the album the power and terrifying know-how of an SAS squaddie. And while one can make comparisons – to Nine Inch Nails, to the untethered nihilism of Slipknot's debut, to the artful extremity of *The Dillinger Escape Plan* – *Underneath* is its own species of wild animal.

But never does the mission statement slip, and the fact that all this fury comes from within makes it all the more overpowering. It makes *Underneath* one of the most powerful, cathartic, creatively satisfying and bruisingly heavy records of its age. The discipline, exploration and unforgiving self-critique that Code Orange have invested in it have come out the other side as something as hard and robust as granite, and as sharp as Death's own scythe. And that's why, in years to come, this is an album that will still stand as a monument to just how scaldingly intense music can be. **NICK RUSSELL**



**JAMI MORGAN**  
(VOCALS/PERCUSSION)

Underneath sounds one of a kind – how did you bring this blend of sounds together?

"We realised that we wanted to make a record that was 'electronic' on a different level. We wanted to use synths and samples to really paint the environment, rather than just being there like a fifth instrument. A lot of rock music is written, then the way you hear it through the headphones is done in the mixing process or in post-production. We wanted this to come together more like a hip-hop record, where it came together as we went along. It was really about being in the same house and building things up layer by layer, making it deeper, and figuring out where things fit as we were putting them together."

**"THIS HAD TO BE PRESENTED IN A CERTAIN WAY..."**

JAMI MORGAN

How does the *Underneath* concept relate to your evolution as a band and your everyday experience?

"We jumped right into this, every day, on a level that's hard to communicate. If you even talked to the producers we worked with, I think you'd find that they were flabbergasted by the lengths we were willing to go to for this new sound. This record feels like a mixture of that journey, while also coming to the realisation of having this thing in my pocket, my phone, and the way that I – and everyone else – am always looking at it. Thinking about how that affects my mind and how I think about myself, how I come to dislike myself... We probably won't really understand the effects [of this technology] for another 30 years."

Are you satisfied with this realisation of your grand vision?

"Yes. We've had a long time to decide how to play our hands. It had to be presented in a certain way. I think a lot of it's gone great. Not everyone in the world is getting to see this, but I hope that the people who do will realise the lengths we're willing to go to present something truly creative."





REVIEWS

# STAY HUNGRY

**Legendary rap-metallers**  
**BODY COUNT** return,  
just as aggro as ever

**Y**ou really can't keep a badman down. When notorious rapper Ice-T first got together with guitarist and high school buddy Ernie C to coin their experimental fusion of hip-hop, hardcore and thrash, few could have reasonably expected them to still be raising the bar three decades down the line. However, *Carnivore* continues an incredible late-career renaissance that began with 2014's *Manslaughter*, delivering another focused, uncompromising and downright vicious slab of street wisdom.

On the face of things, this album has much in common with its two most recent predecessors. Steeped in 30 years of metal evolution, the

album veers between gore-drenched psycho attitude (*No Remorse*), breathless bangers (*Bum-Rush*), indulgently nostalgic callbacks (a no-frills cover of Motörhead's *Ace Of Spades* alongside a rework of Ice's own 1988 hit *Colors*) and rueful political commentaries (*The Hate Is Real*). It's on the last of these that Ice most clearly shows his years, the voice that once yapped '*Die, die, die pig, die!*' sounding worn down, asking, '*How many more innocent people and kids gotta' get killed by these police, man? / Then it's always the victim's fault / It's some fuckin' bullshit.*'

Not that he's gone even the slightest bit soft. For the most part, Ice plays with middle-age, cranking up the grumpy-old-man persona he established on 2014's *Institutionalized* with tongue-in-cheek glee and riding it through the exploitation movie excess of *Thee Critical Beatdown*. He's roped in some inspired cameos from his friends, too. Power Trip frontman Riley Gale crops up to

push the furious *Point The Finger* completely over the edge, while Hatebreed legend Jamey Jasta ramps up the aggro among the sinister, Slayer-like riffs of *Another Level*. Meanwhile, Evanescence singer Amy Lee offers a completely-out-of-left-field contribution to the Nipsey Hussle-dedicated lament *When I'm Gone*, a staggeringly heartfelt highlight that's less *Bring Me To Life* and more '*Don't wait for death.*'

His most crucial collaborators, though, remain Ernie and his ever-tighter band of badasses. Honed by their furious live shows and several summers on the metal festival circuit, they've enlivened their defiantly throwback sound by layering up their serrated edge and malevolent textures, providing the gunpowder for their frontman's lyrical bullets. Pivotal, of course, it's the Los Angeles crew's continued ability to walk the line between puff-chested machismo, social awareness and bouts of self-referential silliness that allow rap-metal's original butcher to keep hacking that crimson path into the future. *Body Count's* still cookin', so get your teeth sunk in. **SAM LAW**

**BODY COUNT**

**CARNIVORE**

(CENTURY MEDIA)



**KKK**





**DYSTOPIAN FUTURE MOVIES**  
**INVIOULATE**  
(LADAINFRONTA)  
**KKKKK**

**FOR FANS OF:** Chelsea Wolfe, We Never Learned To Live, OHHMS

■ While no strangers to the occasional crushing riff, Dystopian Future Movies make music that is more about the stealthy establishment of atmosphere than heaviness for its own sake. As such, the Nottingham quartet feel more in step with the questing dynamics of prog than the Neurosis-aping end of the post-metal scene. The songs on this second album aren't just build-ups in search of a crescendo; for DFM, the journey is the point. Guitarist Caroline Cawley's understated, graceful vocals lend proceedings a distinctive quality, equally strong on the relatively straightforward goth-doom of single Black-Cloaked and the delicate Kathleen, based on the story of a young inmate of the now-derelict tuberculosis hospital pictured on Inviolate's sleeve. It's a record that grows ever more compelling with each listen and, in contrast to the connotations of their monicker, DFM's future looks bright. **OLLY THOMAS**



**THE OUTLINES**  
**HOUSE OF THIEVES**  
(SELF-RELEASE)  
**KKKKK**

**FOR FANS OF:** Green Day, The Clash, Anti-Flag

■ Just as Green Day point their skis decidedly off-piste on Father Of All..., another band arrive with an injection of raucous, high-energy punk rock to fill the gap. There's a definite shot of Billie Joe's bounce to Nottingham trio The Outlines, but there's also much more to their sound, even on this short, sharp shock of an EP. Their influences go further back, for a start, incorporating the ragged swagger of The Clash and the jerky riffs of The Adverts, with even a touch of Dead Kennedys menace to the bass-led intros. It's not all backwards-looking, mind. There's a thoroughly modern sheen to the buzzsaw guitars and holler-along hooks, along with a certain sense of adventure. The ingredients might all be familiar, but the song structures never quite go where you'd expect. The Outlines have been plugging away for a few years now, but hopefully House Of Thieves will steal them a lot more attention. **PAUL TRAVERS**



**PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES**  
**FUCTIFANO**  
(ARISING EMPIRE)  
**KKKKK**

**FOR FANS OF:** Descendents, Bad Religion, Against Me!

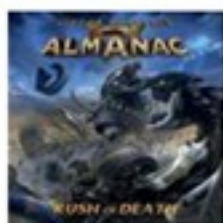
■ Age may be just a number, but even so, Oi! punks Peter And The Test Tube Babies have no right to sound this fresh, energised and exuberant on their latest album. Original members Peter Bywaters and Derek 'Strangefish' Greening – who founded the band in 1978, aged just 17 – lead the charge through this vociferous set of new songs that capture the band's original snotty spirit. After all, anyone who can write an invective about someone spending all their time on social media (Facebook Loser) and make it sound like a thrilling protest song is doing something right. Elsewhere, the band's trademark tongue-in-cheek humour ripples through the laid-back Wanker and the quasi-surf-rock of Gravy Train, while I Ain't Missing Her Yet is a booze-addled knees-up that makes break-ups sound almost fun. And while there are signs of the band's age in the chugging, boisterous Saturday Dad, it's only because of its knowingly old man lyrics. All bands should age as disgracefully as this. **MISCHA PEARLMAN**



**SILVERSTEIN**  
**A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO DROWN**  
(UNFD)  
**KKKKK**

**FOR FANS OF:** Beartooth, Senses Fail, A Day To Remember

■ Perhaps Silverstein's stubbornness should be lauded. Most of the Ontario five-piece's noughties screamo peers went the way of your MySpace account – or in cases like The Used, prospered through sharp reinvention – but Silverstein have never strayed far from their post-hardcore roots, and started this year with a globe-crossing tour celebrating 20 years as a band. And while the foundations of ninth album A Beautiful Place To Drown might seem formulaic with a capital F, there's an undeniable brightness and bravado that carries these songs beyond any that they have previously written. High points include the surging Madness, which features a hard-hitting guest spot from rapper Princess Nokia (Beartooth's Caleb Shomo and Simple Plan's Pierre Bouvier also guest on the album), and All On Me, pitching vocalist Shane Told's piercing vocals against languid electronics and a saxophone. Sticking to what they know, Silverstein are truly owning it. **TOM SHEPHERD**



**ALMANAC**  
**RUSH OF DEATH**  
(NUCLEAR BLAST)  
**KKKKK**

**FOR FANS OF:** Sabaton, Blind Guardian, Iron Maiden

■ How epic do you like your power metal? Fit for the coliseum? Then step this way – aficionados of chest-beating symphonic bombast will find Rush Of Death an absolute feast of musical cheese. Across a decade and a half playing with German heavyweights Rage, mainman Victor Smolski has mastered the marriage of metallic crunch to classical luxury, and this third LP from solo project Almanac delivers both evolution and regression. However, while the album's midsection boasts no small amount of irresistibly OTT bombast, other ideas feel awkwardly tacked-on. Following a vaguely gladiatorial concept (inspired by Victor's other career as, um, a champion rallycross driver), the likes of Predator and Blink Of An Eye ambitiously weld a base-level crunch to the stiff-upper-lipped sweep of latter day Maiden, but feel disappointingly low-octane in execution. It's enough to get the blood up, overall, but hardly one for the books. **SAM LAW**



**GIANTS IN THE TREES**  
**VOLUME II**  
(GIANTS IN THE TREES)  
**KKKKK**

**FOR FANS OF:** Nirvana, Sleater-Kinney, Emma Ruth Rundle

■ Ex-Nirvana bass player Krist Novoselic has always loved dark-hearted pop music. And it shows on this simply-titled second album by his current band, Giants In The Trees. But far from being a solo offering, Volume II is a genuine collaborative effort, the Oregon quartet of Krist vocalist Jillian Raye, guitarist Ray Prestegard and drummer Erik Friend fine-tuning their sound to deliver 10 tracks packed with effervescent pop-rock melodies. If their 2017 debut established their so-called "forest grunge" aesthetic, then Volume II is a heavier, groovier and more cohesive affair. Jillian's joyous, beguiling vocals shine once again on stand-out tunes Weight Of The World, This Is Love and My Name, while her bandmates deliver carefully crafted, intricate backing. GITT's resolutely localised/DIY approach also means that physical copies of Volume II – vinyl and handmade signed CDs – are only available via the band's site. Right on! **PHIL ALEXANDER**



**FRAMING HANLEY**  
**ENVY**  
(THERMAL)  
**KKKKK**

**FOR FANS OF:** Memphis May Fire, The Word Alive, New Years Day

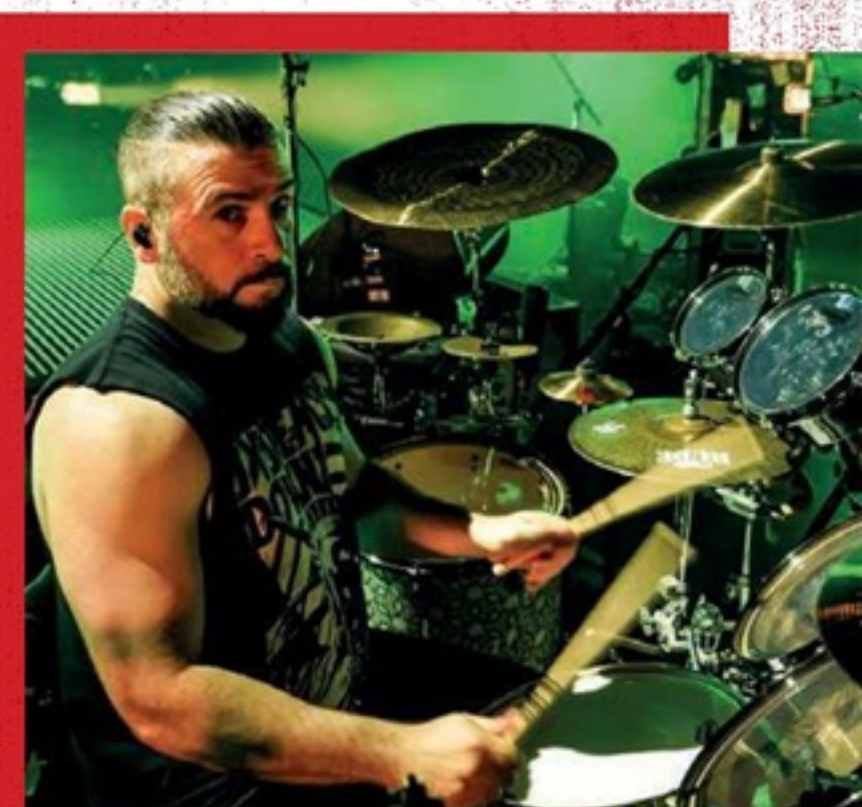
■ Best known for their internet-breaking cover of Lil Wayne's Lollipop way back in 2007, Nashville emo quintet Framing Hanley have returned from a five-year hiatus with their fourth album, Envy. After such a long time away, some of the rust still needs to be shined off the studded belt – this is an album that sounds like it could have been found on any emo's record shelves in the late 2000s. At best, it evokes a vintage charm, and at worst, it is trapped in time. There are some clumsy missteps, for sure, like the way Joke's On Us leans so heavily on the guitar noodling for a mid-tempo song that already features strings. Meanwhile, the thudding Maevae drags and repeats itself a few too many times. Carousel, however, pairs a memorable, soaring chorus with a good amount of riffage, and Bubbles is a solid rock song, albeit one you could hear on any mid-afternoon festival stage. It all makes Envy an album for an era, but maybe not the present. **MACKENZIE HALL**



**JOHN DOLMAYAN**  
**THESE GREY MEN**  
(WAKE)  
**KKKKK**

**FOR FANS OF:** Faith No More, Mastodon, Tool

■ For those who have finally grasped the nettle of reality and accepted that System Of A Down releasing a new album is about as likely as a dead dog catching a ball, there is a small amount of consolation to be taken from this solo venture by drummer John Dolmayan. A covers album reimagining tunes by artists as varied as Radiohead, AFI, Madonna and Talking Heads, among others, it's a diverting and intriguing collection, with the sticksman frequently doing surprising things with the source material. Take his version of Radiohead's Street Spirit (Fade Out), featuring Rage Against The Machine guitarist Tom Morello and Avenged Sevenfold frontman M. Shadows – a curious idea that, somehow, retains the mood of the original without sounding cringe. Elsewhere, his SOAD buddy Serj Tankian adds his unique flair to David Bowie's Starman and Talking Heads' Road To Nowhere, while the take on Madonna's Hung Up, with Armenian singer Sirusho, is a jacked-up, drum-led beast that's



barely recognisable from the disco-thumping original. It may essentially be a load of musicians having a laugh, rather than a proper album, but These Grey Men remains an inspired and creative enough project to be worth a gander nevertheless. **NICK RUSSELL**



# ALL GUNNS BLAZING

**PVRIS** return stronger than ever  
at up-close London comeback

**L**ynn Gunn is about to do something silly. But before she does, she makes the crowd in front of her promise that they've put their phones in their back pockets – she doesn't want anyone taking pictures. "I don't know if I trust you," she teases. After peering out past the front row for any sneaky snappers, she then pops on a purple unicorn headband, before starting the gentle guitar intro to You And I. It's a surreal scene, given the ghostly, forlorn mood of the song. Before it's over, PVRIS' singer has stuck the horn on top of both bassist Brian MacDonald and guitarist Alex Babinski's heads, without breaking stride.

This moment perfectly captures the playful mood that PVRIS are in tonight. It's a feeling that's all the more precious, given the tumultuous few years that the Massachusetts trio have had – particularly when it comes to playing live. Last year, Lynn revealed the vocal issues that had left her feeling like she was failing every night that she performed, and how she'd effectively had to re-learn how to sing to get past them. But after an extended period out – tonight is the band's first headline show in London for two years – the singer seems bolder and sounds more assured than ever before.

Before the headliners make their long-awaited return, New York indie-rockers Joywave open proceedings. With all five members dressed in solid white, they look like an off-duty space crew, an illusion only enhanced by the shimmering electronics that back their angular music. Frontman Daniel Armbruster's saintly voice cuts across songs that mix a nerdy energy with danceable

**PVRIS**  
+ JOYWAVE

ELECTRIC BRIXTON,  
LONDON

20/02/2020

**KKKKK**

grooves, their set culminating with the wonderfully weird Tongues.

"It's been a while," says Lynn Gunn with a smirk about halfway through PVRIS' time onstage. When the band were last in town at the end of 2017, they performed just down the road at the Brixton Academy, to three times the number of people here tonight. But the band's decision to keep this comeback a little more intimate ushers in some

special moments. The singer clearly relishes the closeness she's sharing with her audience during this intimate setting, gazing across a sea of illuminated mobile phones during the darkly entrancing Holy, and telling the room that they sound beautiful as she performs a piano introduction to Heaven that's as delicate as a spider's web.

But then there are also moments of raw power. The inner anguish of opener What's Wrong gets torched as Lynn finds the high notes with ease, while the whirlwind tension building within Half finds a release as she picks up a set of drum sticks and lets loose on the kit. Meanwhile, it's the tracks taken off last summer's Hallucinations EP that get the congregation moving the most. From the sultry, hypnotic beats of Old Wounds (getting its first airing on this tour) to the slithery pop rhythms of Death Of Me, the room is all too willing to fall under their spell. Indeed, by the time the fiery My House rounds off the night, we're all left with the unshakeable sense that PVRIS are not only back to their best, but they're clearly enjoying themselves more than ever. **TOM SHEPHERD**



The gig at the red traffic light was an inspired idea

**Q&A**

**LYNN GUNN**

(VOCALS/GUITAR)



**How does it feel to be back?**

"It feels great! I have a functioning voice now, which is good. I was not doing too well the last time we were here. I was a little scared coming into these shows, but we did basically the U.S. version of this tour before Christmas, with more intimate settings, and it started to get better. Nerves can affect your voice and body so much, so I try to remain as cool as possible and not think about it."

**Why did you elect to play smaller venues on this tour?**

"Most people will take a year and a half off to make an album. But we did so much reconfiguring with a lot of [other] things as well, we just wanted to get back to square one and be in a really intimate setting with our most dedicated fans. We wanted to be under a roof, in really close quarters – or as close as we can get them. We wanted it to be a little 'thank you' to them for sticking with us."

**And how has it been different playing in these places?**

"It depends. There's a different energy for every type of show, but especially at our headline shows there's a lot of camaraderie and connection. It's very present – and even more present in a smaller setting. Everybody is just awesome and respectful to each other, and to us. I can go on the floor and just be totally okay. It's been fun with everyone so close."

**FACE IN THE CROWD**



Is this you having a lovely time watching PVRIS' London show? Well, you've won yourself a setlist from the gig! Send a picture of your face and your ticket to [Feedback@kerrang.com](mailto:Feedback@kerrang.com) to claim.



**LIVES**

# A MANN APART

**TILL LINDEMANN**  
shows London the true  
meaning of "shock"

■ "London, you're amazing – thank you very much." These are the only words Till Lindemann's baritone voice utters tonight, standing at the back of the stage alongside his Lindemann collaborator Peter Tägtgren at the end of their 17-song set. Dressed in white suits and bowing, it's a civilised end to

**LINDEMANN**

02 FORUM KENTISH  
TOWN, LONDON

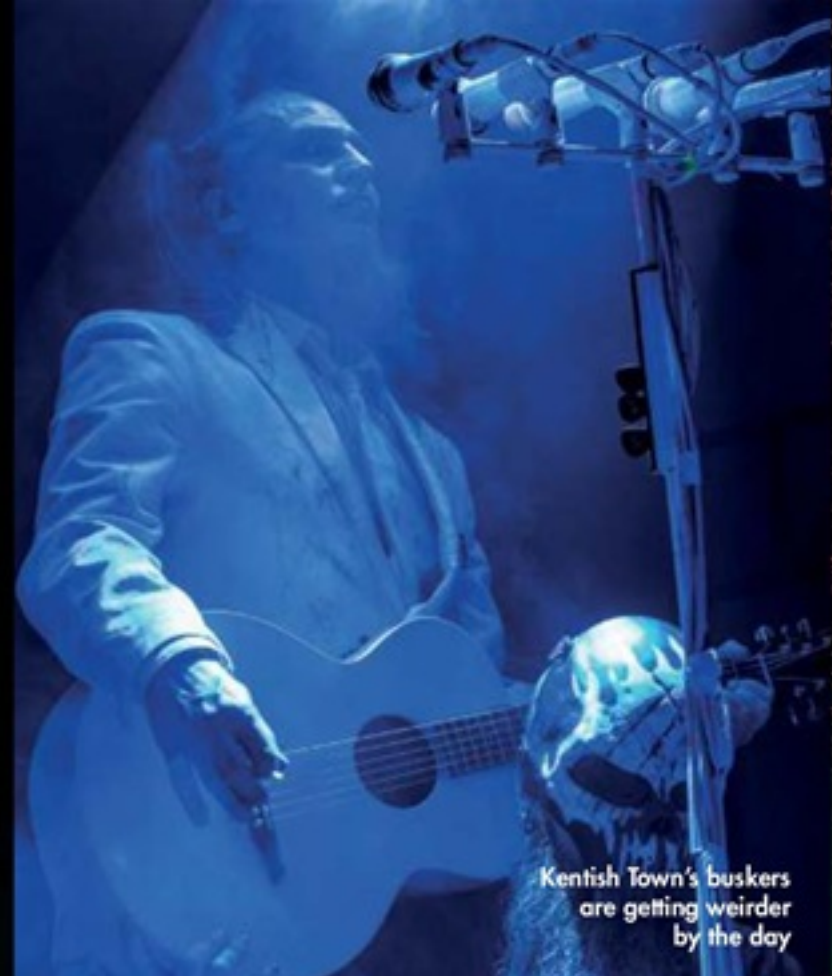
23/02/2020

**KKKKK**

plus restriction that still doesn't prepare you for what's to come.

It seems bizarre to describe Rammstein as Till's less extreme band, given their propensity for pornographic music videos and violent use of pyro, but it's hard not to see them as such after a show that boasts bottoms full of pills (Skills In Pills) and a cigarette being stubbed out on a penis (Ladyboy). And that's just the start, with the less said about the visuals for Golden Shower, the wetter – sorry *better*. If Rammstein provides a vehicle for Till to send up the darker corners of the world and his native Germany's own past – albeit with smatterings of sadomasochism and banter thrown in – then

a monstrously uncivilised display not for the faint of heart or the weak of stomach. In an age in which shock is commodified rather than controversial, this is the most X-rated live show to visit these shores in years – a smorgasbord of smut boasting an 18-



Kentish Town's buskers  
are getting weirder  
by the day

Lindemann presents the hulking frontman's id run amok. When the music and imagery successfully collide, which is often, it provides the filthiest of feasts for the senses. It's certainly hard to imagine a spectacle as striking as Till catapulting dead fish into the crowd this or any other year. The man is a one-off. Thank God for that. **JAMES NICKIE**

Till Lindemann, in a rare  
moment of not doing  
something unfit for print



## SYLOSIS

+ DYSCARNATE

ISLINGTON ASSEMBLY HALL, LONDON

13/02/2020

KKKKK

### Reading metallers return, harder than ever

■ "It's been a long fucking time," declares Sylosis leader Josh Middleton solemnly. At least he had a good excuse – after putting this band on hiatus, he's spent the last four years touring with Architects, first as a hired gun then as a fully-fledged member. And while he's grown accustomed to headlining rooms 10 times the size of this one, tonight it's painfully obvious just how much the group Josh has dedicated most of his life to have been missed. After some mind-boggling tech-death from Dyscarnate, Sylosis are greeted feverishly like old masters, the sing-alongs to old favourites and comeback singles *I Sever* and *Calcified* filling this old hall with an electricity that surprises even the four musicians on stage. For one of those members, Conor Marshall – best known for handling the low-end in *Conjurer* – tonight also marks his live debut. "Honestly, I was fucking nervous about this, so thank you for waiting," admits Josh, but only once he's certain he has the entire crowd eating out of his hand. That patience he speaks of is rewarded by the metallic thunder of a band reborn – slicker, tighter and angrier than ever. As comebacks go, this is dynamite. **AMIT SHARMA**

## NAPALM DEATH

+ EYEHATEGOD

OLD FIRE STATION, BOURNEMOUTH

18/02/2020

KKKKK

### Fast meets slow as ultra-heaviness hits the South Coast

■ In the absence of Motörhead, Napalm Death have filled the vacant slot as the band that can be held up as a benchmark of enduring extremity, who dependably run like – admittedly very fast – clockwork, and guarantee a certain amount of ear damage if taken without proper precaution. And never have such an extreme outfit been quite so likeable. In fact, tonight it seems like heaviness and endearing friendliness are in direct proportion to one another. To wit, New Orleans sludge legends Eyehategod are all banter and jolly piss-taking – until, that is, they tear into their nasty, feedback-laden doom filth. Singer Mike IX Williams looks like Mark Lanegan's scratty little brother, screams like Johnny Rotten going through a clothes mangle, and, charmingly, blows an enormous stream of boogies from his nose during a ferocious *Sister Fucker*. And it's absolutely fantastic. For Napalm Death, there is not a moment that isn't heavy, intense, or greeted with a violent pit. But as great as ancient cuts like *Scum* are, the newer stuff remains just as boundary-pushing, especially their mad cover of Sonic Youth's *White Kross*. Never change, Napalm Death. **NICK RUSSELL**

## NEW YEARS DAY

+ LOWLIVES, CALL ME AMOUR

02 ISLINGTON ACADEMY, LONDON

21/02/20

KKKKK

### U.S. horror metallers celebrate Ash Costello's birthday and more...

■ Some things are worth the wait. Though no strangers to our shores, it is perhaps surprising that this marks New Years Day's first *bona fide* UK headline tour. And the revelation that today is also frontwoman Ash Costello's birthday? Well, that's just the crimson icing on this goth rock cake. "You know what I want tonight," she purrs to a room full of her followers (who respond, correctly, with everything they've got).

Popping off celebrations are electro-rockers Call Me Amour, who relish their duties in getting the crowd moving. Sometimes literally, as singer Harry Radford throws himself into the fray. Lowlives, on the other hand, are by far tonight's scuzziest proposition. Grimy punk banger *Hey You* rattles with devil-may-care abandon as drummer Luke Johnson thrashes his kit like the snare has personally insulted his mother.

This is undeniably New Years Day's bash, though. Ash is an utterly commanding presence, whether coolly gesturing for the crowd to sing *Malevolence*, or whipping her two-tone mane around. Even the curious decision to follow a convincingly vicious cover of Pantera's *Fucking Hostile* with the syrupy

grind of *Shut Up* works to illustrate the band's sassy duality: a little sugar to help the menacing tunes go down. Where the party falls short, though, is in Ash's frequent, lengthy pep talks about community between songs. Although undoubtedly sincere, these fits and starts ultimately scupper their otherwise impressive momentum. Still, the crowd are with her every step of the way. And it's this deeply loyal connection between New Years Day and their people, which tonight shines brighter than the candles on any cake. **JAMES MACKINNON**

PHOTOS: JAKE OWENS



"Right, which pedal is the 'Spooky' one?"

Ash Costello ably pointed out the floor





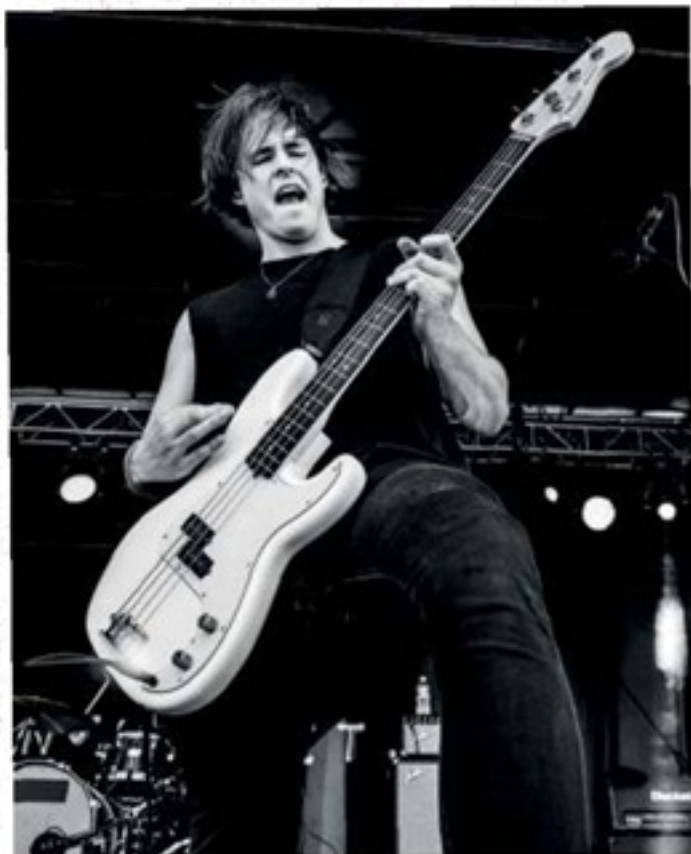
**GET IN THE VAN**

# COUNTERFEIT.

A band's-eye view of the shenanigans the London punks get up to on their adventures...







## WHAT GOES ON TOUR...

**Vocalist and guitarist JAMIE CAMPBELL BOWER** dries off and reveals all...

**Our favourite movie to watch on tour is...** This Is Spinal Tap.

**The golden rule on tour is...** Be chill, always.

**The one essential rider request is...** Avocado.

**Our dressing room music of choice is...** Indie bangers from the early '00s.

**The phrase you're likely to hear on repeat on tour is...** "Love that from you!"

**The atmosphere just before we go onstage is like...** A bunch of unruly children on a school trip.

**The one thing that annoys everyone on tour is...** Stairs.

**We pass our free time before shows by...** Kissing each other.

**The saddest thing about leaving tour to go home is...** Not being able to spend time with like-minded people who love music every day.





# GIG GUIDE

## HARSH TRUTHS

### EMPLOYED TO SERVE

are taking off on a massive headline tour. Prepare to mosh...



### JUSTINE JONES (VOCALS)

**Hey Justine! This is your biggest UK headline tour to date, and the first full run for *Eternal Forward Motion* – feeling ready for it?**

"I'm really excited, especially for the [Camden] Underworld because it's such a bucket list place for us to headline. We've played it once before supporting another band, but I've been going to that venue since I was a kid, so being able to headline it is really, really cool for me. It was one of the first smaller venues that I went to, so I'm so stoked to be able to play there, for sure."

**What shows at the Underworld stand out in your memory?**

"One of my favourites was when I went to see Napalm Death there when I was 16. I think they were touring *Smear Campaign* [2006 album]. We've had such a good time at that venue over the years, and it's where we supported Biohazard, which was really sick."

**Do you see these venues as a good benchmark for how the band are progressing, then?**

"It's such a good benchmark. It's not like we didn't feel like a 'proper' band before, but since playing The Garage last year, and now playing the Underworld, we feel like it's more real, if that makes sense? It feels like more than just your mates and family turning up to shows. Now there's actually people into our

band who are buying tickets, which is really cool."

**Looking back on your latest album, *Eternal Forward Motion*, has that upped your momentum?**

"The ride of this album has been so cool. I feel like it's still ramping up, as well. We had a nice ease into it with a couple of headline shows we did with the release. The thing with new albums is that I'm very aware that people don't listen to them properly straight away, and that's why we kept the release shows very minimal. But it's now given people almost a year to get into it, and it means we can play a load of new songs from it."

**"I STILL GET NERVOUS, BUT IT'S LIKE BEING EXCITED"**

JUSTINE JONES

**So, can we expect the best live version of *Employed to Serve*, then?**

"Yeah, 100 per cent. That month-long run we did with Bury Tomorrow at the end of last year has definitely made us more of a unit. When you do extensive touring together, you just feel more locked in with each other. It feels really good. I still get quite nervous before playing, and I don't think that will ever go away, but I just feel excited more than anything now. We've got a bunch of cool little bits

we're doing in the set, and we're going to be playing a couple of new songs that we haven't done live yet."

**And you're bringing out *Palm Reader* and *Cruelty* – that's a pretty banging bill...**

"Palm Reader and us go way back. It was actually them who mostly inspired us to do ETS. I went to school with the bassist [Josh Redrup] – I have literally known him since I was a kid – so to go out with hometown friends on our biggest headline run is just so exciting for us, because we know everyone is awesome. I only discovered *Cruelty* last year, when they opened at the Renounced [metalcore outfit featuring ETS guitarist Sammy Urwin] album release show. They're like old Converge, and they've got such a sick take on that sound. It's good to have the bill a bit more mixed."

**And after this, you'll be swinging by Download Festival in the summer – looking forward to it?**

"We were second on the first time we played that stage, and now we're on just before [headliner] Funeral For A Friend. It's so much higher up on the stage than we're used to. It's going to be good to play to a lot of drunk people rather than a lot of half-awake people! To be fair, when we first played was amazing. I was so scared that no one was going to be there, because we were on so early, but we had a good-sized crowd and it ended up being amazing. That's what I love about that festival: everyone is just up for it."

## DATES

**SOUTHAMPTON**

Joiners March 6,

**MILTON KEYNES**

Craufurd Arms 7,

**NOTTINGHAM**

Bodega Social Club

8, **BIRMINGHAM**

Mama Roux's 9,

**GLASGOW** Cathouse

10, **MANCHESTER**

Academy III 11,

**LONDON** Camden

Underworld 12,

**NEWCASTLE** Think

Tank 13, **LEEDS**

Brudenell Social Club

14. Support: Palm

Reader, *Cruelty*.



# NOW BOOKING

★ = JUST ANNOUNCED

**2000TREES** Line-up: Jimmy Eat World, Creeper, Dinosaur Pile-Up, Boston Manor, Knocked Loose, The Amazons, The Get Up Kids, Young Guns, The Joy Formidable, Counterfeit, Trash Boat, Silverstein, Room, The St Pierre Snake Invasion, Nervus, Dream State, Hot Milk, Black Futures, The Witches, Kid Kapichi, AJJ, Chapter And Verse, Ten Times A Million, Raiders, We Never Learned To Live, Lady Bird, SHYVES, Gloo, Cassels, The Winter Passing, YUKOVI, Ithaca, False Advertising, Calva Louise, Lucia And The Best Boys, Dream Nails, Halfives, Creature, Middle Distance, Kews, Loran Hibberd, Lizzy Farrell, The Hara, Wargasm, Beach Slang, Demob Happy, The World Is A Beautiful Place & I Am No Longer Afraid To Die, Spanish Love Songs, Hundredth, Airways, Hotel Lux, Together Pangea, The Virginmays, Haggard Cat, Fangclub, 68, Nova Twins, Ditz, Stoke, Static Dress, Erica Frear, Delair the Liar, S.T. Marville, Chloe Moriondo, Bob Vylan, Bent Knee, Gatherers, Giver, Tom Jenkins, Harry Marshall, InTechnicolour, Grief Ritual, Superlove, Sapphire Blues, Lande Hekt, Katie Makro, Holiday Oscar, Non Canon, Zeb, Andrew Cushin, God Damn, Bears On Toast, Press to MECO, Will Varley, Thrill Collins, Morisa And The Moths, Cheltenham Upstate Farm, July 9-11.

**5 SECONDS OF SUMMER** Dublin 3Arena May 11, Belfast SSE Arena 12, London SSE Arena Wembley 14, Leeds First Direct Arena 15, Birmingham Arena 16, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 18, Glasgow SSE Hydro 20, Liverpool M&S Bank Arena 21.

**A DAY TO REMEMBER** Hatfield Park May 23, Leeds Temple Newsam Park 24, Glasgow SSE Hydro 25, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 27, Nottingham Motorpoint Arena 28. Support: grandson.

**AEROSMITH** London The 02 July 15, Manchester Arena 18.

**AFTER THE BURIAL** Bristol Exchange March 13, Glasgow Cathouse 14, Leeds Key Club 15, Manchester Rebellion 16, Birmingham Mama Roux 17, London Camden Underworld 18. Support: Make The Suffer, Polar, Spiritbox.

**ALCEST** London Heaven March 4, Manchester Gorilla 5, Bristol Fleece 6.

**ARCTANTHER** Line-up: Ophel, Tesseract, This Will Destroy You, Amernar, Ihsahn, Perturbator, Rolo Tomassi, Earthtone9, Giraffes? Giraffes!, Frontier, Goo!, Rakekkanon, Quail vs Kenny, Scapling, OHHMS, Svalbard, Alpha Male Tea Party, Stoke, Curse These Metal Hands, Boss Keloid, Body Hound, VASA, Luo, BRIQUEVILLE, FES, Tankengine, The K, Mountain Callers, Swans, Metz, Leprous, Wear Your Wounds, Car Bomb, A.A. Williams, Outbreaker, Maybeswell, The World Is A Beautiful Place & I Am No Longer Afraid To Die, Agent Fresco, Tides From Nebula, Jo Quail, The Samuel Jackson Five, PETBRICK, Herod, Teeth Of The Sea, The Hirsch Effect, Bent Knee, Astrosaur, tortuganónim, Bolt Rain, The Hyena Kill, Mutant-Thoughts, Coldbones, Skamer, Natalie Evans, Odradek, Heisa, The Mantis Opera, Last Hyena, Rainbow Skier, Lack The Low, SEIMS, Elephant Tree, Kokomo, Thumpermonkey, TOTS, Bicarious, God Alone, Land Wars, MIET, Vagors, Straight Girl, Ogives Big Band, qariaq, NEW BANDS ADDED Chelsea Wolfe, Emma Ruth Rundle, Caspian, Bell Witch, Aerial Ruin, Intronaut, Talons, Arabrot, Wheel, The Guru Guru, Latitudes, Mass Of The Fermenting Dreps, Bonnocons Of Doom, Jakub Zytek, Parachute For Gordo, Binge, Stoßzahn, Pollyanna Holland-Wing, The Most, Shake The Baby Till The Love Comes Out, Spook The Horses, Traps, West Meets West, Paranoid Void, Caribomb, Beige Palace and STANLEY. Bristol Farnhill Farm, August 20-22.

**ASH** Leeds Stylus March 17, 02 Academy Newcastle 18, Glasgow SWG3 TV Studio 20, 02 Ritz Manchester 21, Nottingham Rock City 22, 02 Academy Bristol 24, Portsmouth Pyramids 25, London Camden Roundhouse 27.

**ASYLUMS** London Moth Club October 24.

**BAD//DREAMS** Brighton Hope & Ruin March 12, London Oslo 13, Manchester Night People 14, Glasgow Nice N' Sleaze 15, Birmingham Castle & Falcon 16, Bristol Louisiana 17.

**BLACK PEAKS** Glasgow Oran Mar April 20, Manchester Gorilla 21, 02 Institute2 Birmingham 22, London Scala 24, Bristol Exchange 26, Brighton Chalk 30. Support: St Pierre Snake Invasion, Sugar Horse.

**BLACK STONE CHERRY** Southampton 02 Guildhall October 9, Exeter Great Hall 10, Folkestone Leas Cliff Halls 12, 02 Academy Bristol 13, London Royal Albert Hall 14, Manchester 02 Apollo 16, Edinburgh Usher Hall 17, Glasgow Barrowlands 18, 02 Academy Newcastle

20, 02 Academy Leeds 21, 02 Academy Liverpool 22, 02 Academy Birmingham 24, Cardiff St Davids Hall 25, Cambridge Corn Exchange 26, Lincoln Engine Shed 28, Nottingham Rock City 29.

## BLOODSTOCK FESTIVAL

Line-up: Judas Priest, Behemoth, Devin Townsend, Philip H. Anselmo & The Illegals, Paradise Lost, Life Of Agony, Diamond Head, Skindred, Violence, Sacred Reich, Glycerhammer, Jinjer, Butcher Babies, The Black Dahlia Murder, Dark Tranquillity, Conqueror, Saxon, Orange Goblin, Unleash The Archers, Hatebreed, Bury Tomorrow, Sylosis, Toxic Holocaust, Winterfylleth, Exhumed, Necrot, Hatebreed, Nekrogoblion, Taken By Owls, Svalbard, Acid Reign, Idle Hands, Soen, Viscera, Dog Tired, Baizer, Walton-On-Trent Cotton Park August 6-9.

★ **BOOMTOWN** Flogging Molly, Skindred, The Hu, Mod Caddies, Dinosaur Pile-Up, John Garcia & The Band Of Gold, Capdown, Sick Of It All, Strike Anywhere, 3Teeth, Discharge, Municipal Waste, Hocktivist, Car Bomb, Malevolence, Winchester Mattered Estate August 12-16.

**BOSTON MANOR** Southampton Engine Rooms April 30, Bristol SWX May 2, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 3, Glasgow Garage 4, Manchester Academy 2 5, London Electric Brixton 7, Birmingham 02 Institute 28, Leeds Stylus 9.

**BRIAN FALLON** Norwich Waterfront May 15, Manchester Academy 16, 02 Academy Leeds 17, Glasgow Galvanizers 18, Nottingham Rock City 20, 02 Academy Bristol 21, 02 Institute2 Birmingham 22, London 02 Shepherd's Bush Empire 23.

**BURY TOMORROW** London Underworld April 2, Kingston Pym 3, Birmingham HMV The Vault 4, Southampton Joiners 5.

**CAR BOMB** Manchester Rebellion March 26, Glasgow Classic Grand 27, London Camden Dingwalls 28. Support: Conjure.

**THE CHATS** Southampton 1865 October 16, Nottingham Rock City 17, Bristol 02 Academy 18, Dublin Olympia 19, Belfast Lighthouse 20, Glasgow Galvanizers 22, Leeds Stylus 23, Newcastle Boiler Shop 24, Manchester 02 Academy 25, Brighton Dome 26, London Electric Brixton 28 & 29.

**CHELSEA WOLFE** Manchester Stoller Hall March 19, Glasgow Saint Luke's 20, Coventry Cathedral 21, London Alexandra Palace Theatre 22.

**CORROSION OF CONFORMITY** Dublin Academy April 25, Belfast Lighthouse 26, Glasgow Garage 28, Manchester Club Academy 29, Southampton Engine Rooms May 15, 02 Institute2 Birmingham 16.

**COSMIC VOID** Line-up: Mysticum, Carpathian Forest, Belphegor, Archgoat, Forgotten Tomb, Urfaust, Harakiri For The Sky, Endezmza, Sur Austru. London Underworld/Electric Ballroom, October 3-4.

**CREEPER** Leeds Warehouse April 12, Glasgow St Luke's 13, Manchester Academy 2 14, London Electric Brixton 15, Brighton Concorde 2 17, 02 Institute2 Birmingham 18. Support: Holding Absence, Wargasm.

**CROSSFAITH** Norwich Waterfront March 4, Wolverhampton KK's Steel Mill 6, Newcastle Riverside 7.

**THE DAMNED** Leeds Stylus May 17, Aylesbury Friars 18, Glasgow Garage 20, Sheffield Leadmill 21.

**DEATHSTARS** London 02 Academy Islington April 29, Manchester Academy 3 30, Glasgow G2 May 1, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 2.

**DESERTFEST** Line-up: Masters Of Reality, Corrosion Of Conformity, Witchcraft, Orange Goblin, Brant Bjork, Pissed Jeans, Conan, Navatras, Raging Speedhoof, Sacri Monk, Huntsmen, Monarch, Spirit Adrift, Fire Down Below, Grotto, Desert Storm, Morag Tong, The Picturebooks, Green Lung, Black Orchids, Blues Pills, 1000mods, Saurvin, Switchblade, Blacklab, Blind Monarch, Big Business, Bombus, Trippy Wicked, Poseidon, Ten Foot Wizard, Dungeon, Grin, Gevaudan, Orbital Junction, Human Leather, Shuck, The Lunar Effect. London various venues, May 1-3.

**DINOSAUR PILE-UP** London 02 Forum Kentish Town April 3.

**DOOMLINES** Line-up: Vinnam Sabbathi, Avooga, Live Burial, Wallowing, Hidden Mothers, Under, Part Champ, Boss Keloid, Bismuth, Kurokuma, Jupiterian. Sheffield Network August 2.

**DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL** Line-up: KISS, Iron Maiden, System Of A Down, Deftones, Disturbed, Korn, The Offspring, Of Mice & Men, Alestorm, Gojira, Black Veil Brides, Daughtry, Airbourne, BABYMETAL, Barones,



Incubus: 02 Academy Birmingham June 4, Manchester 02 Apollo 5, 02 Academy Glasgow 6, London Royal Albert Hall 8-9.

## JUST ANNOUNCED

Blackout Problems, Bleed From Within, Blues Pills, Bokassa, British Lion, Bush, Chelsea Grin, Dead Label, Dead Posey, Dying Fetus, Electric Wizard, Killswitch Engage, Lit, Lotus Eater, Marianas Trench, Obituary, P.O.D., Periphery, Powerwolf, The Pretty Reckless, PUP, Puppy, Skillet, Stone Broken, Theory, Tiny Moving Parts, Uncured, Volbeat, Wargasm, Wednesday 13, The Wildhearts, Alter Bridge, Amaranthe, Bowling For Soup, Cemetery Sun, The Darkness, The Distillers, Employed To Serve, Fire From The Gods, Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes, Funeral For A Friend, Gender Roles, Glorious Sons, Haken, Hotot, Heavy Lungs, The Hara, Higher Power, Holding Absence, JJ Wilde, Kill The Lights, Lacuna Coil, Loathe, Mastodon, The Menzingers, Milk Teeth, Modern Error, Motionless In White, Northlane, Polyphia, Press Club, The Raven Age, Renounced, Sepultura, SHYVES, The Skints, Sleep Token, Sully, Temp, Three Doors Down, Thy Art Is Murder, Twin Temple, Wage War, Will Haven. Donington Park June 12-14.

**DRIPBACK** Nottingham Stuck On A Name Studio March 27, London Unicorn 28.

**EMPLOYED TO SERVE** Southampton Joiners March 6, Milton Keynes Craufurd Arms 7, Nottingham Bodega Social Club 8, Birmingham Mama Roux's 9, Glasgow Cathouse 10, Manchester Academy III 11, London Camden Underworld 12, Newcastle Think Tank 13, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 14. Support: Palm Reader, Cruelty.

**ENTER SHIKARI** Sheffield Leadmill April 18, Glasgow St Lukes 19, Liverpool Invisible Wind Factory 20, London Subterania 22, Bristol SWX 23.

**EVANESCENCE / WITHIN TEMPTATION** London The 02 April 7, Glasgow SSE Hydro 28, Leeds First Direct Arena 30, Birmingham Arena May 1.

**FAITH NO MORE** 02 Apollo Manchester June 9 & 10, 02 Academy Glasgow 11, 02 Academy Birmingham 15, London 02 Academy Brixton 16-17.

**FEEDER** Bexhill-On-Sea De La Warr Pavilion April 16, 02 Academy Bournemouth 17, Cambridge Corn Exchange 18, 02 Academy Bristol 23, 02 Academy Liverpool 24, 02 Academy Leicester 25.

**FULL OF HELL** Lincoln Jolly Brewer April 8, Newcastle Cluny 2 9, Glasgow Stereo 10, Dublin Grand Social 11, Limerick Siege Of Limerick 12, Manchester Bread Shed 13, Bristol Exchange 14, London Scala 15. Support: Primitive Man, Eye Flies.

**FU MANCHU** Manchester Academy September 24, London 02 Shepherd's Bush Empire 25, Glasgow Garage 26, Dublin Button Factory 28, 02 Institute2 Birmingham 29.

**GENDER ROLES** Glasgow Poetry Club March 26, Newcastle Think Tank 27, Sheffield Network 28, Manchester Yes 31, Bristol Exchange April 1, Birmingham Asylum 2 2, London The Dome 3.

**THE GHOST INSIDE** London 02 Academy Brixton July 4.

**GODFLESH** London Fabric July 15. Support: Cut Hands.

**GOST** London Camden Underworld March 15. Support: Swart Crown.

**GRAYSCALE** 02 Academy 3 Birmingham May 21, London Camden Assembly 22.

**GUNS N' ROSES** London Tottenham Hotspur Stadium May 29 & 30, Glasgow Green June 25, Dublin Marlay Park 27.

**HAGGARD CAT** Bristol Rough Trade March 17, Milton Keynes Craufurd Arms 18, Swansea Bunkhouse 19, Nottingham Bodega 20, Liverpool Sound Basement 21, York Fulford Arms 23, Stoke Underground 24, Birmingham Dead Wax 25, Huddersfield Parish 26, Glasgow Garage Attic 27, Newcastle Surf Cafe 28, Bournemouth Arnil 30, London Grace 31, Guildford Boilerroom April 1, Plymouth Junction 2, Pezrny Fish Factory 3, Exeter Cavern 4.

**HELLA MEGA TOUR** Line-up: Green Day, Fall Out Boy, Weezer. Dates: Glasgow Bellahouston Park June 24, London Stadium 26, Huddersfield John Smith's Stadium 27, Dublin RDS Arena 29.

**HIGH ON FIRE** Brighton Chalk Venue June 22, Bristol Fleece 23, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 24, Leeds Brudenell

Assembly 14.

**INCINERATION FESTIVAL** Line-up: Bloodbath, Vomitory, Dark Funeral, Tsjuder, Mgla, Lucifer's Child, Skeletal Remains, Damnation's Hammer, October Tide, Defeated Sanity, Grave Desecrator, Blasphemer. London various venues May 9.

**IN FLAMES** Edinburgh Liquid Room April 25, 02 Academy2 Liverpool 26, Sheffield Leadmill 27, Bristol Thekla 29, Wolverhampton Steel Mill 30, Stoke Sugarmill May 1, London ULU 2, Brighton Concorde 2 3, Southampton Engine Rooms 5.

**I PREVAIL** Portsmouth Pyramids Centre March 17, Manchester Academy 18, Glasgow SWG3 19, Dublin Academy 21, Nottingham Rock City 23, 02 Institute Birmingham 24, Leeds Beckett University 26, London 02 Forum Kentish Town 27, 02 Academy Bristol 28.

**KNOTFEST** Line-up: Slipknot. Milton Keynes National Bowl, August 22.

**KVELERTAK** Manchester Academy March 20, Bristol SWX 21, London Electric Brixton 22.

**LA DISPUTE** Brighton Chalk April 17, Southampton Boiler Rooms 18, Bristol Fleece 19, Sheffield Leadmill 20, Edinburgh Leadmill 20, Edinburgh Liquid Room 21, Newcastle Riverside 22, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 24, Liverpool Invisible Wind Factory 25.

**LAMB OF GOD** 02 Academy Bristol April 21, Manchester Academy 22, 02 Academy Glasgow 23, 02 Academy Birmingham 24, London 02 Academy Brixton 25. Support: Kreator, Power Trip.

**LUCIFER** London Camden Underworld May 12.

**MACHINE HEAD** London 02 Academy Brixton June 5, 02 Academy Birmingham 6.

**MILK TEETH** Tunbridge Wells Forum April 1, London 02 Academy Islington 2, Cambridge The Portland Arms 3, Brighton Patterns 5, Norwich Waterfront 6, Leeds The Key Club 7, Newcastle Think Tank Underground 8, Glasgow King Tuts 9, Manchester Academy 3 10. Support: Potty Mouth, Kaji.

**MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE** Cornwall The Eden Project June 16, Milton Keynes Stadium MK 18, 20 & 21.

★ **NECK DEEP** Manchester 02 Victoria Warehouse September 12-13, Glasgow Barrowland Ballroom 15-16, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 18, London Alexandra Palace 19.

**NOTHING, NOWHERE.** Manchester Gorilla September 17, Glasgow SWG3 18, Birmingham 02 Academy 19, Bristol The Fleece 21, London Electric Ballroom 22.

**NOVA TWINS** London Colours April 23, Cardiff The Moon 24, Manchester Aatma 25, Birmingham Sunflower Lounge 26, Exeter Cavern 29, Portsmouth Edge Of The Wedge 30, Norwich Waterfront May 1, Edinburgh Slag & Dagger 2, Newcastle Cluny 3.

**OZZY OSBOURNE** Newcastle Utilita Arena October 23, SSE Hydro Glasgow 25, London The 02 28, Birmingham Resorts World Arena 31, Manchester Arena November 2, Dublin 3Arena 5, Nottingham Motorpoint Arena 8. Support: Judas Priest.

**PARKWAY DRIVE** London SSE Arena, Wembley April 18. Support: Hatebreed, Stick To Your Guns, Venom Prison.

**PEARL JAM** British Summer Time, London Hyde Park July 10. Support: Pixies, White Reaper.

**PENGSHUI** Cardiff Cwb Ifor Bach March 4, Plymouth Junction 5, Bournemouth Arnil 6, Southampton Joiners 7, Brighton Hope & Ruin 9, 02 Academy2 Oxford 10, Milton Keynes Craufurd Arms 11, Birmingham Asylum 13, Doncaster Vintage Rockbar 14, Manchester Star & Garter 15, Glasgow Garage Attic 17, Newcastle Think Tank 18, London Boston Music Room 19. Support: Kid Bookie.

**POLARIS** Bristol Fleece 3 May, 02 Academy2 Birmingham 4, Glasgow G2 5, London 02 Academy Islington 6. Support: Alpha Wolf, Currents, Variab.

**QUEEN & ADAM LAMBERT** London The 02 June 2-9, Manchester Arena 11-12, Birmingham Arena 14-15, London The 02 17-21.

Social Club 25, London Garage 26.

## HIGHLY SUSPECT

Bristol SWX March 16, London Electric Ballroom 18, 02 Institute Birmingham 19, Glasgow King Tut's 2, Manchester Academy 22.

## HOLLYWOOD

**VAMPIRES** Leeds First Direct Arena September 2, Glasgow SSE Hydro 3, London The 02 5, Birmingham Arena 6. Support: Primal Scream.

**HOT MILK** Manchester Deaf Institute April 13, London Camden

**RAMMSTEIN** Cardiff Principality Stadium, June 14, Belfast Boucher Road Playing Fields 17, Coventry Ricoh Arena 20.

**READING & LEEDS** Line-up: Rage Against The Machine, All Time Low, As It Is, Cancer Bats, Creeper, Dune Rats, FEYER 333, Gallows, IDLES, The Maine, Sleeping With Sirens, Waterparks. Reading Richfield Avenue and Leeds Bramham Park, August 28-30.

**SISTERS OF MERCY** Manchester Albert Hall March 7, 02 Academy Bristol 8, 02 Academy Leeds 10, Nottingham Rock City 11.

**SKUNK ANANSIE** Norwich Nick Rayns LCR UEA June 17, 02 Academy Sheffield 19, 02 Academy Birmingham 20, Guildford G Live October 26, 02 Academy Leicester 27, Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall 28, Lincoln Engine Shed November 28, Nottingham Rock City 29, 02 Academy Glasgow December 1, 02 Academy Newcastle 2, 02 Academy Leeds 3, Cardiff University Great Hall 5, 02 Academy Bristol 6, Manchester 02 Victoria Warehouse 7, Brighton Dome 9, Cambridge Corn Exchange 10.

**SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL** Line-up: Don Broco, The Wonder Years, Mayday Parade, Four Year Strong, Knuckle Puck, Bayside, Issues, Motion City Soundtrack, Hands Like Houses, Ice Nine Kills, State Champs, Sum 41, Billy Talent, Basement, We Are The In Crowd, The Story So Far, Your Demise, Grayscale, Refused, Comeback Kid, Young Guns, Movements, Free Throw, Deez Nuts, Fit For A King, Riel Big Fish, The Vandals, Face To Face, Mom Jeans, Bedouin Soundkesh, Bury Tomorrow, We Came As Romans, Stray From The Path, Dance Gavin Dance, Polaris, Trash Boat, The Faim, Normandie, Days N' Daze, Zebrahead, Code Orange, While She Sleeps, Me First & The Gimme Gimmes, A, This Wild Life, Doll Skin, Chunk! No, Captain Chunk! (spunge), Popes Of Chilltown, Blood Youth, Counterparts NEW BANDS ADDED: Stand Atlantic, With Confidence, Wargasm, Static Dress, YUKOVI, I Am The Avalanche, Room, Yours Truly, Sleep On It, The Bottom Line, 30H13 and DJ Jacky P. Leeds Temple Newsam Park May 23, Hatfield Park 24.

**SLOTFACE** Southampton Joiners March 14, Bristol Louisiana 15, Cardiff Cwb Ifor Bach 16, Nottingham Bodega 18, Liverpool Arts Club 19, Leeds Headrow House 20, Newcastle Think Tank 21, Glasgow Broadcast 23, Manchester Deaf Institute 24, Birmingham Hare & Hounds 26, London Garage 27, Brighton Patterns 28.

**SOCIAL DISTORTION** Manchester 02 Ritz July 15, London 02 Shepherd's Bush Empire 17.

★ **SUICIDE SILENCE** London Camden Underworld June 21.

**TEDDY ROCKS FESTIVAL** Line-up: The Amazons, The Fratellis, Chariworth Farm, Dorset, May 1-3.

**THERAPY?** 02 Ritz Manchester April 3, London Camden Electric Ballroom 4.

**TURNER** Southampton Loft March 6, Norwich Waterfront 8, Glasgow Garage 9, Manchester Gorilla 10, 02 Institute2 Birmingham 11, London Electric Brixton 13.

**TURNSTILE** Manchester Academy 2 March 9, Bristol The Trinity Centre 10, Glasgow 11, Birmingham The Mill 12, London ULU 13. Support: Gag, One Step Closer, Glitterer.

**TWIN ATLANTIC** Aberdeen Music Hall 4, Dundee Fat Sams 6, Kilmarnock Grand Hall 7, Newcastle Riverside 9, Manchester Academy 2 10, Sheffield Leadmill 11, Cardiff Tramshed 13, 02 Academy Oxford 14, 02 Academy Leicester 15, Bournemouth Old Firestation 17, Brighton Concorde 2 18, London Camden Electric Ballroom 20.

★ **UK DEATHFEST** Line-up: Autopsy, Triumph Of Death, Arskat, Barshasketh, Benediction, Birdflesh, Corpessed, Craft, Creative Waste, Damin, Decrepid, Deepart Birth, Deirus, Desecration, Devangelic, Die Choking, Entrails, The Funeral Orchestra, Gets Worse, Grey Brain, Infest, Intermitt, Kjeld, UK, Liquid Shit, Malthusian, Martyrdom, Massacre, Meat Spreader, Necrosis, Nuclear Assault, Sacramentum, Scordatura, Thanatos, Vachrus, Walfrid, Wormrot. London various venues August 22-23.

**ULVER** London Fabric May 13. Support: Vatican Shadow.

**THE USED** London Lafayette May 26, Brighton Concorde 2 27.

**VADER** London Camden Underworld March 9. Support: Defiled, Chronosphere, Fallia.

**VICTORIOUS FESTIVAL** Line-up: Royal Blood, Feeder, Twin Atlantic, Terrorvision. Portsmouth Southsea Common August 28-30.

**WHITECHAPEL** 02 Academy2 Oxford April 24, Leeds Key Club 25, Manchester Rebellion 26, Colchester Arts Club 28, Stoke Sugarmill 29, Glasgow SWG3 30, Bristol Thekla May 1, Wolverhampton KK's Steel Mill 2, London Scala 3.

**WILLIAM DUVAL** Dublin Whelan's March 25, Glasgow King Tut's 27, 02 Academy2 Newcastle 28, Liverpool Arts Loft 29, 02 Academy3 Birmingham 31, London 100 Club April 1.

**WINTERFYLLETH** London Boston Music Room May 22, Manchester Rebellion 23. Support: Mark.

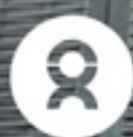
**YOUR DEMISE** London Underworld April 5.



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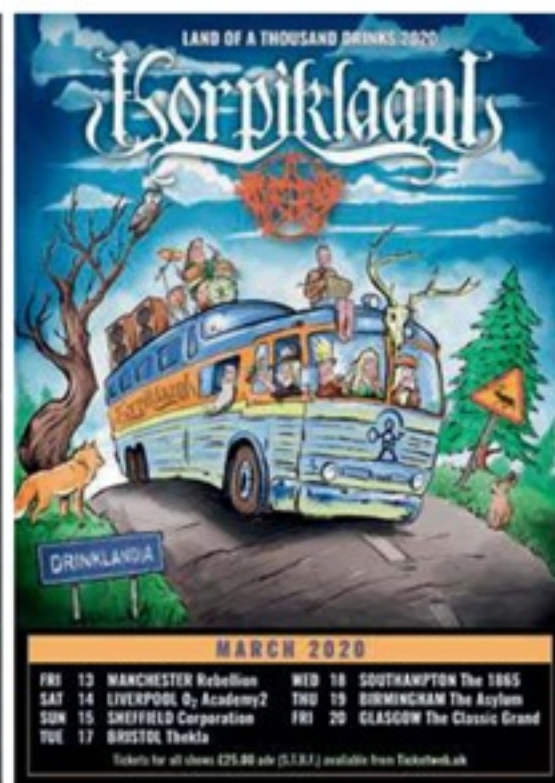
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EMAIL: [FIRST.LASTNAME@KERRANG.COM](mailto:FIRST.LASTNAME@KERRANG.COM)

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Sam Coare

### ART EDITOR

Matt Dykzeul

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### CONTRIBUTORS

Kiran Acharya, Matt Allen, Alex Baker, Steve Beebee, Paul Brannigan, Daniel P. Carter, Angela Davey, Hannah Ewens, George Garner, Stu Garneys, James Hickie, Justine Jones, Sam Law, Alistair Lawrence, John Longbottom, James MacKinnon, Mörat, Mischa Pearlman, Jake Richardson, Amit Sharma, Tom Shepherd, Dan Slessor, Esme Surfleet, Mark Sutherland, Olly Thomas, Ben Tipple, Paul Travers, Jennyfer J. Walker, Ian Winwood, Rod Yates, Simon Young, Ray Zell.

### PHOTOGRAPHERS

Tom Barnes, Thomas Brooker, Lindsey Byrnes, Chris Casey, Jenn Five, Andy Ford, Andy Gallagher, Paul Harries, Gobinder Jhitta, Lisa Johnson, Ryan Johnston, Nick Karp, Andrew Lipovsky, Ashley Maile, Nicole Mago, Tom Martin, Ashley Osborn, Angela Owens, Jake Owens, Perou, Tom Pullen, Nick Sayers, Abbie Shipperley, Neil Visel, Jonathan Weiner, Dave Willis, Nat Wood.

## VIPS

### CEO

Jerry Perkins ([jerry@wastedtalent.com](mailto:jerry@wastedtalent.com))

### GLOBAL CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Phil Alexander ([phil.alexander@kerrang.com](mailto:phil.alexander@kerrang.com))

### M.D.

Nick Stevenson ([nick@wastedtalent.com](mailto:nick@wastedtalent.com))

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, U.S.

Ethan Fixell ([ethan@kerrang.com](mailto:ethan@kerrang.com))

### FINANCIAL DIRECTOR

David Joseph

### DIRECTOR

David Hepworth

### CHAIRMAN

Ian Flooks

DISTRIBUTION Seymour (0207 429 4000)

PRINTING PCP

## ADVERTISING

TELEPHONE: 0207 078 8423

### ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Juliet Cromwell ([juliet@wastedtalent.com](mailto:juliet@wastedtalent.com))

### ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER

Owain Harries ([owain@wastedtalent.com](mailto:owain@wastedtalent.com))

### DIGITAL SALES MANAGER

Katie Scrafton ([katie@wastedtalent.com](mailto:katie@wastedtalent.com))

### ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE

Katie Muszanskij ([katerina@wastedtalent.com](mailto:katerina@wastedtalent.com))

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even name  
one **Satanic  
Warmaster**  
song, scoffs  
neighbour



**Tony Iommi** fends off burglars  
with ominous riff

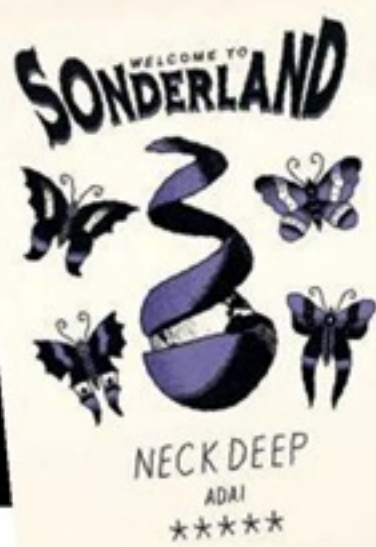


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WORDS: SIMON YOUNG

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