

OUT OF THE FIRE A FULL REVIEW OF FIREVOLT '23



BLU

THE BLUE LENA. LOKKO. IGNER.
REMEDY. THE WHISKY SYNDICATE.
NIGHT THIEVES. RXPTRS. B.O.E.



BRUCE DICKINSON

THE MANDRAKE PROJECT

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CONTENTS

PAGE 5 - OUT OF THE FIRE. FIREVOLT '23

PAGE 18 - BLACK ORCHID EMPIRE. LIVE.

PAGE 21 - DAVE WOODSTOCK 3.0.

PAGE 27 - STEVE BOYCE, KING CRIMSON.

PAGE 29 - MIZZ HYDE'S REVIEW, LOKKO.

PAGE 34 - THE DUST CODA. LIVE.

PAGE 37 - KEITH NICKLESS, IAN HUNTER.

PAGE 39 - DGM, LIFE.

PAGE 42 - PRONG, STATE OF EMERGENCY.

PAGE 46 - THERION, LEVIATHAN III.

PAGE 47 - REMEDY

PAGE 51 - FEAR FACTORY, BUTCHER BABIES,
IGNEA

PAGE 58 - THE WHISKEY SYNDICATE

PAGE 61 - LIVEWIRE, ROCKIN BY THE RIVER

PAGE 65 - NIGHT THIEVES

PAGE 71 - THE BLUE LENA

PAGE 78 - TALES FROM THE DRUNKEN DUCK.



ROCK RADIO UK

Welcome Back!

Holy Cow, thank you to everyone who took the time to look at our new magazine!!!! So, after thinking long and hard for around 3 seconds, we decided to keep on going with this Monthly magazine, as it seems that everyone likes it. The feed-back has been phenomenal and on a personal level, it has been so gratifying to be able to create something that people want to read.

This issue may even seem bigger than the first. Now that people realise that we are serious and dedicated in what we do here at Rock Radio UK, more people want to become involved. Hopefully, this will lead to more content that you will want to digest. I am trying to keep it a little different from other Magazines out there, having a whole host of album reviews in tiny columns does not really work for me. I would sooner have a few good albums to promote and really do them justice. The same is to be said about Gig reviews. A few with great pictures may be better than loads with nothing more than “phone” shots.

We are also trying to promote a wide range of bands, new and established. If you pick up this Magazine because we have highlighted a major band that you like, you might just find a brand-new band that you have never heard of before and they might...just might be your next favourite Band.

The Radio Station is going from strength to strength, we have a new batch of Hosts to bring you on a weekly basis. Adam Webster has joined us with Heart Shaped box, Richard ‘Stan’ Hallam with The Mosh Pit and Greyfox Growl is bringing his Southern Style Boogie to the airwaves to name but a few. I am glad to hear our very own tech guy, Lee, on air on a Friday evening and Chris has been well and truly bitten by the radio bug as his second show, The New Releases Show airs on Thursdays now.

Something that I have forgotten to do in the past, is to actually publish a schedule! Schoolboy error on my part, however in my defence, the schedule was ever changing until I found one that seems to work for everyone.

So, sit back, read a few pages, sip a beverage of choice, and listen to the Radio,
LOUD!
Dave





Carissa Cyderbaby

Out Of The Fire Firevolt '23

This year, for me, has been a busy one. I take on a station, find a dependable crew to help and launch a (this) Magazine, along with this I have been keeping the interview side of Cyderbaby going, writing the odd article and getting up each weekday morning to host a radio show. We won't talk about the mundane stuff such as the bits and pieces on the farm and various car-based projects I've taken on in my spare time.

Last year I believe, I spoke to Stret And Bev, the brains and beauty of the Firevolt team (I'm not sure what Stret brings however ...it must be his Band booking prowess). Anyway, I interviewed them about this year's event in the hope I could somehow sell the odd ticket for them. After the interview I did offer my services to help set up the Festival in August. Not in any official capacity, let me make that clear from the start. I have no financial input or gain from the festival,

I am not a partner or anything like that, I just wanted to help out in some small way and see another side of the festival circuit that we don't often get a chance to experience. Stret jumped at the offer, and I agreed to drive up on the Monday before the event started and help with the build. It was only while I was there that I understood why Stret was pleased to have the offer of help. I should set the scene and give some initial history about the Festival. In February of '22, Street and Bev announced the first ever Rock Festival, Firestorm to be held at Whitebottom Farm, Stockport. It took 6 months from conception to completion of this first round of Face-Melting Rock! The bands all turned up, the day splits were excellent and the people that attended were really impressed, so much so that many, if not most, booked their return tickets for the second year. There were a couple of gremlins but nothing that was any real issue if I'm honest, there had been worse at bigger and more established events.

Fast forward a year and we have a re-branded Firevolt Festival. The name change was down to one individual who came out of the woodwork, laying claim to a so-called name which has all but died its own natural death now. Was it really worth it? Not in the slightest.

This year was set to become much bigger than the debut, word had gotten around that this was a good Festival, a great vibe and a cool place to hang out. The headliners were a step up from the previous year with Kris Barras, The Answer and the inspired booking of the entire event, Royal Republic. Now I've known who Royal Republic were for a long time, I've seen them 4 times prior to this Festival, I knew that this was going to be the band of the weekend for me. With Massive Wagons on the bill as well, there was no way I could stop my Granddaughter, Layla from coming along as well. RR and MW are 2 of her favourite bands ever and for a 6-year-old, this is quite special for her. Her first ever festival and a load of bands to watch. If her number 1 band was there as well, then I think she may well have exploded!!! Ticket sales in general were up on the first year as well with absolutely loads of campervan pitches sold and Glamping pitches selling at a higher rate as well. The pressure was on the team to deliver something special again.

Stret and Bev held their wedding there at Whitebottom Farm a couple of weeks prior to the Festival was due to start so they already knew how beautiful the place is. For those who have never been for other music Festivals, let me try to describe it to you...

Set in the Etherow Country Park, just outside of Stockport, you would never have any idea that you were so close to Manchester. You're in a valley, enclosed by a tower of trees on one side with Parkland on the other. You can walk up to the Farm from the Village which takes you past a peaceful stream. This is fed by a man-made weir at the farm entrance. The noise of this is quite substantial but rather soothing when you camp at night on-site. Once at the entrance, to start to ascend a small incline up to the Farm itself, an open field on the right which would soon be covered by Campervans and tents and a pond on the left which then opens onto another field where the Big Top will stand for the event.

Further down this side is the Glamping area and a recent addition of a new welfare block. Something that wasn't used this year was the next field over for campers.



Carissa Cyderbaby

Caring on up the track, you eventually stumble upon what I call Reggie's Cabin and then the farm itself. It's been a long time since this place was a working farm, this is a venue without a doubt. A double Decker bus as a bar, a few permanent but not permanent food stalls and to the left you have 2 Farm buildings which contain the main stage and a bar. Indeed, the bar is the longest in Europe apparently, set at the back of what was an animal house. There is a raised deck to one side where small bands can play and the main area for sitting/standing drinking purposes, all undercover. This area plus a small outside connecting area between the bar and stage is covered in Astroturf which makes it all very agricultural. A step or two away are the welfare units and shower block for the campers. Following this track on will bring you to the other end of the Campervan site so in actual fact, everything is very close and there is not too much walking (stumbling) involved. If you are disabled, then the place has reasonable access but it's far from perfect.... it's a farm! Just keep this in mind when or if you buy a ticket.

So, this strange chap from Devon travels north to Stockport not really knowing what he is doing or what is expected. I left 10ish and arrived in my heap at around 5. I had a complete car full of gear as not only did I have my camping stuff, but I also had to bring my Daughters gear up as well. Trudi, Carissa and

Layla would be arriving on Friday morning...just when all the work was done!

I arrived and to be honest, I did wonder at that point if we would have a festival ready in time as it was just a bare shell. No Big Top, bits and pieces everywhere in the sheds, They were essentially already set up, but it just needed a tidy. No Glamping tents were up and there was no sign of any stage gear or fencing etc like we had the year before.

Before long, Stret and Bev turned up in a van and we said hello...can you carry these boxes in please? They were looking suitably hassled as any Festival organisers would at this point but...they seemed more than happy as well! It was the start of the fun!

Everything was turning up at 7 tomorrow morning, so it was time to set up camp and be ready early.

After a superb quiet night's sleep in my tent and a hastily cooked breakfast (I can sort of cook), It was time to get busy. The JCB turned up which was massive, along with Tractor Joe and Carl who owns the farm. We basically went to work cleaning up the site and moving things about. During the night, the crew who were putting up the Big Top had arrived, after a serious amount of Coffee and a long chat with Stret about where to position the Big Top, they set to work, marking out the site and smashing in long bars which were the tie-downs we trip over outside the tent. Do any of you realise that these are 4-5 feet long? I didn't.

By this time, trailer loads of stage gear and fence panels were turning up. My job for half the day was counting.....and counting...and counting. Everything had to be checked as if it was missing on the return, Stret would be billed accordingly. Chairs, tables and fence panels are easy to count but boxes and boxes of clamps, stage deck legs and millions of square plastic cards the size of a CD is trying at best! I was dreaming of those plastic cards that night!!!!!!

By this point, I was joined by a couple of fellas who had made the same offer to Stret as I had...yeah, we'll give you a hand they said. Geoff and Reece I have to say were as solid as rocks for the entire week and I am so glad they turned up to help. By the end of the first day, things were beginning to take shape. The grass had been cut, the roof of the Big Top was up, nearly everything was on site to put together.

Seven o'clock and the 3 of us were up and ready. Stret was already out and about, living off a couple of hours sleep. There were more people about on the Wednesday as well which was a good job as on this day, the Stage in the big top had to be created. I hated this job with a passion! Legs had to be attached to every 8x4 stage deck then turned over and carried to its spot. There were over 50 individual decks to make up the Big top stage, all had to be level and bolted together, then all the handrails put in position and for added excitement

.. a raised viewing area at the back was made up. I NEVER want to see a stage deck again.... well not until next year anyway!

Along with this, Gazebos were being put up, signs were going up, Tables positioned and various other things that you don't think of, needed doing. To say I slept well that night is an understatement.



I should mention the rest of the helpers who turned up and were invaluable to the process, the Ladies who helped us with tea, coffee, food and moral support, Thank You! Lee, her daughter, Ruth, Karin, Kie and many others, with the heavy lifting on the stage front coming from a couple of local guys who I really can't remember the name of and 3 young lads who did a fantastic job of doing those things, none of the others really wanted to do! The team was getting larger, and it was all starting to take shape.

The 3 old geezers decided we needed a pub dinner, so Geoff drove us to the local up the road where an evening was spent putting the world to rights. Thursday and the VIP pre-party was set to kick everything off.

So, Thursday morning came around and we had our morning briefing from Stret who was looking bright eyed, and bushy tailed after another short kip. It was then that I realised just how much Stret and Bev had done the year before at the first festival, on their own with much less help than this year. I think they must not have slept at all. My admiration of what they have created has grown exponentially, it really is something to be proud of and it shows how good it is by all of the positive feedback they get. I can't overstate just what a good vibe the whole place has!

I think Thursday itself was a blur. To be fair I was flagging a little when it came to 5 in the evening...I had to stop for a bit to get myself prepared for the buzz to come. We were cleaning, moving, erecting fences, in one case, using a leaf blower to clear the Astroturf of straw! But somehow.... the entire team came together and created something special that those who attended, saw with their own two eyes. One thing I have to mention, did any of you see those giant flowers around the Big Top? I tried to push them into the ground and failed miserably Now I'm not a small bloke and I'm used to dealing with cattle and round bales of hay! Tractor Joe came along, and these metal flower stems just disappeared into the soil.... I hang my head in utter shame and patheticness!

People had been arriving throughout the day, the first year saw around 70 people there, this year it was five times that figure. We were all meeting people we hadn't seen in at least a year, reacquainting ourselves with those who we'd seen on the socials and drinking with people who'd we had known forever. It was a party of old friends even though most of us were strangers to each other.

The queue for the food that evening seemed quite long and never ending... how many of you blighters went around for seconds?!?!? But the Rock Quiz and Q&A session beforehand was all good fun! What sealed the deal for Thursday was the Band, Tyger. These guys are seasoned pros, I'd seen them before, so I knew what to expect. A whole host of classic Rock covers from that golden era of the 80s. These guys can work a crowd and keep them in the palm of their hand for an hour and not seem out of breath doing so. Throwing in a cheeky original track at the end of the set surprised everyone and got people asking questions, just what can these guys do? Well, we found out on Saturday night as they did a surprise original set after the Answer had finished. They went down a Storm!



Friday and it was an early start, The press tent needed to be prepped which in all honesty...wasn't really needed other than a place to stow gear out of sight and have a cuppa now and again.

The family turned up bang on time after leaving at stupid o'clock in the morning, they re-organised my perfectly set up camp to something completely different.... apparently, they couldn't find a thing! Well, I never!!! Many who were at the festival will probably remember Layla, she was everywhere having the time of her life at the Festival, considering she had been awake since 4 that morning, she was nearly the last one standing when Royal Republic were done with us.



Layla was making her mark as well, joining Russ on stage to jump around to Beef Jerky, although she did run when he started head banging. Can't say I actually blame her either!!!

Hollowstar...I hadn't seen them in ages and they sounded fresh and ready to melt faces. It was about this time when I had to start doing interviews, so I didn't catch the entire set but my daughter who was on official Tog duties stayed for the entire set, and they are now a favourite band of hers. Just goes to prove that they can still make new fans.

With interviews coming thick and fast, I missed When Rivers Meet and Cardinal Black.

Everyone wanted to speak at the same time! I did catch some of Cardinal Black which was great as it was just one big chill-out time whilst listening to really cool music.

Opening the Festival was down to Spot winners, Luna Marble who took to the stage in style. You can see why they won a place although.... Crooked Revival were my firm favourites. The crowd were chomping at the bit for new music and today they were handed it in spades. Leaning towards what I call 'real' classic rock of the 60s/70s, Luna marble were just fantastic and made their traditional style fresh and exciting. Down to the 'Top for White Raven Down and they never fail to exceed expectations. Full throttle from the off and a brand-new track to boot which is the first recorded song to feature Stu on vocals. These guys are on fire at the moment...they get better every time I see them. It was also a good test for our stage building, None of them disappeared through the floor... result!

Hells 'Addiction took over the main stage with style, showcasing the new album for all that it's worth. They are all amazing showmen and deserve all the accolades that they get. It was a shame they had to pull out of last year's gig, but I think we eventually had the better deal, the music had been refined and perfected from the new album and the show was all the better for it.

A note here to the quality of both stages and their lighting and crystal-clear sound.... I don't think there are many festivals that can match it to be fair. Dave, the chief sound guy is probably the most chilled guy I know in the business and he gave Layla (purchased) chocolate Brownies which made him an instant hit.

Sons Of Liberty were on at the 'Top next. The Firevolt shuffle between stages was in full swing now, with hefty crowds for each band at each stage. Russ knows how to get a crowd going and engage... I'd say Sons are on a high at the moment with a reinvigorated line-up and some damn fine tunes coming out now which will be on the new album in February.

Massive Wagons were headline the 'Top. Any of you there would have noticed that the stage was a bit crowded for the other bands, The wagons had well and truly trundled in and taken every available bit of room. Triggered is a fantastic album although I feel it actually shows flashes of utter brilliance to come, Please Stay Calm is probably THE biggest song they have written.

There's been a little noise about the track and Baz has said it's been a labour of love that song (roughly speaking), however...I think it is set apart from the rest of their music and if they can tap into that particular vein and bleed more music along that kind of passion and then match it with a few tracks on the lighter side of their particular style, I believe they could well become THAT major light of our time. Don't get me wrong, they are great now and they always put on a top show as they did for Firevolt...but the next album could see them be demanded to attend bigger Festivals and I think they could break the states. That being said, I do fear that it is a heavy

weight for the lads to carry. Do they really need fireworks to headline? Are they making any more cash now doing that than they were when they play good sized venues where it's stripped back? Probably not. They do need to reconsider using their own sound guy.... twas a bit bottom heavy to my ears, as it was for later dates by all accounts, yet this did not diminish the stellar show that occurred in the 'Top. Layla was loving every second and so too was a little chap in a chair. I spoke to his mum during the set, and he was a huge fan of the band, and it was also his birthday weekend. After the set, some chap steered Baz and Adam in his direction to have a few words. This, and the inclusion of kids over the weekend is how Rock music will live forever and gain the Festival a reputation of being inclusive and retaining its good vibes.

The best was yet to come.

Royal Republic were live in the Barn, and they stunned everyone at the Festival. There was not one person who was not impressed by their show, the banter, the jokes, the sheer fantastic moustaches and quality music. Banger after belter after tuuunne came henceforth from the PA. I loved every second, the crowd adored every minute and when they came out to the sound desk to play an acoustic version of Addicted, they won every heart in the crowd. Come back soon guys, we do miss you!!!!

How Layla was still buzzing after the day she'd had, I have no idea, but we stumbled back to the tent to get some much-needed rest.



Saturday dawned...round 2 of Festival mode. I was absolutely shattered to be honest; Layla was up early and full of life, how I hate young people's energy!!!!

The music started with a shot. Yep, that purple juice that was handed out to unsuspecting punters such as me was quite a shock to the system at the 'Top but it got us energised for the Band To Watch, The Hot One Two. These guys were on fire from the outset, full of power, full of melodies and ...errr...full of grace! Seeing them now for the second time, I was beginning to like them quite a bit and they bring that boyish charm and swagger to the stage so very well. Their album is out now and has not moved from my car's cd player yet. An excellent start to the day and then you get Thieves Of Liberty blowing us all away opening the main stage as well! These guys are good, actually, more than good, they are fantastic. Both bands were such gents to interview as well, welcoming Layla who suddenly became very starstruck (I'm sure there's a song about that?!). Nige was supposed to be handling the togs on the pit, but he was called away by Stret to get some more rider supplies for the bands, for a few Bands, it became my duty to cast an evil eye over the reprobates' holding cameras. I have to say, apart from a couple who were there for a couple of Bands only on the Friday, they were all laughing and joking, enjoying themselves...it didn't seem too much like child daycare at all!



A'priori I missed. Sorry guys, but from what I heard outside, they were damn fine again, just like the first year where they opened the main stage. The same should be said for Valhalla Awaits, they were back for the second time and to put it bluntly, they were bloody brilliant again, I never did get that interview guys, were you trying to avoid me?

Scruffy Bear were back in the 'Top again, owning the stage once more and confirming to me that they are a force to be reckoned with even if one of them did steal all the Philadelphia from the fridge (I Know who it was! check out the interview). At this point, outside the wind was picking up a little. I was trying to save one of my tents at the camp from blowing away when I looked up to see the Press gazebo take off and roll over a couple of artists' cars.....oops! Bear in mind this was weighed down with a lot of iron, I was a little more than shocked/surprised it had happened. Oh well, no one was hurt, and cars can have scratches repaired. It wasn't long before we took down other gazebos as well to ensure nothing like this happened with people milling around. Street was all over this in a flash and I am sure it was all sorted amicably. Because of this, I missed Absolva (AGAIN!) which really miffed me more than losing my Tea making facilities, I'm sure one day....

Vega owned the 'Top. They always put on a fine show without a doubt and for those who were a little like me in the past, hesitant about them, check out their latest offering. It is the best album they have recorded. They recently toured the UK up to a point; Marcus unfortunately lost his son, and my deeply felt condolences go out to him and his family in this difficult time.

How do 2 men make so much noise? I think this was a question many asked after seeing The Virginmarys in the Barn. They are a force to behold and flipping brilliant at what they do.

Mason Hill were closing the 'Top tonight and it was the first time I had seen their set in full. As it turned out it was the last ever set with Scott as he was taken seriously ill after the festival, which turned out to be quite life-changing for him, making him rethink his priorities in life. I'm glad I was there to witness his final show with the band, and I think many of us will look back with fond memories of that particular night.

The Answer headlined the Barn, and with so much style as well. It was the only time I actually got to take pictures in the pit as Layla had finally exhausted her supply of adrenaline and was ready for bed

which meant Carissa was off looking after her as well. Blood Brother is hands down, my favourite track by this band but they were also my introduction to the NWOCR scene many years ago when Oren got me to take him to their gig in Exeter. They still have it and long may it continue! A stunning performance from these guys.



I was off to bed as well ... guess who Missed White Tyger?? Yeah, my bad but I reckon everyone there cheered for these guys because I didn't get any sleep until it was all over.

Sunday, it was tinged with a bit of sadness as we knew it was the final day, yet we had some belting music to look forward to. There were two bands that vied for "Find of The Weekend" for me, both were on Sunday, first it was The Golden Leaves. Where did these guys come from?? They were so good and just how many were on stage? They opened the Barn doors with so much style, I was truly gobsmacked at just how good they were. They were obviously not the only Scandinavian Band on at the weekend, but I have to say it is refreshing to get bands from abroad here at the smaller festivals because I feel they bring a little more to the event. Their new album is out now and please do check it out. Only then will you realise quite what you missed.





FIREVOLT

ROCK FESTIVAL

STOCKPORT

THE HOME OF FACE MELTING ROCK FRIDAY 9TH – SUNDAY 11TH AUGUST 2024

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY



TO BE ANNOUNCED
TO BE ANNOUNCED

GUN



TO BE ANNOUNCED



TO BE ANNOUNCED



THE DAMN TRUTH

HELL'S ADDICTION

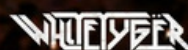
LAURENCE JONES

SOUTH OF SALEM

DEAD MAN'S WHISKEY



LOZ CAMPBELL



UNKNOWN REFUGE



THIEVES OF LIBERTY

gigantic



FESTIVAL WEBSITE



WHITEBOTTOM FARM, ETHEROW COUNTRY PARK, COMPSTALL, SK6 5JE

www.firevoltfestival.co.uk

Weekend tickets £130 + BF

PAYMENT PLANS AVAILABLE

Day tickets from £45 + B/F



Ashen Reach opened the 'Top, owning the stage like the professionals they are. I've seen them countless times, but I still take the time to watch them play. As a 4-piece, I think they have moved forward in leaps and bounds with the new music they are releasing sounding so much better than the earlier stuff. Again, vying for find of the weekend was Attack. I hadn't a clue who they were, Dan Byrne was there as a stand-in singer as their vocalist couldn't make the gig. What we were given was a masterclass in Classic Rock which was just outstanding! Taking in the sound from the Guitar and Hammond Organ, mixing it with a superb amount of Bass and a healthy dose of Drums, you ended up with something that felt so damn good and exuded great vibes throughout the set. Some of the shredding was just amazing.... I'd found a favourite new band right there! I had to speak to Keith after the show to find out more, where had he come from.... where could I get his music? I pre-ordered the album a few weeks later and hopefully if I have my arse in gear, there is a review in this very Magazine as Nine Lives was released 25/11/23.

Jack J Hutchinson is riding high at the moment, the new material he is putting out there is head and shoulders above what he has done before, whether it's working with Joshiah on production that has moved things up a notch, I don't know but whatever it is, he is going in the right direction. The show was fantastic as always and you get that little bit of banter with it as well which is great. Again, as with all the other sets this weekend, there was a great attendance, no one were playing to a handful of people...everyone was there to show their support to the bands.

I missed Gin Annie. I am suitably hanging my head in shame, but there you have it...I can't change history. Interviews...food...socialising, it all gets in the way at times.

So, for me Black Spiders were there to fire both barrels into the crowd. From the outset, they were so much better than when I saw them at Call of The Wild. There were a few tech issues there which couldn't be helped but tonight, they were excellent! I saw Stret rocking out at the far side of the stage, so I guess it was one of his pet bands he brought to the festival...and why not?! They always know how to work an audience and tonight was no exception. This was an audience who were going to go home later fully satisfied with each and every band they had paid to see.

Collateral stopped me dead in my tracks. I've seen them before and again, they are masters at giving the crowd what they want to see and hear. We all know the older stuff now like Merry Go Round and Midnight Queen, all good stuff. Today was a first for me, seeing them as a 4-piece which is how they have decided to move forward. They have handled the transition well and Whilst I was watching, I thought to myself...it's time for a drink! As I walked to the bar, people were nodding their acquaintance or saying hello as I walked past. Just how many friends have I made in the industry and gig-going fraternity over the last couple of years??? Whilst pondering this thought, I had to stop dead and turn to the stage, Collateral were playing a new song, Out of The Shadows I think it's called. I don't know what it is, it seemed like a perfect storm, the band were red hot, the crowd super receptive or the vibe of the festival. Probably all of the above but that song sent strong chills down my spine! It was more than just fantastic. It was immense! Even Angelo seemed taken aback by the reaction and indeed the track itself.





Dare is a band I have never seen before, although Blood From Stone is one of my top 10 albums of life. I wasn't disappointed by the band at all...it was superb from start to finish, I actually had not realised how much material I'd missed from this band and honestly, Darren was loving being the focus of our attention, the more the crowd interacted, the better the entire set got. I won't be waiting decades or even years to see these guys again.

The honour of closing the entire Festival fell to Kris Barras and his band. Perfection from start to finish, Layla enjoyed every second of it as this was another of her must-see bands of the weekend. As you can see from the cover of this Magazine, it was visually spectacular as well as one of the best sets I have seen this year. The band works as one unit and I believe Kris has a knack of finding the right person for the job as well as expecting the best from each and every one. It certainly pays off for him, the last album is probably his best work yet and the shows they put on get better and better as time goes on. A worthy headliner to what was a fantastic weekend.

All that was left was for Stret and Bev (mostly Bev as Stret Could hardly talk) to thank everyone who



helped out and to all of the customers who themselves made the Festival worthwhile. Stret said something that was quite pertinent, "Go home and buy yourself a ticket for next year and then buy one for your friend, that'll be enough for me" By that, it would mean that the place is a sell out and it would ensure the future of the festival. I personally don't think he needs to worry about it too much, the reputation of the entire Festival from punter to Player is so good that it's getting around. People are STILL buzzing about the festival, and I think with the recent announcements, it won't take long for it to sell out or come close to it.



Looking forward, what will we expect? The stand-out headline act for me is Vandenberg. His latest album Sin is superb, and he is such a nice guy too! We will all be singing along to the Whitesnake classics, I'm sure. Sunday headliners GUN should be good, they've been around for ages, and we all know Word Up and Steal Your Fire, there's loads of energy there to keep us all fired up to the very end. Kira mac, probably the best band ever (Layla said so ...it must be true!), Stone Broken and Florence Black are Firestormers of yesteryear, they are going to be back with solid albums behind them. South Of Salem are riding high now, it'll be good to catch them again.

Another first for me, The Damn Truth and Laurence Jones, along with Trucker Diablo. I am really looking forward to those guys yet look at the quality of the lower bands? The Hot One Two, White Tyger, Loz Campbell...Unknown refuge, Thieves Of Liberty, The Karma Effect.... these bands are extremely good at what they do, fan favourites and deserve to be on the same bill as the headliners.

It is a guessing game for the final 4 announcements, there may be a couple of bands named at the release of this magazine. If I'm really clever, I could update the mag as it happens. The miracle of modern print! Yet who would WE like to see? I've made a couple of suggestions, but Stret and Bev were very straight faced, remind me never to play poker with the pair of them!

Would I make any changes to the format? Essentially no, I think what there is, is near perfect. Maybe not a blow-away press tent next year, I can live without that but on the whole, maybe order less Heras fencing and Stage decks!! I caught up with Stret And Bev for a chat earlier, basically to see how they thought of things and where they envisaged they would go.



At the end of the day, Firevolt IS my favourite festival of all time.

The atmosphere, the vibe, the friends and most of all the music. I have yet to find another Festival that can come anywhere close to this and I've been to a few now! Stret And Bev have created an amazing legacy of which they should be very proud of. I am honoured to be a very small part of the wheel that makes up this beautiful machine!



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Black Orchid Empire

NervEndings

Cobblestones – Bridgwater



I have known about Black Orchid Empire for a couple of years now, Semaphore is an absolute belter of an album, only outdone by the follow up, Tempus Veritas.

When they announced a small UK tour and that they were indeed playing within an hour's drive from home, it was an absolute no-brainer to go and see them. The Cobblestones in Bridgwater is basically our closest Rock Pub. It hires out ye olde skittle alley out the back to a number of bands and promoters, so we do get an array of great music there over the year. Should I go there more often? Quite possibly!

First band on tonight were very new to me, NervEndings. Hailing from those counties that pretend to be from the South-West (Wiltshire), I was interested to hear what they would offer.

You will have to excuse my ignorance around song titles as I only know a couple, but opening up, they served up a slice of Bluesy Rock that sounded great, the backline were top notch, complimenting the Guitars and vocals of the extremely tall (I mean EXTREMELY tall) front man.

Second song in and the curse of Friday 13th struck. The pin holding the guitar strap to the actual body of the guitar broke and the guy was left trying to sing and hold and play his rather heavy looking guitar mid-song.

Now you can tell who are the tech guys in the crowd, as pretty much all of Black Orchid Empire and Cobblestones staff rushed over to bring him a chair and alter his mic so he could keep going. Going is what he indeed did as I don't think he missed a beat! A lot of bands may have stopped mid song, but I really was impressed by his professional attitude. What impressed me more was the actual content. The music altered subtly as the set progressed and started to sound more progressive and alternative in places. This was a very pleasant surprise as it gave everyone something a little bit different. There were some standout tunes, Toxic (and other love stories) and Democracy Manifest. Both of which have been released to the world and the former I have since been playing on my Radio show. What completed the show was the between song banter between the band themselves and the audience. A great start indeed and a band to watch for in the future. I will certainly search them out again.

A bit of a break, it was time for Black Orchid Empire. I first saw them support Empyre at KKs, earlier in the year. They are a blend of Modern progressive metal, Alternative and just ballsy Rock.

Opening with Singularity, it's as in-your-face as an opening track as you get! With barely a breath drawn, they fly into Natural Selection and then the first offering from Tempus, Hydrogen



The guys in the band are Class one musicians (along with really nice guys) and it shows with the music they produce. The sonic waves of excellence just kept pounding us as the evening progressed. My personal favourite track Scarlet Haze was next, which for me is a standout track on the current standout album.

Motorcade is such a great track; I think it was at this point that I stepped back just to take stock of the gig. When you look at the stage, you don't see any cabs and PAs as such, everything gets sent to their own sound desk. Apart from maybe turning up the guitar a smidge, the sound was awesome. The Bass was almost acting as a harmonising agent to the Drums and Guitars.



Rather than being that deep low-end rumble, there seemed to be more 'fill' which obviously creates a denser overall sound, especially live. Billy on drums, the coolest guy ever and probably makes playing drums seem effortless, although when you really listen, you understand just how complex the drums really are. Paul on Guitars is a real gem, the passion in his playing just seems to ooze from his fingers, across the strings and then into your ears. Deny The Sun, The Raven (another standout track from Tempus) and Winter keeps Us Warm follow on swiftly. Evergreen and the brilliant Death from Above close the show.

When it was over, I felt a little gutted. I wanted more, much more! Go back and play it all over again!!! This band is fast becoming a live favourite, a go-to band when I'm at a loss. How long will it be before I get a chance to witness this kind of brilliance again in the flesh?



This was the second to last gig of the current run, however, straight after the Guildford gig, they announced another tour! March will see their return with the first date in Bristol, Crofters Rights on the 2nd, Swansea 3rd, Stoke, 4th, Warrington 5th, Sheffield 6th, Birmingham 7th, Derby 8th, Bournemouth 9th and London on the 10th. Support at the London gig comes from Rock Radio UK Favs, LaVire and Pryma. That particular line-up is making me want to travel to the Big Smoke as that will be a cracking gig!

If you know nothing of Black Orchid Empire, then please check out the latest releases, Semaphore and Tempus Veritas. I am sure you'll be booking a ticket to see them soon after.

Ticket link - <https://mtr.cool/lhvolfftbr>

Dave



SAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PRESENTS

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BLACK ORCHID EMPIRE

UK TOUR 2024

02/03 BRISTOL CROFTERS RIGHTS
03/03 SWANSEA THE BUNKHOUSE
04/03 STOKE THE UNDERGROUND

05/03 WARRINGTON FRIARS COURT
06/03 SHEFFIELD CORPORATION
07/03 BIRMINGHAM SUBSIDE

08/03 DERBY THE HAIRY DOG
09/03 BOURNEMOUTH BEAR CAVE
10/03 LONDON NEW CROSS INN

Dave's Woodstock 3.0

The Phoenix - Exeter



I was asked if I wanted to interview RXPTRS by their press agent, so of course I said yes, especially since they were appearing in Exeter, my home turf. What I did not realise was that they were headlining an indoor festival which meant it was an all-day event. I had a gig in Wolverhampton the night before, so I got home a little later than I anticipated to eventually get to Dave's Woodstock around 4ish.

Oren, my tog had made the effort to get there at the opening, so he managed to get to see the first couple of bands. Death Assault, Athelas and Blind Tendril were amazing opening acts by all accounts and I am truly sorry for missing them. Blame the M5!!!

What came next though was a huge slice of traditional Punk! Spitting Blood have everything you would want from a 70s era Punk band, the swagger, the tunes and most of all a huge amount of energy. What actually set them apart from everyone else here this evening was the fact that the singer was indeed Dave of Dave's Woodstock, the organiser of this event.

I should talk about the actual event really because it's not just a bunch of bands coming together to make some noise and sell Merch; it is indeed a festival where there is a donation to charity. Dave hosts a few Rock and Metal monthly gigs in the area, and I believe this is to be the third instalment of an actual all day event. There are no muddy boots or cold camping options, it's all pulled together at the Phoenix in Exeter which has a great reputation for putting on great stand-alone gigs.

Seeing it all come together as a festival and I am even more impressed with the venue. You have the bar in the main entrance hall and here we had an all-day DJ set behind the bar, outside the smoking area which is actually really nice on a sunny day for everyone to socialise in. The main venue holds somewhere around 400 people, great sound and good lighting. The ONLY pitfall is that the entrance door is situated beside the stage, so when people are watching a band, trying to walk in is a bit of a pain if I'm honest, but this is to do with the venue itself, not the festival.

Just outside in the corridor was a stall selling various boys and pieces along with the obligatory Merch stand which is about the only place any band can make some real money out of their music!



For me, I was here for RXPTRS, as I have said, but I am so glad I came for the day. BITTER KISSES were on stage next, 2 guys on guitars and 2 ladies on drums and Vocals. What they produced on stage was absolutely astonishing! I have found my new favourite band, and I came to that conclusion before the end of the first song. Mixing Rock/Metal with an Alternative yet almost Pop sound, their music is different but completely accessible for everyone. The bassist was sporting a very dapper moustache and was spending his time pretty much being the centre of a whirlwind. Helping out on Vocals from time to time was the guitarist looking like a young Gary Numan and he was playing superbly throughout. Hidden at the back, the Drum sound was just immense, powerful and one of the best new-to-me drummers I have seen in a long time. On Vocals, this is where the band really shone the brightest, such a fantastic range with great harmonies. The set was a good length but in reality, it just flew by, some recorded clips introduced the band and they then just set the place ablaze!

These guys are Bristol based and I recommend that everyone search them out, just to hear the magic that they produce.

Onwards to the next band after what was a quick turnaround, Andromedous.

Fresh from their appearance at Download, this should be a fantastic set, they didn't disappoint me either. I had no real idea of what to expect so when you get 4 guys walking onto stage, all in black with hardly any lighting with 3 of them wearing full-face masks, it all set the scene really well for what was a full-frontal attack of modern metal with an industrial edge. I know the purists out there will be horrified that there is no drummer as such, just a guy with a mac and various Plug-ins, yet it was all on point, the whole set. I loved it from start to finish, the atmosphere they created, mixed with lowlights and the sound, it literally caught me unawares. You know that music that hits you square in the chest with a killer blow which takes your breath away? This was exactly what it was like.



I had to feel for the guys in the masks, it was getting pretty hot so they must have been sweating their b*&\$s off up on stage. To end the show, they removed the masks and indeed, a few pounds had been shed. Musically, totally different to what I buy, what I like but this blew me away. This was music on another level and yet another band I would not hesitate to see again if (when) I get the chance.



Time for a snack...Maccys was just down the road and back in time for Aviira. A south-west Metalcore band no less, again something a little different to what has it the stage before. Again, a moment of mystery for me as it was yet another band I had not seen or heard before (yes yes, I do own a radio station and I do Host a few shows each week...Honest!). So, bracing myself, I peeled back my ears and let the sounds in.

I know next to nothing, but it was clear from the first bar that this was a seasoned band who knew the key magic in music to create something worthwhile. There are bands out there that learn their craft but still fall short, be it from lack of chance or dedication or whatever, These guys thought they were the real deal. Professional from the first strike to the last reverb, they produce music in a genre that I struggle a little with, but I was more than happy to stand corrected about my entire outlook on Metalcore.







This was really good! I can now understand why their debut album, *Avalanche* has passed a million streams. I may have since added to that number of streams since the gig as I am really missing the music! A solid sound with solid playing, I think given the right chance we could see this band on the mainstage at Bloodstock or even Download in the not-too-distant future. I am not going to pretend to describe what I heard as I do have some integrity as a writer, simply pretending to know all about each and every band that you see, in my mind comes across as a little false. Say it as you see or hear, it was a stunning set from a top-quality band.

Vampires Everywhere were late additions to the festival. They were on tour with RXPTRS, so it was an easy call to make to add them to the Bill.



Again, this was a band that was a little different to everything else. These guys had travelled over from the states to bring a huge slice of Goth Rock with that spooky edge we all know and love. I have seen Wednesday 13 in Exeter a few years ago, after hearing someone compare the band to him, I thought I knew what to expect. Wrong!

Vampires Everywhere were so much better than that. Vocals were just superb in a Gothic kind of way which suited the particular genre perfectly. The Guitar was ripping and tearing throughout the set and the Bass was a blazing deep throated cross of low-end fury. As for the drums of doom.... I am surprised my head didn't explode with newfound adoration. I don't normally get all fanboy-like, but when I do it's for a good reason. I wish I'd caught the guys on another date in the tour now, this was inadvertently, a taste of heaven!

To round off what was already a great Festival, RXPTRS hit the stage. I've been playing the new tracks released this year on the radio, *World On My Tongue* and *Hillbillies*. This being dubbed the *Hillbillies* tour; this show would almost be a homecoming gig for them. I'd seen them before at *Call Of The Wild '22* and I thought they were good then, tonight they raised the roof and smashed it wide open.



Everything was on point; this is a band that were seemingly out to prove to the world that we all should stop and listen to what they have to say. Si was all over the stage, making each and every person in this rather crowded room feel like this gig was just for them. This in itself is a rare commodity as I have only come across a handful of vocalists that can do this well, Dio, Snider and maybe a few from small bands like Gary Salt of God Damn Smile. It is a gift, but also, it's something that feeds off of each and every member of the band and collectively, they draw the best out of each other.

Drawing songs from their debut, *Living Without Death's Permission* and the 2 new songs, the band stormed through their set, taking no prisoners! From my point of view, the crowd were loving every second of it, getting more and more involved as the night went on. The energy in the room was almost palpable, I haven't been to a gig this electrified in months, years even. Track after track after track hit us right between the eyes and left us wanting for more.



The lights came up and it was time for me to go. There was more to come that night but for me, 2 gigs in 2 nights is enough. I have to say that the entire festival was warm, welcoming and very well run. There wasn't any trouble and the band choice for the event was actually inspired. There was something for everyone there and new discoveries to be made, bands that sometimes you would pass by just because, would then turn out to be your favourite find of the year.

I wish Dave and the team every success in what they do, whether it's a monthly gig or next year's Festival. What he is trying to do is absolutely incredible. When you want a great night out in Exeter, with top quality music and a great atmosphere, just buy yourself a ticket to Dave's Woodstock 4.0







King Crimson - The Beginning Of A Progressive Journey

Steve Boyce

So it's 1969. I'm eleven years old and I've spent the last few years with a transistor radio almost surgically attached to my ear. I've been listening to the like of the Stones, The Who, The Kinks etc. A friend of mine had an older brother who collected albums by "underground bands". We played them when he was out of the house. I was quite taken by the Spooky Tooth album. A track from that album appeared on a sampler album from Island records called "Nice Enough To Eat" and it cost 14 shillings and eleven pence (75p today). Two week's pocket money was saved and I purchased the said album.

The rear of the sleeve had pictures of the albums that were featured on the sampler and one of them had a grotesque face on it. I was entranced. Who would have a sleeve like that? Fourth side track two gave me the answer. The song was "21st century schizoid man".

To say this was a culture shock is an understatement. No one, and I mean no one, was producing music as wild or as "out there" as this in 1969. I had to buy the parent album!! Christmas was coming and it was top of my Santa list. Santa did not disappoint.

First of all seeing that sleeve was a revelation, 12 x 12 inches of crimson, pink, blue and white with that pained face told me this was going to be a new experience. The cover concept carried on to the rear and inside, yes, it was a gate fold with the lyrics

I took my new acquisition up to my room and placed it on the Dansette (we all had one) and sat back for the next 40 minutes.

It was a journey into a new world where rock met jazz, classical, folk and a kind of new electronic music which I couldn't put a name to. Someone called it Progressive Rock.

"Schizoid man" opened followed by the pastoral sound of "I talk to the wind" a total juxtaposition to the opening track with it's prominent flute arrangement. Then came another monster "Epitaph" featuring a new toy called a mellotron. An orchestra in a box if you will. Greg Lake's lead vocal never sounded so good. This was fiery stuff and you almost felt like crying.

Then I had to turn it over. Just three tracks on side one, and just two on side two.

Side two opens with "Moonchild". The first three minutes are ok but I couldn't get on the all of the strange noises that followed for the next nine minutes. To this day I can't play it all the way through.

The final track is a majestic soundscape of choir voices, mellotron, beefy Les Paul guitars all topped with Lake's voice.

Looked at 54 years later this was the real beginning of prog rock. From the sleeve to it's musical contents, nothing had looked or sounded like it up to this point. They didn't sound like any other band on the planet, a challenge they continued throughout their lifespan. The world changed that day, so did mine. No more Stones, no more Kinks, I wanted to explore this new world of sound. I have four copies (don't ask) and at least one of them gets taken from the rack every so often and I get transported back to those heady days when musically I grew up.



I have spent the last 30 years as a professional musician. I have toured and acted as a session player for one or two names. In 2014, once the last child had left home, we moved home, studio and guitars to East Anglia to try out this thing called semi-retirement. I have never been so busy.

Strange days was born out of a drunken night on Facebook when I was showing off my so-called knowledge of obscure bands with a couple of friends. Somebody spotted this, he was the director of a local radio station and asked me if Id be prepared to put together a radio show. I was and I did. The first show was broadcast in January 2013.

After moving to East Anglia I hitched up with Felixstowe Radio 107.5 fm but i noticed that most of my listeners were online. The good folk of Felixstowe werent quite ready for a show that featured Gentle Giant and Joe Byrd and the The Field Hippies!!

I stayed for two years before coming to the conclusion that I would be better off preaching to the converted via my home studio and a weekly podcast on Mixcloud.

So i now find myself putting out the same stuff through Rock Radio UK. Im sure Im onto a winner.



Mizz Hydes

Welcome To The Hydeside

*Reviews
&
Views
From My Side*



Lokko - The Awakening Reviewed By Mizz Hyde

Lokko are a new British heavy rock/horror collaboration, who are made up from ex members of Electric Circus & Sykko Dollz.

Formed in late 2021 but sadly due to the pandemic it wasn't until January 2022 that Lokko could conjure up their vision to bring out their inner beast of new music & live theatrical shows. Aiming to push the boundaries of a dark unknown world that lay in their twisted tortured minds, stratching & clawing to get out into the world of music.

Whilst adding to their cooking pot of deranged thoughts recipe, Lokko put in catchy riffs, twisted dark lyrics, hearts, souls, emotions, thought, care & attention to detail.

Turned the cooker up to gas mark 5000 then left it to simmer while mixing was done.

Like any potion & you can ask any Witch or Wizard this & they will tell you that you need the correct

ingredients for any potion to work.

Lokko have done just that with their potion.

So now it's tasting time, drink up good people as I tell you all about the ingredients that make up Lokko's début album *The Awakening*.

Track (1) *I Belong To The Dirt*.

Don't be fooled by *I Belong to the Dirt* when it starts with haunting vocals & guitar, I'm thinking this going to be some ballad about two lovers parted by death, the echo & reverb make my body shiver as I imagine Silas's vocals coming from some cathedral like a ghost waiting for his lost love to join him once more as he watches the funeral, then the slight pause & you think is that it? No the power kicks in & is filled with the whole band as it twists & turns into a powerhouse of two lost souls finally being reunited again, this is what Lokko have done with *I Belong To The Dirt*.

The guitar solo cuts the air like a razor across your throat & your dying to hear more of this album. This track married a haunting melody & vocals to hard rock brilliantly to my ears.



Track (2) Burn The Priest.

You don't need me to tell you what this track is about, it says exactly what it is by the title. What I will tell you about Burn the Priest, is that Lokko could have written this for Ozzy Osbourne, it sounds like The Prince of Darkness himself could be doing vocals along side Silas on this track. The heavy low key riffs mixed with bass guitar opening that can only be added to with an amazing lead break.

Early Black Sabbath, Ozzy Osbourne? No Lokko took them both cut them into pieces & made a Lökkostein monster because you can't say it's Sabbath or Ozzy or any other band, It's a Lökkostein monster & it's theirs. (I created Lökkostein that's my word) ha-ha.

Track (3) Murder Murder

Take two guitars that you think they're loud & then drop as they fall into the devouring drums & Bass guitar, it all fits in perfectly with great drum fills through out this track by Dragon.

Listen to Murder Murder a few times & you will hear that it's not the guitars driving Murder Murder, it's the drums, it's the bass guitar, I love hearing a bass guitar been played higher up the fret board with great little fills from Kaine.

These two are a tight unit like any bass guitarist & drummer should be. They drive every song.

Track (4) Insane

An insane opening of laughter can only mean one thing & that is it's going to tell what's about to happen in this track. Well you didn't think it was going to be all sweet & nice with title like Insane. Or did you just skip to track 4 review, then you really need to die Lokko style.

Insane is a great bouncy rockin tune with every word clear to hear as Silas tells you what he would love to do to you as this rocks through to it's closing laugh.

Track (5) The Thing

This is a track that has everything of a twisted Rocky Horror Picture Show, with Vincent Price from Hammer House of Horror telling you he's been possessed by Hannibal Lecter. This track is pure twisted Lokko magic, it's catchy as hell, with great kick ass rockin riffs, spoken lyrics.

I don't know if it's my twisted imagination, but The Thing is like if Hammer House of Horror & Rocky Horror Picture Show had a baby this would be it.

Also this is the first time Kaine sang on the album & his vocal really works well, it has a depth that makes The Thing even more sinister.

But be warned if your walking down the street listening this on your headphones etc. & you end up singing it out loud, people will either cross the road or your going to be surrounded by police.

I just love how catchy The Thing is.



Track (6) Bring Out Your Dead.

A dark sinister warning opens Bring Out Your Dead, before it unfolds into a punching riff that pushes this track as it works it's way through to the ending, with clever changes into the chorus & back again to yet another great lead break, the drumming etc. all make Bring Out Your Dead another hard rockin track before an ending I never saw coming.

Track (7) Finit hic deus

A kind member of Lokko told me what Finit hic deus means (I didn't know Lokko had such a thing as a kind member of the band) Maybe it was the five gallons of blood & some hearts, in exchange for that information. (Kaine loves his hearts & if you have seen Lokko perform live you will know why) Yes I'm the alter ego Mizz Hyde from welcome to the Hydeside & it was a great pleasure to be able to open my show with this track. Ok Finit hic deus means god ends here. It's got amazing drumming that opens Finit hic deus, it's fast, it's powerful, it's got twists & turns. It's going to have you bouncing around to it with vocals to match the pace.

Track (8) Asmodeus

This is one of Lokko's slower tracks on the album, but don't let that put you off, because once again Kaine's bass leads with a deep rooted bass line while Lilith & Silas add power chords that just hang in the air as Asmodeus unfolds around your ears.

Track (9) Lavinia

Let's take a journey back to medieval times, those old 1950 movies like King Arthur, Robin Hood etc. Imagine the court music they use to play back then, well for me Lavinia takes me there with this acoustic track. Into a time of feasts in great halls of amazing

castles through out the land.

It's sorrowful lyrics , amazing acoustics, Lokko know how to stir your imagination, & lead you into these place.

With acoustics it's hard not slide your finger on the frets when changing notes, there isn't one slide on this which makes Lavinia a truly amazing song, it shows Lokko's talent of both Lilith & Silas.

I listened to this through my headphones & you should really do the same to hear how this track fills out.

Track (10) Until We Meet Again.

This is the final track from Lokko's debut album The Awakening & it's another hard rockin ass kicker of a tune, with it's mix of mini lead breaks that lead into one amazing lead break that speeds up as the whole thing gets faster until it's ending .

So what can I say about Lokko & their debut Album?

It's a must hear album, it's been mixed with perfect clarity. Care, attention to detail, that nothing is out done by another. The vocals clear enough to follow Silas unfold the story in those dark twisted lyrics.

I don't need to sell The Awakening album.

It will sell it's self, Lokko will sell themselves. Their fans will sell this album with word of mouth that will make radio stations want to play them, magazines review & interview them, because even I was telling people you need to hear this band Lokko.

So let me finish with this. I'm honoured to be given this opportunity to review The Awakenings album by Lokko, because when this band are selling multi platinum albums, I'll be able to look back with pride & a smile on my face & say I reviewed their very first album.



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DAMAGED ROSE PROMOTIONS PRESENT

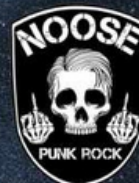
DEMENTIA

aware

COVENTRY 2024

SATURDAY

SUNDAY



A W A K E N
E T E R N I T Y



THE ARCHES, COVENTRY

16TH & 17TH MARCH 2024

DOORS OPEN 3PM

TICKETS VIA WWW.TICKETWEB.CO.UK (SUBJECT TO BOOKING FEE)



Because Lokko sold themselves to me through their music & that's the making of a really great band. Lokko got their good friend Nigel Langford to design their album cover & logo with the Lokko all seeing eye. As they like to put it, we're watching you through the gateway to your soul.

While they finished the final recordings & mixing was carried out by Simon Henley at Base Studios in Stourbridge West Midlands.

February 18th 2023 Lokko held an album their launch party at the Billesley Rock Club. To great turnout of people.

Lokko have headlined & supported through out 2023 & are now busy working on their second album Kaine told me in a conversation. So a busy 2024 is planned for Lokko as they plan to start recording their second album in January, working on a bigger theatrical horror stage show, along with a video shoot. May 11th 2024 will see Lokko headline The John Rocks Festival at the Queens Hall in Nuneaton & something I'm very proud to be involved with also.

Lokko are just another example of what a band can produce together when they a tight unit, with Lillith, Kaine & Silas putting together riffs etc & writing lyrics, Dragon doing the arrangements.

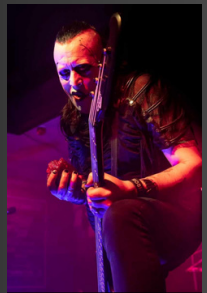
So I asked who would Lokko most like to support when they tour the Uk? Wednesday 13, Avatar & any band crazy enough to have us was their reply.

They also told me that they are currently looking for a rehearsal studio where they can set up all their theatrics etc, so if you know of anywhere in the Birmingham then please let them know.

I will never go into great detail about any music, I will only give you an outline of how it makes me feel, how it sounds & stirs the imagination, it's up to you to go listen & be taken in by the music. I merely show you the door it is up to you to step through it. This is a step worth taking.

Band Members

- Silas. Lead Vocals / Rhythm Guitar
- Kaine. Bass Guitar / Vocals
- Lilith. Lead Guitar / Vocals
- Dragon. Drums / Vocals



billibecreative





The Dust Coda

Doomsday Outlaw

18th October 2023 – The Junction, Plymouth

Here is a first! I had never been inside The Junction for a gig, only ever been down there as a taxi driver for my son and his band to perform there. Was I impressed? Oh yes! What a great little venue and literally less than an hour away from me.

I already had a ticket for this gig but at the last minute I was asked to stand in for the merch guy on The Dust Coda stand as he was unable to make it, so I had to get my “selling hat” on (more later). Being there early enabled me to listen to the sound check and it was obvious that the venue had invested in new equipment because the sound was superb. First up were Doomsday Outlaw who for me have released one of the albums of 2023 in *Damaged Goods* so I was looking forward to hearing some tracks new and old. If you have not heard anything by this band, then I suggest you go and get your head looked into (after reading this magazine of course).

Kicking off proceedings was “In Too Deep”, the opening track from *Damaged Goods*. Doomsday Outlaw let rip with their blues/rock formula and with Phil ?? on vocals they had the crowd lapping them up from this moment on. Speaking of the crowd, it was heartening to see the venue almost to full capacity on a mid-week rainy night in Devon – well done to all that attended.

“Turn me Loose” swiftly followed and by the time “If This is the End” came next, the band were in full flow with the crowd cheering and singing along at full volume – again great to see. “Blues for a Phantom Limb” and “One More Sip” continued the vibe and by the time Doomsday Outlaw were at the end of their short set they squeezed in “Runaway” and finished with the excellent “Bring Your Pain”.



There is a chemistry within the band that to me will only aid them going further and further up the ladder in 2024 – expect to see them at plenty of festivals and make sure you don't miss out! So, the headline act on this tour – The Dust Coda. What can be said about this foursome that has not already been said? Pure rock n roll from the very first note right up to the last and loud as it should be! John, Adam, Scott, and Tony just ooze rock n roll, so much so that in fact I would say they bleed it out of their veins and sweat it and boy was it hot and sweaty.

“Rock n Roll Paradise” kicked the set off, blasting out raw guitar from Adam and the amazing vocals of John Drake that are a match made in heaven. A favourite of mine, “Limbo Man” was up straight away with no time in between to chit-chat – then again, we were there for the music, weren't we? “Call out the Dogs” really shows off TDC at their best; great riffs, basslines, drums, and the vocals highlighting that John was made for this. More tracks from the superb 2023 release “Loco Paradise” swiftly followed – “Come the Night”, “Love Sick”, “The Streets”, “Free All The Dancers” and “Since You've Been Gone” all show that picking an album of the year for

me will be damn hard. Interspersed with the simply stunning “The More It Fades” from the debut album had the crowd wanting more and more.

After a brief chat with the crowd we were soon on to the last few songs to end the night off with. “On Fire” and “Edge of The Knife” were thrown in the mix and to finish the night the loud “Road to Hell” had the crowd eating out of their hands.



The tour was aimed at the Loco Paradise album so if you expected more older songs, you might have been disappointed but come on, how could you be! And the punters proved that by handing over so much hard-earned dosh to me on the merch stand.

I for one look forward to seeing The Dust Coda at Planet Rockstock in December where I shall be having the odd drink or two with the lads.

Chris (Shabba)



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Irene Wilde – Somebody Someday

Ian Hunter
Keith Nickless

Pretty boy East Midlands rock band The Struts have a new album out, so what. The last track is called Somebody Someday, a youth's yearning for lost love that motivated them to leave home and become a STAR! So what!

Well park those so what's young ragamuffin there's something deeper going on here. The song isn't a Luke Spiller original it's a cover that appeared in 1976 on Ian Hunter's album All American Alien Boy under its proper title Irene Wilde. This is one of Hunter's many autobiographical songs that are spread across his whole career. The important message of this song is summed up concisely in his lyrics.

“They ain't a chain – just a link”.

So why would a Queen loving band at the start of their career pick a song written by a guy who is now 84 about a woman who existed and is about the same age as Hunter himself? This starts another train running, why do so many musicians want to perform with Hunter or appear on his albums what the heck has the old boy gone to gain such devotion.

When Hunter first touched the hem of fame, he was the focal point of a musical riot called Mott the Hoople. Constructed by a speed freak scenester called Guy Stevens who wanted the perfect hybrid of Bob Dylan and The Rolling Stones. Mott the Hoople were the most raucous live band on the planet. Go to a gig and your spleen would still be vibrating the next day. Over excited fans almost broke the Albert Hall by bouncing up and down in the grand circle leading the venue to ban Rock n Roll bands for being too violent.

They had the most loyal fans imaginable, following the band over the country and if they couldn't afford a ticket Hunter and friends would let you in the back door for free so your journeys were not in vain. These followers included Mick Joines of The Clash, Morrissey, and Benazir Bhutto the first female prime minister of Pakistan. The albums came and went, the urgency of the live shows could not be repeated then came the meeting with Bowie and everyone knows what happened.

Don't forget while all of this was happening Hunter wrote *Diary of a Rock n Roll Star*, the go to book on what life is really like in a rock band. They helped an up and coming band called Queen by taking them on the road and both Brain May and Roger Taylor say that Mott the Hoople taught them to be rock n roll stars.

When the band broke up Hunter ploughed a solo career that has continued until now. His latest album is packed with contributions from admirers and fans including Billy F Gibbons, Slash n Duff, Ringo Starr, Jeff Beck, Stone Temple Pilots, Taylor Hawkins, Robert Trujillo, and Mike Campbell. But why, why, why do bands old and new want to be associated with his music. Campbell Devine has written a two volume biography of the man and the overall feeling that comes through is Ian Hunter is honest, has integrity and isn't impressed with stories of flexible groupies, red snappers or the contributions made to the Columbian economy. Joe Elliott is a huge fan, so much so when Def Leppard were inducted into the Rock n Roll Hall of Fame who was front and centre for their final song leading a planet shaking version of 'All the young Dudes'? Yes, you guessed it, Ian Hunter. Just as a side note the unofficial city anthem of Cleveland home of the Rock N Roll Hall of Fame is a song called Cleveland Rocks written in 1979 by Ian Hunter.

So, this one guy born in Oswestry in June 1939 has spread his web of influence and his work is still being covered. Barry Manilow is on his final world tour and on his setlist some nights is a Hunter song called Ships about a sons difficult relationship with his father an ever recurring theme in this work. Most people of his age are worrying about incontinence pants, dementia and how to get to see the grandkids at the weekend not Hunter he is mixing his next album the follow on from this years 'Defiance Part 1'. Its going to be called 'Defiance Part 2' with an equally star studded line up but this album contains the last recording session that Jeff Beck ever did and contributions from Messrs May and Taylor. Which is funny really because they contributed backing vocals to 'You Nearly Did Me in' a track on *All American Alien Boy* the home album of Irene Wilde.

Ian Hunter may not be a household name, but he was motivated by Irene Wilde's rejection to become Somebody Someday. In the world of Rock Music, he certainly is somebody. I wish Luke Spiller and the rest of the band absorb the integrity and honesty of Ian Hunter and they may to be grateful to the spirit of Irene Wilde someday.

IAN HUNTER
All-American Alien Boy





DGM Life

Italian progressive metal masters DGM have released their long-awaited new album, “Life”, on November 17.

What are we to expect from this album? I think personally, it is a transition album, over the last 20 years or so we have come to expect certain things from the band, a certain sound, sweeping choruses and technical brilliance, yet I think Life marks a subtle but quite a complicated change in the band’s sound. Rather than relying on various technical abilities of each individual player, I feel more emphasis has gone into creating the best overall song with each track.

Crafting a “complete” song of this style can be really difficult, their style requires certain aspects to remain true to the “Progressive Metal” origins, the sheer shredding brilliance of the Guitar work

matched with the strong melodies of each song can dictate the direction of each track, yet you listen to songs like “To The Core” and you have every element carefully intertwined together, laced up in a 5-6 minute package.

These guys have managed to weave an hour-long album together with ten tracks that explore every corner of the “Progressive Metal” scene without boring us with too much tech or in-coherent twaddle. Each and every track entertains and draws you in, sweeping and soaring, taking you on a fantastic voyage that leaves you wondering where the last 3 hours disappeared to because you kept punching the replay button!

I had a chance to speak to Simone (Guitars) and this is a little snatch of what we talked about. Hit the embedded video link for the full interview.

Dave - You have just produced I think today actually a very, very stunning out new album with DGM. Life. Tell me about it.

Simone - Well, thanks, thanks. Yeah, I mean, this is the combination of probably the last three years, and the majority of the album was written during lockdown, you know, in Italy was pretty bad. So we were pretty much stuck in a tome for like, two years in a row. Yeah, except a few months in summer. And, yeah, the only thing I could do was like mixing, that's my day job, you know, right, I run a studio where I record a mix a lot of stuff and, and in the evening, I was writing new new tools. Actually, the fun thing is that I basically wrote two albums. And my idea initially was to put out you know, like a double, because the first one was a little heavier. So it's live. And the second one, which probably will come out next year, it's a little bit more mellow, like more prog rock ish, like old school, kind of, you know, Mellotron, no double bass and all that stuff, because, you know, we're trying to experiment with some different styles rather than repeating the same album over and over. And yeah, again, the idea initially was to put out the album as a, as a double. But, you know, like, a label suggested that maybe was too much stuff, because it was like, one hour plus one hour, one hour plus the other ones. So, you know, nowadays, people just want to listen to one single and then boom, it's done. So maybe it's a better idea to just put out two different albums so people can digest, you know, the first one properly, and then move on to the next.

Dave - But you seem to hit that sweet spot between technicality and mixing and mastering you seem to have got it so that the musicianship is not overshadowed by the mixing?

Simone - I got exactly what you and I think that's the best analysis of the album, because, you know, I found myself changing towards the IRS. Not I mean, all my background is always the same I grew up with, you know, like both avid staff, and both progressive like Kansas rush. All the all the classic, of course, but I find myself over and over getting tired of just noodling on my guitar showing off to people like I can do the soul faster than everyone. I mean, I really, I was like that, like 15 years ago, because probably every everybody needs like 20s or 30s. It's more about Okay, I gotta improve this technique. And nowadays I really, I really don't care at all I just care. The time when I spend the most is when I when I write a song is to find the perfect melody and a riff that you really array for a chord progression that is pleasing me rather than Okay, I gotta do like this duel solo with keyboards that is super technical and flashy. Of course we still have that because you know it's it's in our DNA so it's but it's rather than replicate the same formula like in 10 songs. We just tried to okay let's do a song that is instrumental and maybe more melodic and then let's do another one, where we have the fast stuff and then you know, trying differently the things and again, for the second album, that We wrote that still, I mean, I don't want to promote that, because it's not out yet. But, you know, we're going even more towards that direction. No. So we have a lot of more like acoustic stuff. And like more frog in the old school like, like, I don't know, like, ranging from King Crimson to Spock's birth to, you know, Neal Morse and all that and, and I think this our life is the perfect bridge between the old and the new path than I probably want to pursue in the future.

Dave - Nothing is short on this album, is it? Nothing has been cut short. I love it. Six, seven minute songs. For you, if you were to pick two, or maybe three songs that stand out for you on this particular album, which two or three would you pick?

Simone -I will say the first three. Okay. But you know, pretty much because they span through all the styles of the band, you know, you have the fast one. And that's more like the past, you know, like fast songs with double bass. And then I love the first one or rather the solo, but mainly, and as you as you pointed out, it's like seven plus minute song and everybody even in the label told me that is impossible to be a single because you know, the algorithm today on YouTube, the coral says to start in one minute and I told them I don't care. I mean, I really not chasing that. That thing you know, I otherwise I wouldn't do progressive metal. I will do probably pop music if I if I was teasing this success of pop music. So why should I cut the song? I mean, I have one minute intro of keyboards. I don't care I love. So why I mean, I want the listeners. I want the people who listen to DGM step away from the standards and cliches of like, okay, the song is to be three minutes and 30 and no solo or whatever. If I want to do a two minute solo, I'm free to do that, you know, I'm not trying to pleasing or selling million records here and just to please my, my ego trying to put out songs that I like, That's it, you know, that's the only the only thing that motivates us. And yeah, so that's why the first three songs are probably, but I could change my mind in one week.

Dave -I'm gonna say dominate. It's probably my favourite on first few hearings, and Neuromancer as well.

Simone -I love the last one Neuromancer, Dominate maybe it's too straightforward to my taste. Now, you know, again, if I'm in the mood of something more like straight, like heavy, then I might say dominate, so it's always changing.

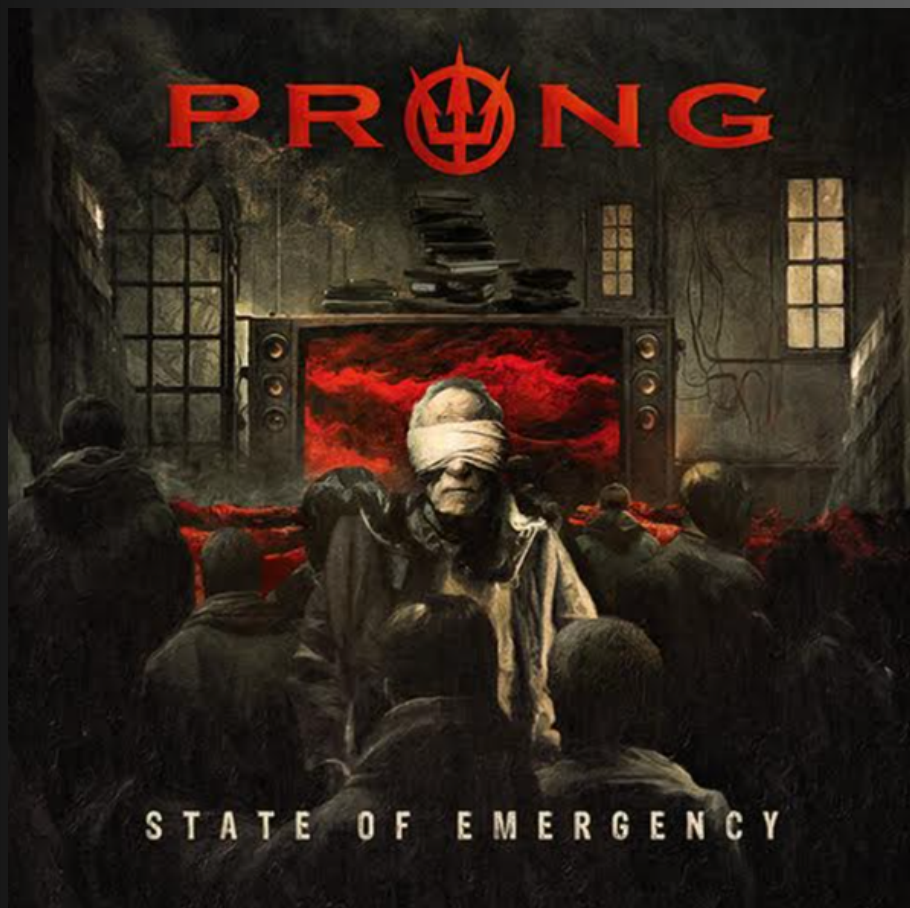
Dave -Yeah. Okay. So what are the plans for DTM? Now, going forward? Are you intending to tour?

Simone -Yeah, we have some selected shows, like, in the next year, because we've not playing together as a band since more than two years, right. Because we all live far from each other. So it's not easy for us to just rehearse and stuff like that. So we plan to do some rehearsals for one or two weeks in November and December. And then next year, we also have shows but again, my main focus is actually to put out the new record, you know, the other one that because we recorded the mix the two songs, the two albums at the same time, so it's, I really want people to, to hear the second one too. And then maybe do you know, like, a tour, where we can play the two albums together or something like that, you know? Y To me., they're connected in some way since I wrote them in at the same time.

Life, is then the first instalment of a 2-album package from DGM. I have listened to this album, over and over again and I really cannot get enough of it. What gets to me is the entire roundness of each track and the entire album. There is something there for everyone even if you are not a Progressive Metal fan. Do not let the Genre title itself, put you off from trying out this fantastic collection of songs.

I am eagerly awaiting the next instalment.





Prong

State Of Emergency

Prong are a band that I found late in life. That mean and dirty Bassline at the beginning of "Snap Your Fingers, Snap Your Neck" got me in an instant along with that Riff..... it is one of my favourite tracks of that era now with SOil who are a band of similar nature doing a superb cover of the said track on their recent album release (well, a year ago or so now I suppose).

The song is simplicity itself, keeping that moody feel to it all through the track with a grubby Guitar sound and vocals that chill you to your bone. When I saw a new album come up from them, I thought that I had to listen, I had to take it in and see how this band had progressed and matured over time. I am the first to admit that I really do know nothing about the band other than "Snap" but they had managed to grab my attention with that one track, I could never dismiss them.

State Of Emergency is their 13th release! I mean...where has the time gone and why had I overlooked this for so long? It came out on October 6th on Steamhammer/SPV, these guys know a damn good band when they hear one, there are some fantastic names on this label now.

So...the album! Eleven tracks of pure, unadulterated `Prong like material. Actually, the final track was a surprise to me as it is a RUSH cover of Working Man. I am not a lover of RUSH, great musicians and a real loss to society now they are no longer but the vocals were never my thing. Hand a song over to Tommy and you get something totally different!

Dave - For me working man is quite a track for myself because I've always been a manual kind of man before getting into music media. I was a dairy farmer basically. So working man is sort of like struck a chord with me so good, right? Yeah. What about yourself? Where did working man come from?

Tommy - Well, I was listening to old stuff that was influential in my life. Before I really got even started playing in a band I guess it goes through at the same time as I started. So that was like the Sabbath records and deep purple and rush was one of them. Then I decided I was going to figure out the whole volume for record this is before I went into writing the new prog album. So I was sitting around just like jamming, and had the Tony Iommi, C sharp tuning play that working man riff I'm like that riff sounds really cool too down.

Then I was like, well, that that the lyric really fits with prong. And then I would like to have a big epic song to end the record with. So you know, the idea let it's a couple of weeks went by when I told the producer about it and then we jammed it out and then it really made the record. I put that as a bookend to the first song that just sent we really worked it's just a narrative of one guy who's just losing his mind and you have the modern version, the guy that's like addicted to social media and like his, his last and then the 70s version a guy that's like, you know, laying bricks or something and is losing his mind. Yeah, but uh, the guy that's laying bricks now is probably that's a better job to have it in 2023 is where you're making the real money. He has to have a real skill but that's a whole other story then having a law degree doesn't seem to work anymore.

Dave - State of Emergency itself. I mean, the title track is quite a quite hard hitting song itself.

Tommy - What would you call that? A typical prong groove metal song. And I'm happy that we finally after all after 12 albums finally got a record that solidifies with the Prong sound is and it takes a little from all the records but adds up to some modern metal and it just fuses it together. And that's what Prong is so that I think that song is the definitive one of what really makes Prong with It's just this kind of crushing guitar and you know, could be contemporary lyric. So, yeah, I mean, that's, that's that song. I didn't have a lyric to it until they named the album and take it from all the other lyrics. We came up with state of emergency so that lyric was like the last one I wrote and was put into that that riff in that song.

Dave - But the sound has evolved and changed. Do you think you've almost come full circle?

Tommy - Absolutely. I mean, now I was just thinking about that earlier with one of our previous interview where now it's got back to where, what makes me happy and what's more fulfilling is just getting on the guitar, and come and playing the riffs. And that's about it. Like the riffs and the songs. That's all there is when the band started that's all it was about to Yeah, like all the BS, like the you know, the charting and the you know, the money and, you know, merch sales and you know, record company bullshit and all this stuff. I mean, it's out the window now like I just like, got back into the songs and playing them live and writing them and it's just like, it's great.

I mean, like I'm very happy now like about it the way has full came first full circle and I moved back to New York. I think that's something to do with it. That's like, you can't even describe that. I mean, my being in California for all those years, and now I'm back here. So that is total full circle geographically as well.



Dave - So, going back to the album, if you say pick, let's say two tracks on the album, which two tracks mean the most to you and why?

Tommy - I think non existence is definitely one of them. Just from the lyrical standpoint a lot of people say Oh, we didn't learn about it and that's what I feel pretty strongly about, it was kind of a personal revelation I had where I heard somebody makes a statement. Existence is better than non existence. So I think that that makes a lot of sense to me. It's like, your life has a lot of turmoil, troubles or struggles, these challenges, failures, but it's better than not having any of it. And then it's good to contribute to life. You know, it's like it's, it's, even if the smallest thing that you're doing is somehow a contribution. So you know, life is precious. That's what I believe in now. So that that and I guess Obeisance is a good song. That's almost like a spiritual reckoning kind of a song where, like, it's not really like I did with the causes, I really don't know, but it's sort of like it's it's like a promise that saw that I'm gonna like, try my best you know, and that's where that I think that, that it's time to do that, like where you're making that decision that you're going to, do the best you can and maybe that's sacrificing a lot of your life but just try your best so that the positive songs on the record of me more to me then you know that then the the other ones were pretty much of a commentary on modern day Orwellian Society.

The above is just a snippet of the interview I had with Tommy about the album and that gives you a little insight from the man himself!

The album though, is just not those few tracks we have already mentioned. Opening with The Descent and its speed metal hit...you know you're in for a real spiral downwards into the depths of humanity. The Riff draws you in to prepare you for what is to follow on the album.

State Of Emergency is that hard hitting number as previously described which lends itself perfectly to introducing the next track, Breaking Point. the squeals from the Guitar work prepare you for the brain melting depths of sonic Boxing from your chosen set of headphones or speakers.

I have to say that Non-Existence has probably turned into my favourite Track of the album, heavy yet it doesn't overpower the casual listener and when you couple it with the lyrical meaning as Tommy described, it is quite deep.

Light Turns Black has shades of shredding that would please any metalhead and a chunky melody that reminds me of early Megadeth. Who Told Me makes you catch your breath in that split second opening sequence. When you think you know where the song is going, it takes you off at a tangent which is almost progressive....great stuff indeed!

Obeisance it so different to all the other tracks here but at the same time it retains all the hallmarks of a typical Prong song. Sweeping vocal melodies with a chunky simplistic underlying riff.

Disconnected again, twists the knife of what you normally expect, not as dark or heavy, it comes across as quite commercial and almost pop-punk yet don't be too fooled by it. A fantastic track which shows yet another direction of Prong.

Compliant takes us instantly to yet another level. Pushing the vocal limits harder/higher maybe, I'm not quite sure but I really do like it. A track that I want to hear live at any rate.

Back (NYC) is quite possibly about their return to their origins on the East Coast after so many years living in L.A. It draws a massive amount of energy from each and every member of the band to give you a 3 minute injection of adrenaline.

Rounding off the album is the aforementioned RUSH cover of Working Man. I mean, it's nothing like RUSH so the purists will be hating it from the outset but I really do love the track, as with Prong in general, dismiss your preconceptions at the door and accept it for what it is, a damn fine tune!

In real terms, we have a cracking good Prong album which is up rubbing shoulders with their best work. Is it an outstanding album? Very close. I suppose we all hail back to the heady days of Cleansing and look at that as the pinnacle of their career. Yet time does indeed move on, so does music evolution and for a band to still be this good decades after releasing a substantial piece of music history clearly proves to me that Prong are better than ever they were before.

“Existence is better than non existence. So I think that that makes a lot of sense to me. It's like, your life has a lot of turmoil, troubles or struggles, these challenges, failures, but it's better than not having any of it. And then it's good to contribute to life, it's like even if the smallest thing that you're doing is somehow a contribution. So you know, life is precious. That's what I believe in now.”



Therion

Leviathan III

One thing that is great about this job...is that you get to come across bands that have shaped your musical tastes over the years.

Therion have been rumbling in the background of my music collection for a few years now and they have been active for quite some time. Maybe they are the forefathers of the whole Symphonic Rock Genre, starting it all off back in the dark ages of '91 with "Of Darkness". Now we are ready for the third and final installment of the Leviathan legacy.

Out on the 15th December, the tale is finally wrapped up with killer tracks such as Twilight Of The Gods and Ninkigal, with different flavours of sounds thrown into the mix, like Duende which is something really different from these guys.

I caught up with Thomas the other day, please follow the video link to find out more about this incredible album!



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Remedy

Something That Your Eyes Won't See

It's the same for all Radio Stations and Media folk, Bands reach out and try to get their music on as many platforms as possible. Whether it's for Radio play or review purposes, it doesn't really matter anymore because of the changes within the music industry as a whole, any platform that can just get the name across to a handful of new listeners means that little bit more to the bands. We at Rock Radio UK are now in a unique position to offer more ways for Bands to access new potential fans by offering airtime and possibly an article in this very Magazine.

One such Band that reached out to us is Remedy.

This band released their debut Album, "Something That Your Eyes Won't See", roughly 12 months ago now but it has only been recently that it caught my attention when the guys sent me a press pack. What is offered with this album is a slice of heavy melodic Rock that really captures the imagination. The Band are a Scandinavian collective of session musicians, who came together when they all lost their 'live' work when the world closed down for nigh on 2 years. Roland - Rolii - Forsmann, a very talented song-writer decided to contact his long term friend, Soren Kronqvist and decided not to waste this "down time". They (virtually) got together to write a bunch of tracks that has eventually become this very album.

They decided to call on Rolli's long term friend Robert Van der Zwain to record vocals on this project, bringing in Georg Harnsten Egg on Drums, Andreas Passmark on Bass with Jonas Oijvall on Keys. The band now boasts Jonas Dicklo on Bass with Fredrik Karlberg on Drums.

What are we getting for our virtual streaming money? As I mentioned before, this is heavy Melodic Rock which has been well produced with a great modern sound, however the core sound is from the 80s with catchy tunes and great Riffs matched with perfect vocal harmonies. The production is not over polished which can dampen the sound that certain bands try to achieve. I sometimes feel that some producers feel they need to use all the tricks in their arsenal rather than looking at what the band is trying to achieve. I think the perfect balance has been found here so it sounds exactly where it's supposed to be.

The album kicks off with Living On The Edge, a nice chuggy guitar intro with 80s style keys... it takes you back instantly! The vocals kick in and you can understand why the guy was hired, Robert is perfect for this style. Couple this with the fantastic writing, the combined harmonies and you get a belter of an opening track!

I Wanna Have It All just flows on effortlessly from the opener. I think it might be me but the Guitars are a little heavier and a shade darker in texture which brings out the lyrics from the start. There is quite a good solo hidden away in this track, it really is a guitarist song.

Marilyn is something rather different by being more biased to the Keys and the Vocals. The chorus though, really does sell the song, it's not very long as such but I reckon you'll all be singing at a gig or if I start playing loads on the radio!!! If there was a song that captured the 80s, then this is it. I can almost visualize the period MTV video or Film it was meant for, those images of how we all looked back in the day still scare the crap out of me today!

Screen In Silence is indeed a dark song, the guitars are lower and the vocal melody is a little haunting. It's when you listen a few times that you come to appreciate the density of all the music that makes up this track. This is becoming a favourite as I go back to listen again. The noodling is rather excellent and the Drums are coming across very strongly in the mix.

Sundays At Nine breaks the formidable tempo of the album and gives you that (dare I say) power ballad. It has everything from strings to solos but it is the vocals that really shine here, have I mentioned that I think Robert is rather good yet?

Stranger rips it right up again with a catchy Riff and a bloody lovely Bass-line! Following quickly on its heels is Thunder In The Dark which seems to open with a cry from the Guitar demanding to be heard. It steps down to a fantastic vocal melody and simple Bass stamp riff which then builds to fly away again.

My Devil Within has a 'religious' opening which is then shattered by the Guitar. Again, the song writing is clearly top quality here, when you listen to the verse and then the transition to the chorus, you start to understand just how talented this bunch of merry men are. I'd give my back teeth to write something half this good!

Keeping with the religious theme, Saints And Sinners is next. This is high octane Rock at it's very finest. Utterly brilliant as it draws you in from the very first bar.

Closing the album is Lifeline. It slows us right down, more of a traditional sorrowful ballad rather than a power outing, it is just sheer class, wrapped up in a 3 minute bundle.



After hearing this album, I in turn reached out to talk with Rolli to find out more.

Dave - Remedy their new band to me but you've had an album out for about 6-12 months, something like that?

Rolli - Yeah. We released it in the middle of December last year. So it was an album that came out pretty late.

Dave - Well tell me about I mean, tell me about yourself. Tell me about Remedy. How did it start?

Rolli - Yeah, well, I've been working as you know, as a freelance musician, hired guns, musical director and so on with different pop parties here in Scandinavia, like my whole life. I have had a career for 20 years but in a totally different genre in pop music, but then the pandemic struck, and I lost all my jobs like over one night, right? tours were canceled, everything. So at that point of time, I almost lost my inspiration for music. I didn't touch the guitar for like two or three months. It wasn't a good time. For me. And at the same time, Robert, my good friend,, excellent singer. He had cancer, tonsil cancer in his throat while he was also you know, he was on the treatment. So we both had a lot of time. So after a few months, I figured okay, I can't, I can't like leave the guitar low. I need to get going. And then I called my friend Soren who is a songwriter, excellent songwriter, and he was currently writing for Julian Turner. And he is like, you know, he's a god to me. I love his voice. And I grew up listening to his albums with Ray Bowen, who made Malmsteen and so on. Yeah. So I contacted him and asked, listen, I need to get going.

I need to start doing something with music. Yeah. Could we write together? And he said, Sure, come along. And as time went by, we wrote for some artists, we wrote songs for one desire and to increase the legs but after a while, I felt we were onto something good writing theater. And also me writing rock music. Like I told you, I've been in the punk business my whole career, but I felt when I started writing, rock music, melodic rock and so on, that I knew the language. You know, it was something that I felt I knew because I grew up listening to these songs, this kind of music so it was something that came quite easily. For me, I felt so after why we started keeping a few songs for our own. And I remember when we recorded living on the edge or the demo for living on the edge you know, Robert was under his cancer treatment, and he didn't have any saliva production at all. So he had real struggles now singing, I remember on a big big one bottle of water here. So between the lines he drank water, but sagging, like you know, like he does it was amazing to see it happen. But he was weak and not in a good shape then but anyway, the solid turned out really well I felt. So then I contacted a small independent label as rock music here outside of Stockholm. And I remember the manager coming over for coffee. And I played living on the edge and he liked it after just one. One. He listened to the song once and said, Okay, let's make an album together. So that was like the triggering point. It was out of something bad. Really bad for both Robert and myself. That's something good that came out. So this was remedy, was our remedy in a difficult period of our lives.

Dave - There's quite a good little image You have for the album cover. I mean, spider over the eyes?!

Rolli - Yeah, you know. We made the first video I want to have it all in Stockholm and we recorded some scenes here at my home when the girl was like, doing her makeup. And at that scene, we just had a lucky strike. A friend of mine took a photo of the makeup scene. Yeah. And then when we were you know, like triggering ideas with each other for photo cover. Lawrence, a great designer, he like zoomed in on the eye and created a spider for it. So it was just and I felt instantly Okay, that's that's the cover. I like it. I love it. Yeah. So I fell in love with it instantly. So it was just a lucky strike.

Dave - Well, the album is all about the music, really. So we've mentioned living on the edge. Excellent track.

I'm not gonna go through all of them but I'm struggling really struggling to find one song that I really like because there's like eight, nine standout tracks for me. And I can't choose between Marilyn, scream in silence, the devil within and Saints And Sinners. I'm struggling, if you could pick two tracks yourself, what would they be?.

Rolli - Yeah. Which tracks for me thunder in the dark is what special because I was on a tour when I made the song. And we were on a tour and me and George got quite drunk a few nights in a small town called boroughs. And then after that, when we were laughing in the tour bus I like you know I got the inspiration for the song and I was just humming ideas to my mobile phone. While we were touring. I didn't have the guitar on the bus. So I made a few ideas. And you know, when I came home, I listened to everything I had tracked on my phone. It was just like crazy stuff me humming, dinging and then I put it all together and made a demo and I felt instantly okay, this will be a great song. So it was just like, you know, a few nights on tour me humming into the phone so I'm really glad about and happy and satisfied with how that song turned out. And also Marilyn, Daniel Palmqvist who's an excellent guitarist and songwriter. We were also getting Drunk, and my wife was coming to pick me up . Now they've been writing songs. All day. I need to get Rolli back home. So she was coming to pick me up and I said to Daniel, that okay, she's coming in 15 minutes. Let's make one more song speed writing. Let's go. And we just, you know, it was the first thing that came to mind. Right? And idea for the verse. And then she picked me up my wife and I went home. And after that Daniel had created like a melody. And after that, we created the lyrics so that was also like the cover, it felt like Lucky Strike. It was something that came out of me saying to Daniel, okay, we have 15 minutes let's do something. And I'm happy with that song, how that turned out.

Dave - So what's next, are you writing again?

Rolli - Yes, I am. I am. So after this interview, I will turn on the computer and I realized what I think might be the last song for the album. If I get it. I think we have a whole album now. So I've been working hard this fall, creating new songs. And I started in the summer when I was in Finland. For vacation. I had my summer house over there. I took my studio with me and you know the process is quite long to get 10 songs you like you need to like write 20 or 30 but hopefully, we have a few songs that will turn out really good.

Dave - Brilliant! So, I'm not going to hold you up from your writing, I think it's more important than talking to me!

Rolli - Thank you Dave. And if I could mention we will release a new song at the end of November.. So if people would like to tune in, they can follow us on Instagram or Facebook Remedy music Sweden and we will keep you updated.

That's just a snippet of a great interview with Rolli of Remedy. Indeed, a new single has just been released, Sin For Me. I will definitely be playing it on my show over the next few weeks. In the meantime, please check out the album and give the guys some love on the socials, They are going to be huge...I'm sure of it!



Credit to the band and the unknown photographers for this article



Fear Factory Butcher Babies Ignea Ghosts Of Atlantis

SWX Bristol



I wanted to come to this gig primarily for Ignea. I had interviewed Hels earlier in the year when their new concept album was released on Napalm Records. Dream Of Lands Unseen is a concept album of stunning proportions and is up there as one of my albums of this year.

Coming from the Ukraine, it is a difficult time for them, not only as a touring/recording band, but with normal day to day life. It was quite ironic that at the time I got to the venue, there was a march by pro-Palastinians crossing the over-pass above the tour bus where I was set to meet and talk to Yevheni of the band. The media has taken upon itself to be fashionable now when it comes to war, how many of us have heard much on the news recently regarding the Russian invasion of Ukraine?

Suddenly it feels like the Ukraine can sort itself out, look at what is happening in Israel! I'm not belittling either conflict, war is a terrible thing and we should be aware of everything thats going on in the world. A point that was hammered home by Yevheni when I asked about his home and whether his family was safe? No was the simple answer, he and his family live in a tower block in the capital, the next building to it has a huge hole on the lower decks from a missile.

I should give you an overview of the album by all accounts, Dreams Of Lands Unseen is about a Ukrainian photographer who travelled the world on her own in the 1930s, visiting many countries and staying off the beaten track. Exploring and documenting a world that was unseen by many back at the time.



it's all the tiny nuances and the larger than life melody that makes songs like this stand out.

The Golden Shell has that oriental feel to it straight away, I can't begin to understand just how they managed to capture the different sounds here on this album. We can be so used to music that really is a replica of what has gone before and not question it. With this album, you get to see what is possible when you draw inspiration from real life events and then touch on the brilliance it takes to be able to mould your imagination into seeing the vision that these talented musicians have seen in their own mind.

Teoura opens the album with a grandiose flourish of power and metal which turns on a six-pence with a middle eastern flavour.

Dunes is just spell binding in its equal amounts of raw power which is driven by Hels course vocal style and a superb guitar sound, matched with her clean vocal style which is divine. Can she carry this off in the live enviroment? Certainly as it was a set opener as well and it literally sent shivers down my spine.

Camera Obscura has a magic about it that makes it one of the best tracks on the album. The Synths on here are utterly brilliant but what clinches it for me is the clean vocal melody and Riff. The way it has been written is inspired because it could so easily have been a little generic but with an altered note here and there, it elevates the song to another level.

Track 4 is in their native tongue, I am not even going to try and write it down. Listening to the raw vocals in Ukrainian is an experience, it seems darker and this enhances the music no end.

To No One I Owe starts off very differently, the vocals seem to swing and sway in a rhythm that lulls you into a false sense of security then the hammer blow hits with the Guitar. You start to realise that you may even be in a different location to where you think, the feel to the music seems to filter through and it really does give you a sense travelling the world within 45 minutes of this particular album.

Incurable Disease is yet another fantastic track with its own story to tell. There is only a hint of course toned vocals in this track, it relies more on the Guitars, Drums and Bass to bring the power which pounds at your chest like several beating hearts at once.

Nomad's Luck reinforced the subtle changes in location, taking on different tones and styles. end,

Optimist obviously has a dark undertone but the track itself follows on in the beauty of its predecessor . The longest track on the album at over 7 minutes, but it seems to fly by in seconds. The mid section change will absolutely blow your mind!!

Zenith closes the album, much more metal than the previous few tracks but still it holds true to the album where it takes you to the completion of the journey. The album really is a killer in all respects, there is no padding here just a well crafted body of music that takes me out of my comfort zone to what I normally play on the radio and listen to. It really is a career defining body of work but I am sure that the band can surpass this again with the next album.

This should give you some insight into why I wanted to see this band live. Not enough promoters will take a risk on a wide spread tour unless its as in support to a band like Fear Factory. This is an absolute shame but unfortunately it is also the world we live in where costs of touring is so high. I know that this review will be too late for you to

catch them on this particular tour but I do hope that it will prompt someone like Bloodstock to bring them over to be seen by a large audience. The show they put on for us in Bristol was just superb.

Before they could take to the stage, we had the pleasure of having Ghosts Of Atlantis open up the evening. Well I say evening but it was more like late afternoon as the gig was set to finish before ten so the club could bring in round 2 of paying customers.



Ghosts' are a UK band from the eastern counties, describing themselves as Heavy Symphonic Rock...with a hint of theatrics. They have an image that is steeped in lore and the whole theatrics of it works really well with the sounds they produce. Dark, very dark yet not oppressive at all. The tracks were long, I mean they didn't have a long set yet the Togs were in the pit for the obligatory 3 songs and they saw most of the set through a lens. However, the quality was outstanding and it was long enough for us all early birds to want to see them play again. It is a credit to an opening act to pull punters away from the bar to watch them and this is indeed what Ghosts' did. By the end there was a hefty number. It was a sold out gig but it was early.



After a swift turn around Ignea took to the stage, atmospheric lighting enhanced the mood and these guys just owned the stage from the very first note. The guys walked to the front and then confirmed their entrance with a curtain of sound, swept over the waiting audience. Hels, this tiny figure compared to the giants she stood beside, became a fireball of power and blew everyone away! Looking at the audience, many were unaware or unprepared for what was about to unfold. People were turning to each other in a state of shock/wonder and asking just who was this? There are many that proclaim to have that raw roar vocal technique in a studio but fall very short when it comes to a live performance. There were no short measures here tonight as Hels voice was on fire and could turn in a blink of an eye to the clean, sweet tones that are wholly beautiful.

Atmospheric lighting, Keytairs, Glitter, the Ukrainian flag and a stunning performance from this band made this the set of the entire night for me. I know I'm going to be biased as I have already said how much I like them but in all honesty, this was a show from a world-class band. It was far too short, pulling the bulk of the set from the latest album. We did get a snapshot of the older material but it wasn't near enough. I do hope they come back again soon



Butcher Babies were up next. I must confess that I have heard the hype but not really listened to the music. It's not the deep, conceptual music of Ignea, but it still hits hard as they ask the questions of yourself that maybe you try to ignore. 'Til The World Is Blind is their latest release and we had a huge slice of it served up here tonight. There was one downside to the show tonight, Carla Harvey would not be performing as she has some health issues,

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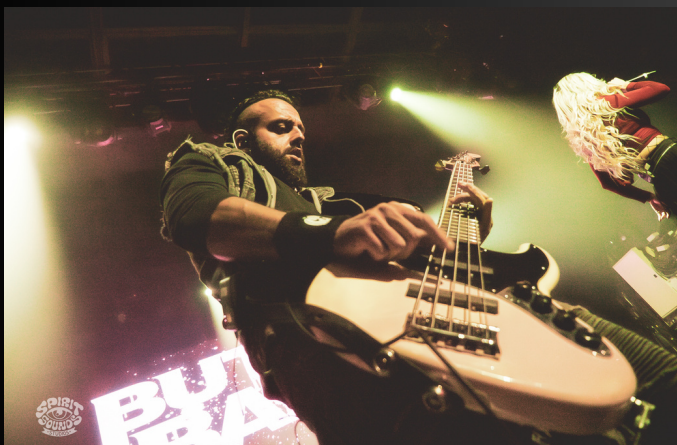
so it was up to Heidi Sheperd to take control of the helm on her own and steer the good ship Butcher Babies. The energy from the start was explosive, the whole band were loaded with electricity and firing bolts of energy into the crowd from the very start. How....where....just where did all this come from???? I knew they'd be good but they worked the crowd with absolute ease and they were travelling the stage in all directions, making each and every person feel included. This was even true when they called out a guy and asked him to be their Kingpin.



Cue the song of that name which was absolutely bloody brilliant....until you heard that electrical pop and then nothing. Mid song there was so much power coming out of the PA, it just gave up. You could just visualise the PA shrugging its shoulders and muttering to itself that it wasn't made to cope with this....it was duly kicked and they started the song again. Wrong End Of The Knife and Beaver Cage are just immense, high octane Rock-Out Metal tracks that are really just brilliant. Just as Heidi was about to talk us through Last December which has significant meaning, the PA popped again. 5 minutes of tinkering and we were alive again but time was short. The set ended early with the haunting and excellent Last December.



I do have to hand it to the band, they worked the crowd really well, then were visible and accessible on the Merch desk later on. I was impressed, actually more than impressed, it was a top quality show and I like many others would have been happy at just having the first 3 bands only at the price of the ticket. Three excellent bands to open for the main event, Fear Factory had a lot to live up to!



After the break, with Brains and back vertebrae added to the appropriate Mic stands, Fear Factory made their entrance.

Dino is an amazing guitarist...of that there is no doubt. His smile was so broad when he stepped onto the stage, you knew he was genuinely pleased to be in front of the crowd. I was never a huge fan back in the day with its crossover sound between modern thrash and Industrial tones. However, you could almost recognise each and every song that they played on this night, It dawns on you that the band in its various guises have been around and quite prevalent for a long time. But all eyes were on the new(ish) vocalist who had stepped into some damn big shoes. Milo Silvestro has probably heard all the nay-sayers before, how he's not this and not that. In reality, would all these nay-sayers prefer the band not to exist? Of course not.

Fresh blood always brings a revitalising element to a new band and I firmly believe that Dino made the right choice in choosing this guy to front the band. The crowd certainly thought so as well, for it didn't take much more than a nanosecond for the energy to transfer from the band to the fans. Crowd surfers aplenty, dropping on the unsuspecting Togs in the pit, the whole place was moving. This was the key point to the entire gig if I'm honest, the re-worked album, the new vocalist, legal matters...it all paled into insignificance at the end of the day. The fans and gig goers were here for one reason only, to go to a Fear Factory gig and have a memorable time.

This is indeed what they did, the entire gig was a full-on top quality, jam-packed evening which would have served up a very tasty festival in the Summer. There was something for everyone, young and old to the Metal Genre. Fear Factory are at Download as well so that itself will be interesting to see....a much bigger crowd doing what they did in the SWX.....Donny will be a blast!







The Whiskey Syndicate Back For A Second Shot!

I was blissfully unaware, who on earth were The Whiskey Syndicate?

Having entered the scene at a very late stage, this band had passed me by. The original band had gotten together several years ago, worked hard and created a very loyal following within the Midlands area. They even earned themselves a record deal and trust me, that's no mean feat as I am sure that this was on the cusp of time where every record label either dropped or walked away from any band who were remotely Rock orientated, and streaming was the new get rich quick scheme and the best thing since sliced bread.

It turns out that this was to be the downfall of the band, they couldn't play where they wanted now or do what they were very capable of doing. The binds of a record deal were constricting and killing the band until it eventually imploded.

Fast forward several (9) years and the band are back! From what I can gather, they felt that there was some unfinished business to attend to and once the issues of the past had been shed, they could reform and do what they do best, play some damn fine Rock N Roll music. Only 2 original members are in the band now, guitarist Mike and Richard on Bass, joining them on Drums is Gareth, second guitarist Neil and fronting the band Richard 'Stan' Hallam.

I've known Stan for a while now and I've seen him play guitar for Slowmo 75 and I do know he can sing. This, however, would be his first foray into being a vocalist only. This is a big step for anyone, to front a band takes some balls to be fair, when you have a guitar to hide behind when you're doing backing vocals, which is a little easier because you can hide behind your playing. This...is a different beast altogether as you can only hide behind the Mic stand.

On top of this, he had the job of resurrecting the voice of a well-loved band, how would the fans of old react to someone who was completely different to the original guy? If you go back and listen to the old album or maybe dig out a few YouTube videos from times past, you will see and hear a band in top form. It is a trial by fire to bring in a totally different person on vocal duties to a public who will have fond memories of gigs that are ten years old.

Obviously, the rest of the band were sold on Stan, they could see exactly what I can and that's the potential in Stan to take the band back out there to the masses and haul in all of the old fans from times past, yet also pull in hordes of new people. I think the one outstanding point is that Stan would be himself and not a carbon copy of what has gone before. This really makes a huge difference,

repeating the past is never a good thing. Always be fresh and new and look revitalised.

So, The Whiskey Syndicate are back, so what do they do next? Organise a comeback gig with a couple of other bands in the heart of their old stomping area that's what!

On the 20th of October, at The Giffard Arms, Wolverhampton, The Whiskey Syndicate poured themselves another shot.

I have never been to The Giffard before, so it was about time I found out what the fuss was all about. It IS a bloody well put together Rock Pub, there are no other words! Why can't we in the South-West have something like this??? Anyway, I mounted the stairs to the where the gig was being held, paid my money and entered. We had been late arriving due to traffic on the M5, so we literally only caught the last few bars of the opening act, Mantis Defeats Jaguar. It was a shame as they sounded pretty damn good. I looked around and the place was packed! I mean, there was really no room to swing a mouse, let alone a cat. Word had gotten out about the return, and I don't think many people wanted to miss it.

Second Band My Great Affliction took to the stage. Raw, full of power and have the ability to play some damn fine riffage, I need to check out this band some more, a 3-piece making this much noise in the style of bands like Motorhead/Orange Goblin and the like.... gets a definite thumbs up from me. The Time had come, the lights went down (ever so slightly), and the Whiskey Syndicate took to the stage.

Met with cheers and applause, the band looked pleased to be there and then faultlessly, they launched into Livin' Fast. For me this was going to be the tell, had they all gelled? Would it go to plan? Would nerves take a hold and stall the maiden flight of this band? I am very pleased to report that they surpassed my expectations. You could see a little hesitation in Stan, but he took hold of the Mic and gave it everything, hats off to the guy as he had some pretty big boots to fill, and he passed the test in less than a minute of being on stage.



Stan was holding his own and as the song progressed, he managed to make the job his own, perfect!

As for the other guys, flipping Pro's the lot of them! Not a bum note or a missed queue that I could tell. That first song would make or break their return, the guys did themselves proud. With a few words between tracks, you could hear the relief in Stan's voice that it was going well, his confidence was growing and with this, the songs just started getting better and better. Right Side of Crazy and Rock N Roller were next. There was no real surprise when they played Whiskey in The Jar was there? I mean, it is a trademark song. Skin N Bones was a flippin' good track as was Rise For Me. The banter between the tracks was getting easier for Stan, Mike and Neil were really starting to shine on guitars. You could see the pleasure on the bands faces at being able to play these tracks live again, it has been a travesty that the songs have not really had an airing in nearly a decade.





Closing the set was Darker Secrets. What a set it was too, there were no half measures tonight with The Whiskey Syndicate, they poured themselves and everyone that was there a double shot, and we all downed it in one. What a gig, what a comeback! I am so glad I took the time to travel up to see these guys play, a new pet band that will get loads of airtime in the years ahead. I believe they are set to re-record one of the old tracks as the new band and have it out, ready for the wider public to make their own decision of the new line-up. I am positive that like me, the wider public will become huge fans. Here's to new success and long may it last!
Dave



Cochise was a surprise, although I have heard it played by Prophets of Rage, just after the death of Chris, tonight it sounded just as special. Jazz Bar and Nothing to Hide, by this time, the crowd were almost bouncing. It was time for one last cover which was Slither... a fav of mine and as it turns out, most of my favourite bands will play it as well!

We had a little dialogue before the next track, thanking everyone for their support and also Stan, who impressed the hell out of the rest of the band when he auditioned for the job by singing the next track, Break The Chains. There is quite a significance to this track now and after hearing them play it on this night, I can fully understand why they gave him the job.





LIVEWIRE

Rockin' By The River

Well, this event certainly lived up to its name this year, when I eventually got down to Saltash for this evening of spectacular music and raffle tickets, it seemed that the River Tamar had decided to join in with the festivities and lap the front steps of the Livewire venue. It was high tide which usually isn't a problem if I'm honest, but nature had other ideas. This did not stop proceedings in the slightest though, by the time I had got there, beers had been drunk a plenty from the Union next door and The Mayhaps had already played.

So yeah, late again! To my defence, I had seen the boys play before when they supported Anchor Lane last winter, I knew they were a good local band, however everyone was raving about them when I got there.

I should step back a little, Rockin' By The River is a Charity event held for the Livewire youth club which is where the event was held. Over the years, several high-profile Rock Stars have donated time, money and equipment to this youth club which is left in the hands of the very capable Andy Rance. Livewire is a safe place where teens can go to not only mix and mingle with other teens, but also create music, often coached and taught many things about the industry which Schools would never dream of teaching in a music curriculum.

I also know how the people within Livewire try to connect and help troubled kids. This place is an essential part of the area for a lot of kids for so many reasons and everything we can do to help this place tick along and keep the Doors open is appreciated by the staff there.

A special mention to Jeremy Wills and Beavis Robins is in order for organising these Rockin' By The River events. I believe tonight they raised a wonderful £1250 or thereabouts.

Anyway.... onwards to Unknown Refuge. I last saw these guys play at the first Firevolt (storm) event last year. Wow! They have grown up and matured in a big way, no drummer tonight, he was just tuned in via his little brother called MacBook. This worked well, I'm not saying they should fire their drummer and have a computer instead, but it got them out of the hole they were in, and it sounded superb. Is it me or have they gotten harder and louder? I'm sure they weren't so in your face metal the last time I saw them...or am I just not as drunk now as I was then? Also, the Shredding on guitars was absolutely amazing! Like I said, I think they've matured a little and for me, this has made them 100 times better. New music is coming soon with a clutch of tracks played.... they are going to be huge!



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Beth Blade And The Beautiful Disasters have taken the plunge and travelled to Cornwall for the very first time to play. They also decided to come down in full Halloween costume, so for people who have never seen them before...it was quite an introduction! Beth and her merry bunch of friends were absolutely on fire that night, they had a decent length set and they filled it head to toe with bangers. My daughter had come along to the gig tonight as well, she became an instant fan. The tracks from the latest album are by far my favourite so I was pleased that they had a good share of the set. Concluding on Jack And Coke, I believe that these guys will be back here again before too long. The crowd loved them to bits.

50 Year Storm hail from the mighty Newquay area, Bevis introduced me to them a few years ago and to be honest, I've loved everything they have put out. The set was well received from the very start as I think 90% of the crowd were here to see them! I have noticed a few subtle changes in the music and when I spoke to them later, they did say they were going a little more Drum & Bass. Don't let that fool you for an instant,



, the music they are putting out there is as heavy as \$£&@, they have just embellished it a little more and the new song they played is brilliant. Music is all about self-exploration for the bands and this I feel is the right way forward for 50YS, I think they have hit that happy streak of talent within themselves and are set to produce something spectacular very soon. As long as the keyboard works a little better than it did tonight!!! To be fair, it only played up once and I did think it was going to go flying off the stand at one point.

SKAM have been here before, they have probably played the venue more times than any other of the bands to come to Rockin' By The River and after tonight's performance, it's easy to see why they keep getting asked back! Launching is the only word you can use to describe the start of their set. They flew out of the starting gates at full velocity and never stopped until the lights came up, giving it everything they had.



No one pulls Bass faces like Matt, no one hits drums quite like Neal and no one fronts a band nor plays quite as well as Steve. I think after a dozen or so years together, they probably couldn't get any tighter as a unit. For style, they are a bit hard to pin down but the SG sort of gives the early influences away to a degree. One thing is certain though, they pull a crowd and know how to entertain. The Memoirs album is probably my favourite overall album, but we had healthy servings from IntraVenous in the set and maybe...this darker edge to their music is sitting with me better as time goes on.

Songs flew by and you know the end is near when you get the medley of covers then the crowd walk whilst playing the guitar. It was the first time my daughter had seen them and quite possibly the first time I'd seen a full headline set.... fantastic stuff!



So, I tip my hat to all that played there on the night, and I was also impressed by the quality of the sound all evening and the light show. There are bigger venues that could learn something from this set-up.

Well done to all involved and hopefully I will see you again next time.





Night Thieves

Polarity

For a little time now, I have been getting into the ALT Metal scene step-by-step. Its never going to become the only Genre of music I listen to, but it is taking a higher percentage of my listening hours as time goes on. I suppose it all started about 4 years ago for me when I was introduced to 50 Year Storm who are fairly local to me here in the South-West. Now, they probably are not the most alternative band out there, but what they did was to open my eyes to different techniques in writing and from there, I have found several more ALT Bands out there.

I suppose to dig a little deeper into the realm, what the bulk of the bands within this genre have managed to do is capture the essence of Rock/Metal and wrapped it up in a more popular mode. Many older Metalheads sniff at modern recording and writing practises yet if we step back 40 years or so, the "Rock" we listen to now was classed as "Pop" back then when we had regular singles getting into the Top 40 by the likes of Slade, The Sweet, Thin Lizzy etc, etc. These Bands managed to capture the popular sound of their time and yes, they are timeless pieces. Fast-forward to today, we have the same kind of Rock Bands,

probably in higher numbers as well, putting out more music than ever before. The only difference is that Bands like Vukovi, Kite Thief and Spiritbox have embraced modern recording methods and particular sounds which has made them possibly more popular than the Rock Gods of yesteryear.

At the end of the day, Rock is alive and kicking, reaching more people and will outlive us all.

So what is all this leading to? There are times I come across bands that I think that everyone in the entire world needs to sit up and listen to. Night Thieves are one such Band. People my age (really old) are going to say who? So let me enlighten you!

Based in the capital, Jess Moyle handles vocals, Paul Andrew welds the Guitar and Rick Hunter-Burns brings the Bass alive. They have released 2 previous Eps, in line with most modern bands these days. Costs inhibit a full album for many but also, album tracks lower in the running order are now tending to get less streaming time thanks to people preferring the shuffle button.

The Debut Ep, Battle Cry, is stunning indeed, as was the follow-up Spiral. In January '24, we are set to see the release of their third Ep, Polarity.

I could go on and give you countless details about the technical side of things, all I will say is that they were joined in the studio by Tom Connolly from Dream State on Drums who has now since been replaced by a new permanent member, Ryan Delglyn. The production was handled by Romesh Dodengoda who has quite a pedigree of work behind him. I believe his influence in certain areas has been a major factor in why Polarity is a major leap forward in Night Thieves sound.

Polarity boasts 4 tracks, It opens with current single, Collide. It starts with a slightly haunting intro which then goes full-tilt into a storming song, taking your breath away in an instant. The main riff certainly catches that particular groove which stays with you until the end of the track. Jess vocals are perfectly balanced and sound absolutely fantastic. At the break down, around 2 .10 minutes in, your mind is blown by the Bass sound and when the vocals kick in again...it really bites! The Way The Story Goes is a gentler affair, honest! It's more of a showcase Jess' vocals than it is to melt faces, although it is still Guitar laden. The vocal melody probably drives the entire track and to my mind, it makes the song stand out by a country mile.

Through The Looking Glass is a slightly darker affair at the intro then turns on a six-pence when the body of the track kicks in. Don't get all complacent though, when the chorus opens, it takes your soul and gives it a damn good shake! I think this played live will shake the house PA system to the core. Closing out the Ep is Walkaway. This is heavy, it's a little different to the other three tracks as well. I actually prefer it over the others, it gets you behind the eyes! It really does highlight each and every members talent to the full, pulling every ounce of energy from themselves and giving it all to the dedicated listener. This is world class music!

I had to find out what makes them tick so an interview was in order!

Dave - I've not come across you before I have to admit. So tell. Tell me about yourselves. Where did you start? Where did you spring from?

Jess - Well, Rick and I have played in quite a few bands in the past. When it came to night thieves, our last band guitarist actually kind of moved and we thought let's keep that to the end of the era. Let's start a new era with the night thieves and so we were looking for a guitarist and Paul came in joint force. We heard his stuff he does a lot of kind of songwriting and kind of arrangements and stuff and we thought that really kind of fitted really fitted with a kind of a new sound that we wanted. We wanted a bit more I guess, slightly commercial but heavier. So that kind of started a new band for us. And yeah, that was in 2017. So we've been kind of going on since then.

Rick - Yeah, it was quite good. I think when Paul joined, we just said we're trying to look for a new kind of sound. And Paul came in with this kind of idea of doing a lot more downtuned kind of stuff. And that was really good for me because I just bought a new five string bass. And I was like raring to go use the Lobi. And, yeah, it worked out really well. It kind of gave us a new kind of new vibe and a new feel. And it started completely fresh. And it was yeah, we've been going ever since.

Dave - You've released a couple of EPs in the past so far. Just run through those for me, please.

Jess - Yeah, I think the first one that we had released was battle cry. And that one we were produced with Jason. I think it was kind of four tracks on that one. And yeah, we had numero uno. We had a battle cry which was like the title Ep that's probably the one that we probably one we still kind of play on our setlist as well. And then after that, we started writing on next Ep, which was a spiral with that one COVID hit so that was quite fun. That was a bit of a struggle to slog through that one, but we had like a three track EP on that. So you can imagine what that was inspired by so it was probably a little bit depressing. With a little bit of perseverance with that one so we have you know, of the wire which was very much kind of about those like internal struggles and then we've got figure it out, at the tone so that one we record with Paul Visser and his team in the recording studio in London. Yeah. And I think people thought there was no there wasn't enough tracks on that 3 was a little too short. So we came with our next one, which is the one that we're



releasing in January is going to be the four track EP called polarity. And I think with this one, I think we really, really tuned into these and made a lot of effort around the arrangements of these of. And we're really happy to work with Romesh on the tracks in Cardiff. So yeah, that's the gist of those our journey through those EP so forth.

Rick - I think I think over over the course of it, we've progressed as a band, honestly, it's been nice to listen back and see actually how we've moved forward with each different release. And like actually now looking at now that we've got kind of three releases out each one of them has their own feel and vibe, and it's really nice to like, go back to them sometimes and go like, Oh, yeah, that's how we were kind of feeling at the time. That's how where we were as a band. And yeah, I think like the latest one, obviously, biased, but I think it's the best one we've done. But I feel Yeah, it's definitely where we are now. And I feel like we've progressed as a group as well. We've really come together. And yeah, what we've done the latest one, we absolutely love it.

Dave - Polarity is out in January and the first single is Collide? Tell me a bit about it

Jess - Yeah, collide opens the EP, and I guess it's the whole theme about the EP of like opposite worlds, or kind of the opposites attract conflict. And that's basically what collide is all about as a track, of lyrics. It's kind of about when you see things in a different perspective to probably what you're used to start to doubt, challenge things and it's about those kind of basically those

two views and those opposing worlds kind of colliding from a lyrical perspective. And I think, yeah, I think the track is very much more the upbeat ones on the EP, which is kind of yeah, like I said, it's like one sides positive one side is kind of like a bit darker. This is probably still a bit of a positive track as well.

Rick - musically, I really love it because it's kind of started a bit angry like writing that. Song it cut there's a lot of Stabby stabby bits in it and a chorus which I love that style. That we've started to progress with now. And yeah, but on Yeah, in terms of the up we have like these two sides has just said like and this is definitely lighter side so we've actually split the artwork into two. So we have this like kind of cool pink front cover for collide and a blue front cover coming up and they kind of fit together to make make the EP cover which really brings the whole thing together.

Dave - When you were writing this was it a conscious decision to make an opposite kind of album or EP rather was just something you plan to do or is it just something that happened?

Jess - No, I always stumbled it to be honest. It always starts off with like, I'm such an indecisive person anyway, when it comes to the ego always starts off with the riffs To be honest, and then start to get it and start to get that kind of inspiration. And then once we get a bit more of a kind of a view in the sound of everything that kind of inspires kind of what this tells me that's how it works.

SaN PR

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Hugely inviting heavy rock quartet NIGHT THIEVES are back with an immersive new EP. The Brit rockers unleash their third EP in three years, *Polarity*, which lands on Friday 19th January. Hailing from the nation's capital, NIGHT THIEVES soon earned glowing comparisons to everyone from Biffy Clyro, Royal Blood, Architects, and Spiritbox. Dispatching a sound that is steeped with stout riffery, intriguing phrasing, and captivating vocal lines, the band soon picked up a legion of followers after a raft of highly engaging live performances. With much revered support from Planet Rock, Fireworks Magazine, Powerplay, HRH, Total Rock, and ERB Magazine, NIGHT THIEVES are destined to break through in 2024.

For more see:

<https://www.facebook.com/NightThievesOfficial>

Commanding Brit Nu-metalcore quartet DRIP FED EMPIRE are poised to unleash a full-blooded assault on the UK armed with their debut album, *Revolutionist*, which drops on Friday 26th January. The self-proclaimed "genre bending metalheads" bring together a wealth of influences drawing from metalcore and industrial, through to nu-metal, and have already racked up glowing comparisons to everyone from Rage Against The Machine, Enter Shikari, and Bring Me The Horizon. Expressing a style and phrasing that are uniquely their own, DRIP FED EMPIRE are a group with a political voice and strong social conscience, and this is depicted through their deeply engaging lyrical themes and messages.

Check out more at: <https://linktr.ee/dripfedempire>



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Rick - I think the idea of things did come together fairly early on, but then it didn't really fully form until we'd like got into the recording studio. I think the EP name came when we were sat in a pub and we really wanted to nail down what we wanted from the EP and we it kind of Yeah, we already knew it was happening. But I think we really, once we've got the recordings down we really kind of realized that we had these two sides and we wanted to really enhance that and really bring that to the forefront when we were like naming the EP and also kind of doing the artwork and things like that. So from that point of view it's Yeah, it kind of happened organically but really, once we noticed it was happening we kind of went yeah, we got to we've got to run with this because it's really cool. Yeah,

Jess - I think like, started off like different stories almost went down the stories but I think that the whole kind of opposite thing like that a couple of songs on there like it's absolute direct, like Alice In wonderland, reality versus imaginary and kind of references like that sort of kind of a bit more of a theme on that side. And then just below the story.

Dave - You mentioned Through The Looking Glass, tell me about that one?

Jess - Yeah, so I think that one yeah, I think I was kind of like is yes. Inspired by others? Why maybe I was watching a film or something like that. But I was looking at that point and kind of knew what we were going towards and yeah, that's quite a story. You have a few references around and again, this kind of she goes into weld or when doesn't she? There's like I said the story but decided to go for the sequel version of it and the whole story is about her in her normal environment. And partying be curious about when going into this completely different world that makes absolutely no sense even even the lips, some of the lyrics in the bridge doesn't make sense. So that's, you know, that emergence of like sounds and yeah, it's just her journey of bone in there. I mean, as she goes in there, there's a read, but in all kind of that reflexion of herself. I was just kind of disturbed by it. And then sides. I want to go back. I don't want to go back home. Is a bit disturbing for me. And that's the whole song is kind of all around all of unfamiliarity the opposite world and then her making her way back basically.

Dave - Okay. Walkaway is another track. I mean, that's quite a chunkier track compared to the other three as well. It's probably my favorite

Rick - interesting, because that's the one actually that probably came together. Last on the up. And is that yeah, as you say, it's definitely the I'd say it's the densest of the tracks on the EP. I think we're definitely going for a definitely heavy heavy vibe with the main riff. And trying for a bit of a new is something we hadn't really done before and explored and it's actually I'm sure you've said it because it's like something new that we're really looking at. And then Jess came in with the lyrics from a book,

Jess - Ice Harvest by Scott Phillips Yeah, it's a very Tarantino like is that kind of that kind of story as well? Yeah, and that was, yeah, again, it's, you know, the story starts in one place and ends up something completely different. But again, like I said, it's kind of very, it's very much like you know, the film bog, you either watch the film Fargo, though, is kind of fear feel to it, a bit of a kind of dark side. And hence, it's like the dark side of the EP. So yeah, that's kind of how it's kind of like pull towards the end.

Rick - Jess lent me the book, as we were doing as we were kind of doing the songs and I read it and I was like, Yeah, this song really fits with the theme of the book. And it really it came together really nicely. Actually. That was one of the ones where, when we were kind of demoing the EP with me, Paul and Jess would kind of sit down in a practice room and we just kind of go over the songs over and over and chest with kind of like, try new ideas for the vocals. And it was a really nice way of working actually and we ended up with some really awesome ideas coming out.

Dave - Okay, well, we haven't spoken about the way the story goes. I suppose we should, we should ask. It's only four tracks we should mention as well. So what's the story about that?

Rick - That was my favorite one on the on the EP I think yeah, that was just musically I love it because it kind of started as a bit of a riff like is in a bit of a weird time signature and I think it started from that and then kind of grew and grew and I kind of had a bit of an epicness to it which I think Jesse you kind of jumped on with the lyrics, which was called where the story goes. I think it was kind of that that happened quite organically.

Jess - Yeah, definitely. I love all those, like weird time signatures, but there's only so much you could do is that they before you confuse everyone to get really, but I love the fact that we add to that into the intro and stuff and then, you know, and then get into into the verse and stuff but yeah, I mean, like I said before, we're almost going down towards kind of like the whole kind of set of stories as I've been to the EP and this is probably one of them in the earliest stages where I was writing the lyrics around this around this song and it's originally we were thinking actually the EP would be called version of what I came up with that but they think that we're done well because it was like, too much too many words. That is too much of a mouthful, so but I think probably the version of events is much what this story is about. It's got lyrics in there like you know, when you think you know, kind of something ends but actually think about infinity. A story story really doesn't typically end and you know, it begins again and he carries on. And that's really about the way the story goes. It's sort of talking about not you know, sort of story, never ending. People understand different versions of events and, you know, for one for one person something, you know, something that happens like I think I use the metaphor like you know this, you know the stars in the sky. That's a beautiful thing. But in reality, those are stars with a big fat solar explosion, that could be the most disturbing thing as well. So it's really, it's kind of playing around with this whole, you know, the way that you see things and again, following on that kind of opposite perspective. So that's kind of the whole story.

Dave - Thanks Guys, it's been a pleasure!

Polarity is set to make everyone sit up and notice this Band, be there first and make sure you pre-save Polarity on the Streaming platforms now! You can hear Collide now on the same platforms and across a few shows on Rock Radio UK





The Blue Lena Darkwood

Who doesn't like a little bit of southern style boogie in their lives? I love it! I don't know much about it if I'm perfectly honest, I can blag my way around Blackfoot and Skynryd if I can ever spell it, but to me, finding Southern Boogie Bands is like a voyage of discovery.

I found Sons Of Liberty a few years ago and in turn found our very own Greyfox Growl who not only has a show on this very station on a Tuesday evening but also fronts The Greyfox Conspiracy who just blow your socks off at every show they perform. So British based acts that Rock those Southern style roots are out there to find....so I stumble around like a blindfolded kid trying to figuratively pin the tail on the Donkey, trying to find new blood to listen to.

I may have found my next new favourite band in this Genre. The Blue Lena.

Vocalist, Peter Yeomans and Guitarist Nick Singleton have gotten together and written one helluva album together and forming a block-busting band with Martin Raggett on Bass,

Richie Yeates on second Guitar, Jon Clayton on Drums, Matt Raynor on Keyboards and finally Fi Channon on Harmonie/Lead Vocals.

This is an impressive line-up to start with, when they got together to record, they pulled in the ever talented Pete Newdeck (0800 top producer (yes, he paid me)) to mix/master the debut album, Darkwood.

So what do you get for your hard earned streaming money? A dozen memorable tracks that will stay with you for the rest of your days. This is a stunning album from start to finish and it is practically faultless. I know you all think I blow a lot of smoke to get you out there to part money with an album that you may not like, but on this....please do trust me when I say that this could indeed for me, be the album and find of the year. I love it!

I am not going to dissect each individual track because I feel it will do an overall disservice to the album and there are only so many adjectives I can use to describe basically the same thing, each track is perfect!

To start, what sells this for me is the Vocals of both Peter and Fi, they are sublime. They compliment each other perfectly, Peter's Bluesy voice and Fi's tone are a magical mix together. If you head to Something 'Bout The Way is possibly the best track to hear Peter's voice on a full out Rockin track. There are different aspects in this song that prove that he is a top performer, especially when he sings the Bridge/opening line of the Chorus without any accompaniment. That spiral melody is also sublime to hear. For Fi, Frozen is possibly the best track to hear those divine tones of hers, the song set the hairs on the back of my neck standing on end.

But the band is not just about the vocalists, lets not let their ego's get carried away! The backline throughout each track is solid all the way through the album, I love the Drum sound, particularly on the final track What Do You Want. The Bass does shine on the opening track, Last Chance Saloon, acting more of a filling sound, another Guitar track if you like rather than just a beat in the background. As the album runs through you can hear it more and more.

The Keys are a major element of this Band with them being a top quality component of the overall sound. Who doesn't love a great sounding Hammond or a perfect pitched Piano? I honestly feel without the Keys in the mix, this wouldn't be half the album that it is.

It's the Guitars though that really sell/complete the Album for me, its a bit like Goldilocks tasting the porridge, it ain't too hot nor is it too cold... they are set just right! This IS a Guitar band and I have no idea who to credit each section to but the playing is just outstanding. As I inferred, it never gets too heavy and it doesn't get dull by being too light and twiddley.

I think it is actually perfection in the skill of writing that set the tone of the Guitars. I'm instantly reminded of the Bands I already listen to of this Genre but it goes 3 steps further, there are sounds and tones I would never have thought would work but do, there are melodies and Riffs that sound truly amazing and all I want to hear is more!

Darkwood is a great album, my track of the moment (because it changes all the time) is Undertow. It feels like it has just about everything on it in an epic proportion.

The Blue Lena have recently released Darkwood and to highlight this release, they are playing WinterStorm and RockStock.

Also, you will be pleased to see, I had a chat with the Band a few weeks ago and this is what they had to say.

Dave - This is the Cyderbaby show. I'm Dave Cyderbaby. And I'm speaking to the blue Lena, which is Nick and Pete. Hey. Well, you're looking chilled and relaxed for a Tuesday evening.

P - Yes. Sat in my Studio, with my Guitars looking down at me. Yeah, we're all good.

N - I'd like to say the same with my tartanblanket, and a quilt up on its end, which I use as a muffler. So it looks very unrock n roll But, you know, I've got a guitar in camera shot.

Brilliant. Brilliant. That's all you need.

Yeah, but apart from that, you know, my rock and roll room is penguin and tartan quilts hanging everywhere.

Dave -Okay, okay. Okay. All right, we'll move swiftly on, The Blue Lena, this is new to me. So how did all this occur?



N - Well, really my previous band, I was in a previous band called 360. And we did during the lockdown period, the band kind of split up and I was a bit frustrated. And I got a bunch of songs together. And I went into a bit of a songwriting frenzy, and a whole load of songs. And then I was trying to think about, I was recording them in the studio here. And I was trying to think about someone to sing them and I remembered Pete, we we met at the Rock den in Hatfield, when my band was playing there, before we got on really well, I loved his voice. And I reached out to him and sent him a couple of songs to sing. And typically with Pete, as always happens two hours later, I get a whole load of vocal tracks back through, and put them all up in my studio, and they just sounded fantastic. So it kind of started from there, we just kept sending each other songs back and forth and collaborating on songs. And before you knew about 20 Odd songs and decided, we just put an album out and put a band together to play them. So that's where we all started.

P - I mean, the rocket in the songs was that thing that sort of came easy to us, the actual putting a band together to get the sounds we want. It's always the same thing. We've got musicians that we could call on that we've worked with before, which really helped sound out. Now, when you have a sound, you hear a vision in your head, and you've got like that whole, like the way you want the band to sound. And then we're really lucky with the people that we found that there are people we get along with, with mates that actually have the same sort of vibe and feel and, and like Next, he writes for something, I don't know how he does it. But he write a song, how I've already heard it in my head that I've done it, it's really hard to explain because I know when he's writing a chord or doing some, he's writing from lyrics or doing some phrases, or sends me a little riff over. It's almost like his hearing what I'm gonna sing on it because one of the things get back to him or melody, he's sort of got it worked out ready, so that you're actually clicking, which is

N - a rare thing to get that it's so it is. Let me as Pete said, we wanted us to pull together people who we played with before we knew and trusted and who were on our wavelength rather than overloaded people that we didn't know and we're getting to know people and all that kind of thing. So, everybody that's in the band with the exception of Fiona, actually, you did come in towards the end. All of this the people who've played with me and Pete in some capacity the band before, so we knew they're all on their wavelength. Dave - Yeah, yeah. Nick could put up your quirks and stuff like that. Oh.

Okay, so explain the same to me. I mean, I know what it is. But the people who are watching this, people are listening. What is your sound?

N - Well, it's kind of funny, it's a good combination of different things. I mean, I always think we kind of like, we're kind of like a UK blues rock band that loves Southern rock. That makes any sense. And we both live where we both love the country rock stuff as well. So, it's kinda like we put in one of our biographies. Imagine if there were a Southern rock band and Fleetwood Mac singing in harmony vocals, so I think that's a fair kind of description.

Dave - Yeah, I'd go with that. I think that's pretty, pretty good cover all for the whole. We've got an album out well, coming out soon and tell me about it.

N - Basically, I mean, just the best of the songs that we wrote in that songwriting period I spoke about. And one strong thing with the songs is the lyrics. They're all personal stories about things in our lives or things around us. And people we know, they're not just like lyrics that just fit and



don't really have any meaning. So that's part of it. Pete's able to really put that across with a lot of graphic art and soul which, which is, which is a major thing of it. It's mainly about the songs, the whole thing is really about the songs.

P - I mean, there was never really intention of producing this particular sound was the I mean, we just happen to write a song, you had songs you previously written right way back in 1996, and stuff like that, and 91. But there is no particular that had its sound at the time, but it's our sound for the moment. So he just happens to be Nick's guitar sound and my vocal sound happened to sound the way it does, there's no like, Oh, I've got to try and sound like this, or try and sell that or try and be a classic rock or try and be a country rock, there was never any intention, we basically wrote the song. And it just happens to sound the way it does. It does sort of help in a way. When we introduce Matt onto keyboards, with the piano and the Hammond, it lends it towards the classic sound that you've got on the rock there and then introducing fee into the mix, which was, yeah, we'd never met fee before she'd come in. And she'd done like, worked out harmony stuff, and she's become a major part of the bands. Now. He's contributing underwriting as well. And that sort of shaped the sounds of the way that the BBs and even that songs are as well. So, we're not going oh, let's write a song that sounds a bit country, let's write a song that sounds a bit classic zipline or something like that. They just have to be lyrics that are next thrown into the mix. And I've done some weird humming over something he's sent over to me. And then I might throw a few words back at him. And then he stirs the pot. And he goes, I

et's try this, and I sing it all. And then he says, oh, let's try a different speed, which means I have to sing it all again. Go faster. So, he sends it again, until we find the right sound, it's not right, the song isn't written to a certain specific thing. It just turns out how it is.

N - a very organic process. It's just like detail a minute ago, it's, it's an actual result of the way that he thinks and the way that I play really, we always think the songs all those kinds of write themselves, once you start off with that initial thing, whether it be like a musical part, or a lyric idea or a melody. From that point on, they almost seem to write themselves, don't they, they just say,

P - yeah, like it was the moment it's gone. It's like, you know, you pulled the stopper out of the sand bottle, and it's just coming.

N - That's a good analogy.

P - No matter how much you put your hand underneath, it comes out. And then you've already got harmonies worked out before you finish working out the lyrics and the melody for the first time because I can hear where they're gonna go. And then you know, fully jumps in, and then we start getting everything worked out, it's, you can't stop it, they start to evolve in the first couple of hours of actually thinking on it. And we're already thinking way ahead, or we could do this, and then come to the awkward bit of rain in ourselves back a bit and saying, No, too busy.



Let's take some of the guitar out. Here., We don't need that many harmonies in working on the sun at the moment. I love that we've done about three different speeds on it. And a few different ideas where their harmonies are gonna go that are stripped and back and we've got one that feels we're working on at the moment, which we're stripping back that she's written. And you go back to the songs not we've not written into any particular direction, it's just we will keep on it until the song sounds and if you get that goosebump feeling when you're listening to it, you get the heartbeat and you get the goosebumps, and you feel so happy in yourself that you don't have to sit there through when you play a song to someone, you don't go or could have done this. Or should have done that when you could just put the song on, sit back and go. That's it, listen to that. There's nothing going on there. That's how it should be. So that's when you know you've got a good song. So yeah,

N - I think we'd kind of what I'm trying to do or whatever I'm writing stuff, the kind of the little piece of the Goosebumps thing reminded me it's like whenever I listen to like, suddenly rather stones or Zeppelin or something that I really really love and it kind of gives you that certain feeling. I'm constantly trying to check I'm chasing that feeling or whatever. I'm trying to make myself feel something like that as I'm kind of turning ourselves on with it really and then hoping other people like it.

P - and isn't going on in there. So, but yeah, we just if you write the song and you know you get a smile on your face when you're playing it, you then enjoy performing it. It's not like you go to work or anything or you want to Oh I gotta do this. So again, I got to do that one. I really hate playing this Swanee, I get a buzz from playing them live all the time because you're just having so much fun playing them because they're great songs to dance to and move around to and sing and I love the harmonies I mean, singing harmonies with a female vocal, I mean, for me personally is an eye opener because I've always done the main melody and all the vote bands that have been in before done on the US to have fee singing. It's weird because there's the different times in the voices. And I've sung with male backing singers that do the high bid or the screaming bit, but to have a different tone in the voice and a different other female vocals can cover us different ranges. And it makes a complete separation on the actual sound of the song which is literally given us. It has

developed that sound because you've got Richie and fi, they've got a great combination of their two voices. And then they do nicely with my voice, and we've literally developed a sound by accident. And so, it just works that way. I mean, put that together with like Nick's really noisy Telecaster is great.

N - We got like we got the vocal harmonies is a big thing we wanted, we wanted to kind of I think the idea I've got the back of my mind when we were doing it was I liked the way that the Black Crowes and the stones and Leonard skin had particularly used the female backing singers and so that's what we were on the lookout for when we really hit it off with fi she's kind of taken over all the vocal harmonies directly but we've also got Richie the other guitar player and Matt the keyboard player both very strong singers. So, we have a 4-part vocal going on.

Dave - So Darkwood This is the name of the album.
N - Yeah, we started kind of uh I think we started the campaign towards the end of July. We could have put it out six months ago in all honesty but we because we got Planet Rock stock and winter storm coming up we decided we would put it out shortly before them so we can try and make a bit of a bit of a noise and see if hopefully for some people will notice us a little bit but we've just started putting a few a few songs out from it. We put an EP out in July of three of the songs and we just started we did a video with the one song sanctity and the other song Undertow which we did a video for we've just started putting that out on social media now and getting radio stations playing that so yeah, we just kind of talked on a whet people's appetite for the album.

Dave - So if you had to pick one song each, which would you choose that exemplifies the album?

N - Okay, I'm good to go. I'm just gonna say a Nashville song. It's all in the letter.

P - I'm gonna say undertow.

Dave - Why?

N - I just like to know, I don't know Undertows got this thing where whenever it kicks it in that groove. It's not detuning with the bass, it's just immediately like, oh, here we go. It's just got that. I didn't know it. Just draw that as it says in the lyrics of the song. It's something that draws you in. So, there's that. Yeah, Nashville. So, I just particularly like the lyrics. And that's a bit of a couple of personal situations I was in with friends letting you down. And there is quite a long gestation period. That's the reason it's called National. So, it was actually in Nashville. I'll get going around the honky tonk bars, marching bands playing out, he got up with a band and played one of them actually, funnily enough. And I just remembered this chord progression this country band was playing; I don't remember the tune at all. But I liked the chord progression. So, I wrote it down on my phone. And when I got back, I couldn't remember the tune at all right? I just started messing around with these chords, and just came up with it and put it together. No really no idea for melodies or anything and I sent it to Pete. And typically, with Pete two hours later, I get a vote of vocal tracks back with these fantastic melodies, which I read the lyrics to. Now just to go to a couple of situations with SES, broken friendships with a couple of people and I just wrote the whole song about that. It's really about what we all know we all are in situations where you wish you'd said something, and you replay the conversation in your head and think I should have said that I should have said this. And this is the whole purpose of the song is really the letter that I didn't send that says all the things I should have said.

P - I mean, it's really because I mean Undertow is one of my favourite songs on the track, because I just love the vibe of it. It's just got everything with the big homies, and I do like Fi's part with some great harmonies behind the course. But it's such a relaxed vibe. My other one Oh, see I like funky rocky stuff as well. I would go. Okay, I'm sorry. I know, but I could sanctity or something about I just love that. Those things and yeah, sanctities out at the moment. So, something about it's got a fantastic midsection on there where it goes. Do something about something about the way it's got great. Well, they're all from this roof. So good. It's something about the way he's got just something that there's a groove isn't there in the way, which is it? I mean, we do again, it's not a song, we actually went out of our way to write that thing. It just seemed to be for a beat and a riff that Nick came up with. And then he sent it to me.



N - Do you remember how that came about Pete? I was sitting on this chair with my guitar in my lap, and we were talking on the ballot and I was just, I was just noodling away on the guitar and you get going, what's that? What's that you're just playing there? And I played it again. And he went, send me that I've got an idea. So, I literally plug it into the studio, record anything, sent it to him. But he put it all together from that.

P - We did a few paces about it. And it turned out, but it just wasn't. We didn't go away to write it. Like it just happened. It fell into place. And I just loved the groove on there. And Nick wrote this really nice mid late section for it, which works really nice for the harmonies. We feel going underneath with Richie and may just like the swinging on top of it. And I just love that bit on there. So, it's, yeah, it's, it's a great song, all of them.

N - e simply said that we thought that if the band got anywhere, it would be because of the songs we thought their way into things, I think because a lot of bands are going back working hard and playing in Yeah, you can do with things.

P - I am just 100% behind this album. It just, it just feels right. When you put it on this year's play. It feels like there's no awkwardness on that bench or anything like that. And I got 100 grand coming. And so, I just put that on, anywhere I played it. It's there. People are gonna go oh, well, what's that? There's not. I just it's such a buzz about it at the moment. And the US. We've been getting in the magazines and have been great and great with us.

Yeah, beer, some great. Fireworks and power play. Yeah, so um, yeah, just hopefully this will keep rolling. I mean just we're, we're riding this wave as much as we can. And, you know, obviously, I'm in my prime at the moment. Yeah. As you can, you can tell by my fine figure, and my lovely waving locks and lovely gnomes. I'm a bit of a catch and a frontman. I'm at my prime picking point if we upstage for like to sell your product. So obviously it's not going to be recent, and it's going to be the assault, isn't it? So, I just watched why I feel so great about the album, because I know we put on a great show when we perform. And you can tell that when we're performing it, we're having such a laugh, there's no, I've got to be a rock good fit on the amp. And, you know, dress like I'm 25 and go for it. That sort of thing. We're going out there, we go out, we dress comfortable. We have a great time we put on a show for people and just trying to produce what's on the album Live. Your buzz, when you can get all of those harmonies and you can get those songs and the people out there dancing around in front of you. I mean, that's really what you're just doing it for really, I mean, just putting your songs across going. We did that this has come out of our brains onto a bit of paper into the thing and now we're doing this for you in front and I sometimes look back and think how the hell did that come out of our heads? It's just really weird to think.

N - a great Keith Richards quote I always like he said the key to songwriting is not getting in the way of the song.

P - I'm totally behind these songs. Now. They're just the everything you know, just they just give you a buzz when you think about them. And people say how can you listen to Jeff over and over in the car?

Well, I think well not listen to yourself. I'm listening to the songs. It just was what's doing it for at the moment. So yeah, and I just can't wait for the next album to come out really. We're writing so many songs at the moment. It's like this album that came out is probably the tip of the amount of songs we've written before we actually get to decide what went on. Because we've got loads of songs from previous that we thought oh, that's the song for the album. And then next superseded by the next one we wrote thinking down Which one do we choose? So, we've got loads from prior to this album, which might go on the next album. But the issue is we're still writing even better songs as we go along. And we've got to try and find time to do those as well as, as you know, as producing, put this album out as well. So, it's just a constant thing, just writing songs, you can't help it you'd be driving along shooting gets in your head. Next thing you know, you send something to Nick and or Nick sends something to me and we're on the case and we've got the next song, then we send it out to Matt or fee or whoever wants to get involved on that side of it. It's great. And we're like, we're linking up so we can do practices online as well, which is going to annoy everyone else. So, we'd better like just disappear upstairs. Link up and just run through the songs and go. What about the swap out this and we'll start creating and get the juices flowing. I'm already buzzing about doing that. Blah, blah, blah, just one that we've been working on before we did the interview. I just think that's gonna be the next single. But yeah, it's just love it just, yeah, we're in the prime. We're going for it. So, I mean, look at Nick he looks about 27 There in that shadow!

Dave - Guys, I wish you all the very best. The album is a fantastic album. I do love it.





**THE
DRUNKEN
DUCK
SHOW**
ROCK RADIO UK

Tales from The Drunken Duck – Episode 1

So when Dave Cyderbaby told me he was acquiring a Radio station, little did I know where this would take me, and as usual when I opened my mouth and jokingly said "I'll have a go" he dared me. Now over a month on and, at the time of writing, four shows in, I can honestly say I am loving it.

After getting my pc all set up and buying cheap'ish equipment just in case I was rubbish, I planned my first show and even wrote a script lol and off I went.... I just had to open with the first ever single I bought and the band that got me in to my love for rock music, Rainbow "Since You've Been Gone" swiftly followed up with Black Stone Cherry "Nervous", because that was definitely how I was feeling. As I progressed I got a little bit more comfortable but still had a long way to go especially in my studio configuration and sound quality (more on that later).

Week two beckoned and I was somehow allowed another go by Cyderbaby - yes I know he likes dressing up as a dinosaur but even this was a bit mad for him. Anyway, I binned the script and went with another solid playlist combining a mixture of old rock, modern rock, new tracks and my usual slot of "WTF year is it?" where I played 3 songs back to back from a specific year, all you had to do was guess the year with no clues! My sound quality was still lacking compared to all the other dj's but it was all new to me and I was certainly learning the trade as they say.

Week three, and I had enlisted the help and guidance of Jarod, my youngest, who let me borrow his audio interface and condenser microphone. To me it was just some magic in a box but we got rid of the background hum at least. Again no script, a few notes and I talked crap in between an hour of superb music.

All three shows had been uploaded to Mixcloud for friends to listen and even I was surprised at the feedback I was getting. Neil Richardson, my wing-man for the last 30 years is usually full of banter and pi55 taking but for him to post on Facebook that I was "sounding more professional rather than a knob in his shed." was praise of the highest order, and I didn't bribe him with alcohol. In fact, the comment has caught on and is now my new catchphrase!

Week three also saw me launch another show as I was feeling more comfortable in myself. Here at Rock Radio UK we are inundated on a daily basis with new tracks so I proposed to the boss a "New Release Show" and again in his madness, Dave agreed. So armed with loads of great music another hour was recorded to air at 5pm Thursday evening. Tagging a lot of the bands on social media raised awareness and got me a lot of thanks and exposure, hell I must be up to 3 listeners by now hah hah

Feedback was again fantastic apart from my voice in all its lovely Devon accent, was only coming out of one channel. News of this was too late for week

4s show as I had already recorded it and uploaded to the station. Bugger, I hope it didn't put my 3 listeners off! So at the time of writing this article week 4 has just aired, including the mic issues and again some amazing tunes as well as "WTF Year Is It?". I have become more relaxed, I mean I'm in my man-cave, playing music I love with no one telling me to turn it down or off, and talking cr4p. What could be more enjoyable?

So what does the future hold? Well today I fixed my microphone gremlins so you will now hear me in stereo you poor buggas. I also thought to myself that I've got so much music to cram in one hour, I am now going to get extended to a 2 hour show and likely move from 2pm Saturdays to the evening. With that in mind, I'm toying with the idea of maybe broadcasting live for a show, although my regulars at The Drunken Duck think they'll be invited and be in the background! I think not. A huge thanks to Dave Cyderbaby for having faith in me, and to Lee James - our resident tech wizard who helped me when I had issues.

Enjoy my ramblings; check me out on Rock Radio UK and follow me on Mixcloud at www.mixcloud.com/chrisfrankum

Until the next episode... love ya all

Shabba x



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