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ISSUE 4



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# Happy New Year!



A new year, same old me though.. don't get too excited!  
January is now about to be behind us, I think that was the longest 88 weeks of my life, looking forward to February though as I will hit the dizzy heights of 56 revolutions around this sun of ours.

Looking forward is something we are all doing at this here station, Rock Radio UK. I had no idea it would take off like it has, listeners and website hits are up, social media has topped 28,000 followers which is mind-blowing, yet our reach now on a 28 day basis is 375,000 people! How crazy is this?

I think what blows my mind the most is the good-will between ALL of the DJ's and how everyone is pulling together to make the best station there is to listen to. We are constantly being asked if we have room for new presenters, Nadie Keating has joined us now, along with Colin Phelps, Dean Parker, The Last Exit from the States, Mike Snook doing his Live Saturday morning breakfast show and there are rumours that Corky's Jukebox will be returning Live and only with us here at Rock Radio UK!

This is along with shows that have been running a few weeks now by JP and Del Garland.  
Where do all these talented people come from?

With this, we have cut the number of repeat shows on the station, but if you missed a show, find the listen again page and click on the Mixcloud link.

The Magazine is now available for members only on the website for the first 7 days. After this, it will go public but we will stretch out the time over the next few months so that if you want to read this Mag, then you must be a member, it's all free.

However, all this we do here comes at a cost, none of us are paid and it is around £1500 a year to do what we currently do, without the costs of camera and radio equipment or travel costs to gigs. Please, I know times are tight but a donation via the Paypal link on the website keeps the wheels turning. I don't really want to be running adverts like our competitors.

Have a great 2024 from all of us from what is probably, the Biggest Internet Rock Station in the UK.

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# FROM THE GRAVE

A SPOTLIGHT ON HORROR PUNK CULTURE

# TO THE STAGE



THE MISFITS

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF HORROR

*Horror punk is a music genre that mixes punk rock and 1950s-influenced doo-wop and rockabilly sounds with morbid and violent imagery and lyrics which are often influenced by horror films and science fiction B-movies. The genre was pioneered by the Misfits in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Subsequent bands formed in the Misfits' wake like Mourning Noise, the Undead and Samhain, solidifying horror punk's first wave. In the late 1990s and early 2000s the genre gained attention through the reunion of the Misfits and success of groups like AFI, Son of Sam and the Murderdolls. This popularity continued to the modern day with Blitzkid, Calabrese and Creeper.*

*From its origins in the late 1970s to its current resurgence in popularity, horror punk has endured as a powerful and influential subculture. Its impact on popular culture has been significant, inspiring countless new bands, filmmakers, and artists across multiple genres. Furthermore, its legacy continues to evolve and inspire new generations of fans and creators. Whether you're a diehard horror punk fan or just discovering the genre for the first time, there's no denying the power and allure of this dark and fascinating subculture. So why not embrace your inner ghoul and dive into the world of horror punk today? You never know what you might discover!*

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# *Mizz Hydes*

*Welcome To The Hydeside*

*Reviews  
&  
Views  
From My Side*

## Blitz Kicking Up A Storm Reviewed By Candy Rocks

Track 1 Breakneck.

The first track on the album & also the first single to come from Kicking Up A Storm. Breakneck is more about kicking up dust, hitting the highway after a gig, sweaty, tired & hungry for food.

All you can think about is food , home, shower & bed. Problem nowhere to eat first.

Blitz paint this picture with punching riffs like a fuel hungry Lambo. Only problem is you're in a van full of equipment & you're the fuel hungry Lambo. That's just me outlining this track.

Breakneck is a track of what it is like been in a band on the road is really like. It's got drumming like a fire spitting hyper car, riffs like a screaming motorcycle, deep tones like lifting the throttle only Blitz ain't backing off it's full throttle balls out till the end. (Happy Eating)

Breakneck was the first video release from the album which was filmed at magnet Studios by kevin, Zak Muller then took over for the editing process.



## Track 2 Shell Shocked

Take a classic riff that we've all probably heard before by many a rock band. Who have all used it to great effect, not going to list any BORING. Blitz on the other hand use it to trick you into thinking oh here is another rock band using that riff, well they don't HAHA. Instead Blitz use it to fill areas of Shell Shocked out, these guys let a thundering bass line & drums drive the verses, because Stuart Cordons voice is a powerhouse along with his bass playing. Mat Davis adds extra vocals & some clever little drum fills.

Kevin Simpson on guitar adds what I can only describe as awesome little fills mixed some power chords at certain points throughout Shell Shocked that lead you into the chorus. Kevin's lead break is off the wall as it drops back out into little fills as Mat & Stuart take back over, I love how in the background you can hear it starting to build up again while Stuart is speaking, then bound the power kicks back in for the chorus.

Blitz have taken that classic saying sometimes Less is More. For me Blitz have taken that saying & shown us what less is more can sound like.

It's rocking, it's a simple chorus that doesn't need much more than Shell Shocked & a fill line, which it has, it will have you singing along to it I'm sure.

Zak Muller put his magic to work as he created the video for Shell Shocked.

## Track 3 C.O.G. Crawling On Glass.

This is a track that will take you back in time, as Blitz have taken their early influences in music from all those bands they grew up listening to in their bedrooms, bouncing around pretending to be in those bands, apart from Mat sat on his bed air drumming. C.O.G is top down convertible cruising summertime feel good music, even if the lyrics say otherwise.

This is a Blitz mood lifter, smile on your face, life ain't great, but hey you're alive, so enjoy the moment. Especially when you're hearing great riffs that sound like hey the sun is shining let's go to the beach with your friends. Blitz deliver great vocals, Riffs & drumming that tell you these guys were enjoying life as soon as they started playing C.O.G. & want you to share that with them. So go do just that.



## Track 4 Keep Moving on.

OK I'll carry on with cruising to the beach from C.O.G. Because when you get there Blitz are the band playing. This is a rocking little number. It twists into Jazz, Blues section, then back to rocking the night away.

They have a great message to say, It's never to late, just keep on moving.

Blitz this is you in an American convertible cruising to the beach & rocking this baby out.



#### Track 6 Addicted To Corruption.

A Chinese cymbal is what I'm thinking opens this track & it's almost like Blitz took everything from all those bands that played apart in their growing up to who they've become today.

I hear Ratt, Van Halen, Rainbow, Dokken etc.

Though many bands will follow the style of a certain band that influenced them, Blitz put this Frankenstein monster together.

It's constructed to perfection, as it twists & turns through clever changes into the chorus, before Kevin lays down an amazing lead break & if all that ain't enough Stuart adds his vocals that I can only describe as David Lee Roth in those early Van Halen days.

#### Track 7 I'll Find You In Yesterday.

As I reviewed this track previously, I've added just a part of it .

#### Track 5 We Are The Power.

Some really powerful drumming from Mat open this track with dampened chord strikes from Kevin that build up into the opening riffs that make up the chorus.

This track is about us standing up together, stop picking on each other, because we have the power if we do just that.

Blitz have set this message to some great punchy riffs, as it's not about making you feel anger or sadness, it's about understanding that feel good music can still send the same clear message.

What Blitz have found is a great way to deliver that, you hear the lyrics & feel the power of good music.

There is nothing better than letting the crowd get involved with a videoshoot, than having them send footage of the gig when Blitz performed at Savfest 2023. Victoria Bikers pub in Coaville. Once again Kevin not only proving he's a talented guitarist, but very good at editing videos.

This is pure rawness at the beginning with Kevin on piano & Stuart's vocals Mat adding this cymbal crash fading like waves rolling onto the rocks, as it opens into keyboards & guitar in the background, with Stuart singing his heart out that day.

It's like he is back there lost in that moment in time again as all the music wrapped around him like some big comfy blanket, his friends Kevin & Mat feeling what he was going through & hell did they do their friend justice, Kevin adds the most beautiful guitar solo, while Mat on drums adds to it with fills that make it even more powerful, because I'll Find You In Yesterday is building into it's power chord & chorus before it finishes how it all began with just a piano & vocals, then you hear it fade away as the last vocal & notes are played.

For a change Blitz enlisted Zak Muller for the video & editing of I'll Find You Yesterday & with help from their fans sending in various photos of when they got to meet the band, which to me just added more to this already powerful track.

## Track 8 Freddie Said

Remember when Freddie Said If your not living darlings your better off dead. Stuart delivers it in his own unique style part way through this tribute to the legend Freddie Mercury.

What I like about this track is that it is not done in some queen style, no guitars sounding like Brian May etc. That is what I really love. Blitz staying true to their style, paying tribute their way in their sound. There is no better way to do that than staying true to yourselves.

The opening is like Metallica Unforgiven but you can soon remove that idea as it punches out some great riffs & lyrics that I'm sure Freddie is going to be smiling over & saying that's me Darlings.

Jay Hillyer Got to work with Blitz at the Bonington Theatre Arnold in Nottingham for the filming of Freddie Said. Producing a stunnig & fitting tribute to Freddie Blitz style.

## Track 9 Hesitate.

This has some really great drumming, it's like Mat said hey I've got more than a snare & bass drum.

Mat lays out a beat like thunder rolling through a valley while Kevin's guitar is adding fills to not take anything away from that beat Mat is thundering out.

Once again this is Blitz showing what can happen when you use all your musical influences be it from seventies glamrock to the more heavy end of the scale. This track rocks a great beat.



## Track 10 Kicking Up A Storm.

Last but by far no means least.

This soft opening track with a great line from Stuart, Kevin playing his guitar that makes you think David Gilmour from Pink Floyd is guesting on.

Wrong it suddenly bursts into a powerful intro that makes up the chorus, Mat bass drum pounding like some hardrock, heavy metal track, this is another melting pot of styles. It has got a Scar, Reggae riff added by Kevin which really works.

It is constantly changing pace from slow, soft to out & out power with vocals from Stuart to match as he changes from almost spoken to something Pink Floyd would perform. This is hardrock, Funk, Floyd. Blitz style.

Blitz for me named this album perfectly because these guys are definitely going to be Kicking Up A Storm.

Don't ask me to pick a favourite track because I really don't have one I have ten. So if you interview Blitz & ask them what their musical influences are? I hope they ask you if you fully listened to to Kicking Up A Storm & just once, then wrote some of the usual questions on a bit of paper. This album has almost everything Blitz grew up listening to & yes I'm telling you this again incase you scan read. I'm a hard person to please when it comes to music, I like to hear everything , that it's mixed correctly, Matt Ellis did just that at Axis Studios in Doncaster. Kicking Up A Storm will be released on Shock Records.

I don't care if it's a three track EP or a ten track album, you can't produce quality with egos & Blitz don't have that, they have a thirst & desire to deliver nothing but their absolute best, it's heart & soul stop at nothing until it sounds like some big budget album. Blitz don't have that big budget, but what they do have is the dedication & people around them to make you think Kicking Up A Storm had such A budget, right down to the artwork by Dave Hurst & photography from Heather Burns. The quality is amazing in my ears & on the cover. I have been lucky to have had some very good chats with Stuart from the band & I can honestly tell you that Blitz is fully focused on putting on a great show, doing the best they possibly can to produce not only a great studio album, but that they can perform them live &

show you what a hard working kick ass band Blitz really are. So if you get hance to check them out at gig near you, then do it. they are down to earth guys who just want to entertain you.



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# Saxon

## Hell, Fire And Damnation

### Album Review By Brett Scarrott

Now I could be biased here, as friends/relatives know I am a massive Saxon fan, but I am putting on my reviewers hat, this is their 25th studio record, the first been released way back in 1979, this does not include the live releases. So what do we have, well the prelude kicks in complete with the one and only Brian Blessed, belting out the words 'hell, fire and damnation' then the title track kicks in, this is Saxon as we know them, Biff's voice still strong as ever, next up 'Madame Guillotine' with a long bass line courtesy of Mr Nibbs Carter followed by a guitar intro, before the blade comes down, and bang we are off, this has a hook line, 'please to meet you, don't loose your head', are some of the lyrics here.

Fire and steel, Nigel Glockler's drumming is pacey, keeping up with the rest of the band. the song is fast in fact, this could of been a left over from either 2001's Killing ground or Metalhead. There's something in Roswell, Mr Byford's beliefs in the unknown, 'we don't believe the lies', I am with you on this one Biff, the twin guitars of messers Doug Scarratt and 'new boy' Brian Tatler (still in Diamond Head), compliment each other. More ancient metal/rock as Kubla Khan and the merchant of Venice, (again) a typical Saxon song singing about past events. Pirates of the airwaves, I do remember Radio Caroline, but this kicks of

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with the tuning of possibly a LW radio (Long wave frequency for the younger generation) and explaining how back in the day, these stations were 'Pirate' no not with Skull and Crossbones, but people did used to tune in. 1066 one in the eye for the boys (see what I did there), this is blinking catchy, the Battle at Hastings, all about the (well guess)...yes SAXONS against Vikings. Witches of Salem, complete with screams, made me drop my headphones, a song about witch craft obviously.

Closing the record is Super Charger, a song which is about being fast, well we all know Saxon like fast songs!! So over all 4.5 out of 5, why? you 'orrible lot ask, well in interviews Biff mentioned, this record was made in conjunction with the tour with Judas Priest, so was it rushed out? (this is not to make an argument) I really have no answers!!, and its not because Paul Quinn isn't on it (I think he plays on 2 songs), this is just my opinion....look its not rubbish, it is a belter.



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# Skinny Knowledge

## Twenty Two

I have a confession to make (instant Dave Grohl singing in one's mind), I was supposed to do a feature on these guys back at the tail end of last year but I have been massively swamped with everything and it got forgotten...sorry, put to one side for a moment (forgotten).

Twenty Two has been released unto the world after a series of singles, so what do we all think?

The fact it is still getting played in Cyderbaby Towers still is testament to the album itself, Catchy songs that stick in your head with well written tunes and infectious grooves, what more do we want? More new music I suppose!

The guys have captured something really good so I am hoping that the ball will keep rolling and the follow-up album will be hot on the heels of this one.

Below should (if all the magic works) be a link to an interview I had with Andy in October.

We chat about the album and how it all came into being which in itself, was a huge task but these guys were more than capable of putting their best foot forward and rising to the challenge.

So what is next for these guys? Well as you can see opposite, there is a gig lined up at The Thunderbolt in Bristol with American Superstars, The Bittersweethearts.

This is a diamond line-up as both of these bands will bring 100% to the stage and I am positive that once you see either of these bands live, you'll become instant lifelong fans.

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# The New Roses The Kites The Outlanders The Junction, Plymouth

Even though I live in Devon, it seems like a bit of an adventure heading to Plymouth. We're very near the Cornish Border but we do have the Tamar inbetween to keep those savages at bay. Mind you it is an adventure on Mutley Plain where The Junction holds court, there are many stories to be told, late at night around a camp fire that would give you goosebumps about Mutley Plain.. However, I have only experienced good things there so I think it is best to keep it as Urban Myth rather than anything else. I have found the people always welcoming and to be honest, Mutley has the best venues in Plymouth so the scene there is really good.

The New Roses were in town, a headline gig as it turns out! They have been here as support for Massive Wagons, these guys were having a night off which to me was a bit strange considering it was a Friday... but who am I to say? I'd seen the New Roses at Call Of The Wild in '22 where they headlined...

they were really good there and this was the reason why I took the time to see them here. We had 2 support bands as well, both local bands, The Kites and The Outlanders.

We arrived at the venue early as we had an interview booked with The New Roses, Timmy met us at the door and was an utter gentleman, we were ushered to the green room in the basement which it turns out is a partially converted kitchen! Maybe I was expecting more from the venue.. I don't know but it was warm, comfy and dry, what more do you need? We were introduced to the rest of the band who all then decided to scarp away leaving us alone to chat. I'm not going to transcribe the interview...watch the link here in the Mag! Timmy was ready to talk and talk we did, for ages. I am always aware that bands do not usually tolerate press for too long but the guy was happy to keep going.

I have to thank him for this and to be absolutely honest, it kind of made the night as he, as with the rest of the band were so down-to-earth and approachable.

After the interview and grabbing a KFC, we were ready to Rock! Yeah, Okay, at my age... stand and watch/take pictures and enjoy the music.

The Outlanders. Now I've seen them a couple of times now, they are just getting better and better and better. Running through the tracks I knew, they were tight as any band I have seen perform at an arena. The guys can work a crowd and write some pretty fine tunes. I'd like to see them tour as a support for a major band. They have a huge following in Plymouth which they have worked hard for, they need to be heard by a bigger audience and they deserve a platform like a tour to show as many new fans as they can, what they can do. I have a feeling '24 might just be their year to break.

The Kites on the other hand.... To say I was a little disappointed is putting it mildly. They have an image and the frontman has real Rock n Roll vibes that again would be great on a bigger stage. The music is good, almost like a modern day Uli Jon Roth, however, if you want to be taken seriously, act professionally. There was nothing obviously wrong but apart from the vocalist working the crowd, there was no chemistry. The guitarist had an issue with his guitar which took much longer to sort than it should've.

Nothing the guy did wrong, he wasn't a dick or anything but you could see his frustration and this compounded the issue. The others stood and watched whilst he was trying to work out the problem and you could feel the guys pain. Every band will tell you that there are bad nights where everything goes wrong. Laugh it off! It's life! Yet I felt awkward watching this unfold on stage. Guys, give your heads a wobble and lose the Egos. you have a long way to go before you can get to Diva mode, trust me. I'd struggle to go and watch them again after this but I do believe in second chances. Fingers crossed, next time WILL be a lot better



To the main event, The New Roses. Now there are a lot of people in this band and the stage ain't that big! They walked on to a really warm welcome, the fans were eager to hear what they had to offer. They turned on the ignition and fired up the engine that was The New Roses, banger after banger, hit after flippin fine track, these guys were on fire from the very start.





What a night! What a gig! Everyone was hot and sweaty, they had all had their moneys worth plus a load more. The band gave everything to the fans that night and I have to say, they probably outdid their festival performance at COTW. I was a fan before the gig but now....now I can't sing their praises enough. In all honesty, they must have been kicking Massive Wagons arses each and every night they played together. I can't wait for the next album!

Dave

I'm not going to run through the setlist, it was a blinder, every track you wanted to hear was there, then they plied you with even more music you didn't realise they had in their back-catalogue.....and that sounded even better! At one point, we were asked what we wanted to hear. Someone shouted Wonderwall....we all laughed until Timmy said he started out in a covers band and he used to sing that every night....the colour drained from all our faces until the band launched into Rockin In The Free World.



The set must've been 20 tracks long, this was no short set from a band who were throwing in a couple extra songs to bulk up a support slot gig, this was full-on rocking and giving the crowd more than what they asked for. I have to say after my favourite track, Life Ain't Easy (For a boy with long hair) came on about the third track in, I didn't know where they could go but the ride was just immense! All I Ever Needed, Sweet Gloria, Devil's Toys, Warpaint and Down By The River were just epic!

After a short break, Timmy came on with an acoustic guitar, queue the first couple of bars of Wonderwall! One More For The Road was just fantastic and so was set closer, Thirsty.



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The above was taken by Cameron Snook.



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# Wayward Sons Muddibrooke The Thekla, Bristol

It's been a while.

It's actually felt like flippin' ages since I have seen this band play live, I think the last time was Firestorm back in '22. Obviously Sam, who seems to be the most indemand guitarist out there at the moment has been seen here and there, whilst Toby has been soaking our social media news feeds with his holiday slide-show snaps. I actually don't begrudge this at all because some of the places he has visited have simply been stunning!

So it seems after 18 months off, it's back to work for this band. A tour!

I suppose I should recall all the times I've seen the band and remind ourselves, what they are capable of. In all honesty, the one that sticks in the mind the most was the first time I saw them which was at Steelhouse Festival. If my memory serves, this was about the third or fourth gig they had done and I think it was the

reception at this festival and the look on Toby's face at the end of the gig that I will remember the most. He seemed absolutely stunned and taken aback by the positive response and out-pouring of love for this new project. I was impressed I have to say, the material was top drawer stuff and I actually thought back then that this was better than Little Angels by a country mile.

Fast forward around 8 years and a handful of albums and the guys are ready to tread the boards yet again. There was nothing new to sell, only a clutch of well known songs and a few handshakes to offer. Would the people turn up for this? Did they indeed!

The Thekla is an old cargo boat and is the only ship you will ever see me on as it never leaves the mud-docks in Bristol. As it was a Friday, it would mean a swift turn around as it would be a club night straight after the gig. Sons Of

Liberty were supposed to have a 20 minute opening slot but sickness within the camp prevailed which put a stop to that. A shame really because their latest single, Light The Fuse was released the same day.

This meant Muddibrooke were to open the tour tonight. I have tonnes and tonnes of respect for these guys after seeing them play at the Rock And Blues Custom Festival 18 months ago. They are just superb and lovely people to talk to as well. I'm not going to go into too much detail here as I intend doing a feature on their new single which is out next month. What I will say is that they still kick serious ass when it comes to live performance and hearing them open with ADHD and then close with Cellar, leaves no doubt in my mind that this is a world class act that are on the rise. Good sound, great songs and top musicianship.



Even Up the Score and Bloody Typical were absolutely brilliant, along with Small Talk, Fake, Faith In Fools and Radio Denial. Its at about this point that you realise what a full catalogue of music they have behind them. Bands that have been going twice as long just don't have this, The band are just prolific writers and each track they played sounded fresh and exciting to the ear.



The stage was cleared down, ready for the main event. The boat was jammed to the rafters, it must have been close to being sold out. Storming the stage to a very loud cheer, the guys launched into Big Day. They hadn't lost it, indeed I think they have become a tighter unit! Feel Good Hit, Be Still (which was impossible considering the boat was rockin) and my personnel favourite Don't Wanna Go, followed on swiftly. The band were not really giving us a chance to catch our breath as they stem rolled right over us with very little in the way of padding and chat. Toby and the rest of the band seemed very happy to be in 'Brizzle'. This last announcement was met with a mighty cheer from the crowd for this adopted Somerset band.

Crush, Looking For A Reason and Punchline came next, with an announcement that they would be back on tour at the end of the year. Toby did seem chuffed that there was a lot of people at the gig this fine night...the hard work they put into this band has paid off in bucketloads.

Land Of The Blind, Something Wrong Here and Until The End closed out the set where the guys walked off stage briefly, only to return as they only had ten minutes left. An over-run and they were a band down!!! We were treated to an encore of Totally Screwed, Ghost and Joke's On You, which ended with Toby doing his trademark throw of the Guitar!

Wayward Sons were back, fresh and chomping at the bit. I was lucky to see them early in their career and I find myself wondering if I will ever fail to be surprised at just how good they are!

If you missed them this time around, I am sure that you will be eager to catch them later in the year. New music is inbound I reckon and lets see just how high this band can climb?

Dave



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# Emergency Rule

## The King Of Ithaca

This caught me by surprise, an album that I can stand next to the likes of Clutch, Down, Orange Goblin and bands of such quality with deep and dark, dirty grooves and matching growling vocals.

I had no idea that this band existed until I stumbled across an Email stating that they had been signed to Wormholedeath Records. I clicked on the link to give me that 10 second blast to see if I liked them...and I haven't looked back!

The debut album, 'The King Of Ithaca' is out on 9th February and if you are a fan of that Stoner Doom vibe that Iommi created 50 years ago then you are going to love this album! Hard hitting drums with a dirty Bass to accompany it with howling Guitars which have a very Lizzy feel about them because you get that dual Guitar hit which in all honesty, sold me on the band straight away. The vocals are quite raw but throughout the album there are cleaner melodies hidden away which proves that Doug Clark has quite a range on his old vocal cords. Listen to the third track, Bartender to hear exactly what I mean, the different vocal styles are there to be heard along with the fantastic Guitar sounds.

My favourite track keeps changing at the moment, at first it was The Hook which opens the album with its gutsy dialogue and breath-taking sounds. Then it was Something To Say. But Bartender is an absolute belter of a track!

Garden is one of the singles off the album, I was a bit unsure at the start that it was 'single' material, but when most of the other tracks are about twice as long...you kinda think that it probably is the best track to snapshot the band, to make you go and enquire within as it were. The tempo changes in the song are inspired, quiet and inviting at one point, really playing to my heart strings with that watery Guitar sound I love but then these guys just blow your socks off with the heaviest Riff to come out of my headphones in a long time.

Something To Say sucks you into a dark void from the very beginning, when the sinister vocals kick in, you know this is a banger of a track and I dare anyone at the 2 minute mark not to bang their head to emphasize the punch of the beat.

Abuse is so off the scale, the use of strings elevates the track and the album to a whole new level. Lyrically, you can guess what it's





about from the title, so this has dark undertones from the start, yet that chuggy riff is like a gift from the gods! Please just listen to this track just once, even if you hate the style of music (how could you?) This is a pivotal song in any band's career, a true sign of greatness. I lied earlier...this is by far the best song on the album.

Corporation is a short (honest) blast of dirty Riffs and goodness from this band, a strike out at the big companies that seem to try to rule our lives and the world. Great stuff indeed and allows me to almost catch my breath!

From The Grave is the longest track here, however after talking to the guys the other day, I feel we have been cheated out of the true running time of this album by about 3 hours. Holy £\$@% this is a cracking tune, tonnage of Riffage and that watery guitar sound, then when the main Riff kicks in with the obligatory Banjo, it just gets under your skin and it bends your will into loving this track in an instant. The vocal melody just adds to its infectious grooves and needless to say, it's a track that becomes a part of your musical history because you will never forget this track...you'll be playing it loud and proud in 20 years time.

Ulysses closes the album out and in real style as well. The intro picks you up and makes you feel like a giant, capable of anything and mightier than any Titan. The depth of sound coming out of this track is just astounding. The production team really got a handle on how this band should sound, this song is immense in every possible way!

So you have the idea that I like this album? The review itself pretty much wrote itself which is always a good sign because the words just flow, if you struggle to write then maybe those 5 stars are not really justified. As I said though, there was no struggle, this album is just fantastic! I nearly missed it as I get so much each day, it can become hit and miss to pick up new bands, purely because there is so much out there.



What about the band themselves/ 4 guys from Australia who have been playing this music for ten years now and yes, this is their debut album. I did have to rag them a little on this point in our interview. Yes, below is a video interview with the band. It was a bit of a challenge to sort out as the time differences etc were a nightmare to work out, but we got there and it was great to see a band sweating in the heat of the sun whilst we were all suffering with freezing conditions!

All this aside, I have found a new favourite band that sound amazing and as it turns out, they're nice Chaps as well to chat to. You have Doug on Vocals and Bass (Universum), former 63 Stone Guitarists of Chris George and Cal Wegener with Travis Dragani on Drums (Bruce Kulick/Mike Tramp). These guys have a bucketful of talent between them and after hearing this album, deserve to have widespread coverage.

Enjoy the video, check them out and maybe, just buy the album???

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## Sons Of Liberty The Detail Is In The Devil

I have been waiting for new music from this crowd of reprobates for some time now, talk of a new opus was being banded about just after Aces & Eights was released but fate it seems, had other ideas.

With the departure of Greyfox Growl who now has his own band, 'Sons were gigging with a good friend of mine, Rob Walker. He was doing a great job, filling in as the front-man but in the end, it just wasn't meant to be. Distance was a major factor and I think in their hearts... for the next album to work, the band had to be tight with the new material. Going into a studio when you've had only a couple of run-throughs was never going to work. So, they hired yet another reprobate to sing.

It was on the recommendation of Pete Newdeck that Russ was hired. Having seen Russ perform with the band a number of times now, he was exactly the right person for the job. The stage literally bounces now with his

boundless energy and he does bring the average age down of the band by about 88 years, so this has got to be a good thing....right?

I think the gig that sits in my mind as "mission accomplished" is Firevolt, last August. They were tight on room as Massive Wagons seemed to fill the entire Big Top, but this did not stop the whole band from pulling a huge crowd and putting extremely big smiles on the faces of all that were there. Layla, my granddaughter was called up on stage to join in with Beef Jerky which was a particular highlight for her. But the crux of it all was the chemistry between the band. They seemed to be buzzing, enjoying what they were doing and having a blast playing the new tracks that Russ had helped them craft.

So the new album, The Detail Is In The Devil has been in the bag for a while, we have been hearing the odd tune at gigs recently and we have had 3 outstanding singles.

What do we all think? Well the reception from the people that I have come across, has all been positive. The gigs themselves are getting bigger and the tours are coming in thick and fast. Was hiring Russ the best decision they made? Yes.

And I say that with all the above swept aside. If I hadn't heard any singles, if I hadn't seen them play live over the last 9 months and if I didn't know them at all....I would still say that this new album from Sons Of Liberty was THE album of 2024!

This is quite a bold statement to make this early in the year, especially with South Of Salem/Florence Black/etc bringing out real bangers this year. All these other bands are bringing out music which is their trademark sound, the songs are excellent and there are classics here and there but..... But they will not bring out an album that is so evolved from what they have done before. 'Sons have pretty much thrown out the rule book that they wrote themselves for the sound they have and re-written something that is completely different. It's still Sons Of Liberty, but it's light years ahead of where they were. This is a good thing, if they tried to copy what they were...they would have become a poor shadow of themselves, a Parody. By bringing in a different vocalist who has a different style, different tones and a different style of writing, the band collectively have elevated what they do to something that is damn near Arena filling. Superstardom is beckoning if they so wish.



The detail of this is in the album (Devil).

The album opens with Time To Fly. Chunky guitars and riffs flow out of the speakers, coupled with what is a quite a simple main vocal melody which really works so well. Most of the lines in the verse' are two words long but they step with each line until you get to the chorus which does truly fly and it is almost a song about themselves as it is indeed their time to fly

Light The Fuse is an out n' out rocker worthy of AC/DC or any other mega band out there. If you're not singing along to the chorus by the

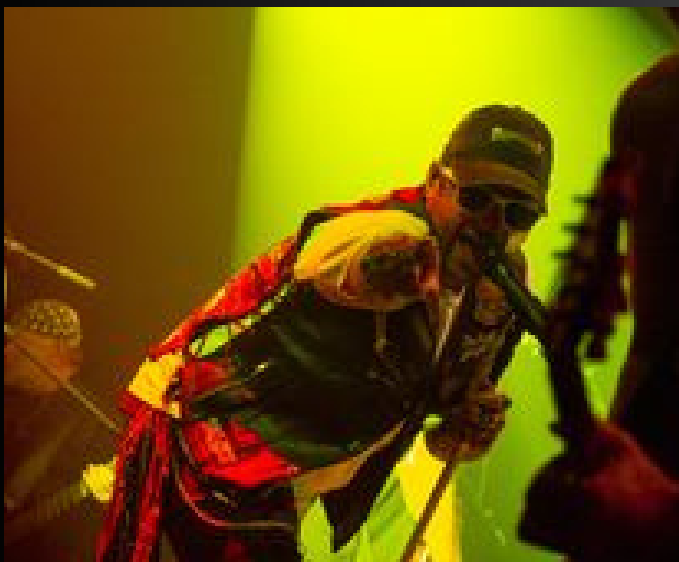




second time around then you really must be dead inside. I think Josiah Mannings production comes into it's own here as well, lifting a good track to greatness.

Turn This Tide was the second single, I wasn't sure about this at first but now..it is a classic! The seafaring terminology used in the lyrics, make the track and is it just me, or does the final movement of the track remind you of all those classic 70s bands like ELO with their huge sounds and stadium grabbing anthems?

Tetulia Time will be new to all of you, It retains so much of that Southern style the band are renowned for but they have doubled down on the quality of what they have produced before. The Bass fill, the Drums but overall, the Guitars are outstanding. Again, bring in the lyrics and party attitude of Russ, it is a great party song.



Walk With You has all that Southern Fried Rock we all know and love, paced so that we can all have a bit of a breather (we are getting on a bit), It's got groove, it's as catchy as hell and if anything, it's understated. Russ' voice takes on a different direction for this and it is just perfect. Soulful Guitar solo's can be lost these days as well when things need to be harder/faster/stronger, yet it feels that Moose and The Fredinator are perfectly synchronized, by that I mean they are on tuned in on the same wavelength, knowing how each other thinks and complimenting each others different Guitar styles.

What's A Man Supposed To Do picks it up again and runs with that particular boogie groove we all love. When I first heard this track, I instantly caught a Queen vibe, the lyrical melody was very reminiscent of Mercury's early career, yet this style is perfectly married to the Rock N Roll that the rest of the band are well known for. You can sometimes tell in a song when its hard work for the producer to get the best out of a band yet I feel Josiah just sat back and let these guys have all the fun they wanted in the studio as the track has got such a great buzz to it, I reckon the song not only wrote itself but the music came alive when they started playing it.





Hawk Men Come is that slow burn, epic track that every fine demands. The vocal melodies sold this to me on the first listen. The song relies heavily on the the vocals and solid drumming from Steve who in my opinion is one of the most underrated Drummers of our era and incidentally, he needs a bigger kit (yes he paid me to say that).

Love What You've Got.....now this one will catch you out! Don't be fooled by the slow intro, especially if you've just listened to Hawk Men, because when this track gets going, it will tear you up and get you dancing around like an idiot!!! The catchy Riff, the infectious chorus, this song has it all and leave you wanting so much more.

Libertine, was this song written about Russ? Well its got a great melody which starts/stops throughout the track, you will absolutely adore this track because I do myself. I never did ask in my interview with the guys if the harmonies were just Russ or it was a band effort? Whatever they are, you really do pick up on the harmonies with this album, I am sure they weren't so prevalent before. Maybe this is something Joshiah has bought out of the band but however they have come about... it has added so much, not only to this track but to the entire album.

I've Got The Sky is a slow burner that hits you right in the solar-plexus, takes your breath away and demands your undivided attention right until the tempo change where you the are singing the chorus out loud(which is really embarrassing when you have headphones on and you've forgotten you're not alone).

Well's Run Dry closes out the album and what a track! Probably the most 'Southern' track on the album in some respects, in others, it shows you just how far this band have come over the last few years.

In all honesty and friendships aside, I cannot overstate just how good this album is! From start to finish...it is a masterpiece. All the elements are there, great Drums, Fantastic Basslines and fills, Guitars that make you wish you learnt how to play yourself so that you can copy the `riffs and solos. But most of all, the best vocal performance I have heard in a long time.

This album is a country mile away from what they have released before. Rob has his thing and he does it exceptionally well and if the band had tried to copy the formula with Russ then they would have crashed into oblivion. What they did was create a whole new evolution of themselves which has elevated them to a whole new level.



THIS IS THE ALBUM OF THE YEAR.

Yes yes, it's far too early to make a bold statement like that but because of the evolution, because of the change in style, because of the quality of the production and because everyone in the band seems so invigorated and on top of the world with what they have created....it all transfers into the music. Because they have embraced a new vision and not relied on the old adage that if it ain't broke, don't fix it like so many other bands do (not that there's anything wrong with that before anyone starts!), for these reasons alone, this is why it's my album of the year.

But most of all, it's my album of the year because it is so flippin' good!!!! HELL YEAH!!!!

Dave



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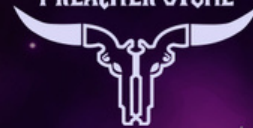
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## Battles

# Jack J Hutchinson

A new album from Jack J Hutchinson I hear you say? Don't mind if I do!

I've been following his career since I had been harassed by his old mate Wes when I started out in this funny old business of media, in fact, I think Jack was the very first interview I ever did on Zoom or whatever. It's probably best to leave that little cha back in the archives...I looked so young and fresh faced then. Its amazing what 5 years in this job will do to a guy but I digress.

We can draw some parallels in our respective careers though, where Jack has always been talented and I have yet to find any sort of talent to boast about, we have both stepped forward in our work and pushed ourselves to the limit of what we can do.

As this is about Jack's latest album, Battles, we should concentrate on this rather than trying to draw analogies.

I last spoke to Jack at Firevolt Festival last August, just after Constellations had been released and quite honestly, I was amazed at how Jack had managed to lift his craft from the high level he was already at, to such dizzy new heights! The song was head and shoulders above everything else he had released. The man attributed much of this to his new band members and Josiah Manning who handled production at Momentum Studios. This modesty (which took me by surprise as well!!!) does not do justice to the bare bones of the songs which he is about to unleash onto the world. The musicians and production can be put to one side, so that when you just look at the songs themselves and imagine them just played in anacoustic setting with just Jack...these songs would fly high still. The quality of the people surrounding Jack at this moment just compliments what this man has achieved with this album. It is by far the best thing he has done ...so far!

So, do I have to write a review? I mean, when he launched a crowd funder last year to get this album made, he surpassed his target in mere seconds. People who know this guy and have seen the band play, already know how good this album could be, these people have already thrown their cash in the hat and have trusted Jack to deliver the goods. When you invest money, you're told that your investments can go up or down, it's the same with crowd funders, you could get a duff album but then you could very well get an album which is as good as this!

So for the people who didn't have the spare noodle to crowd fund and are thinking about finding an album in February to buy...please read on!

Constellations was not only the first single, it is indeed the first track on the album. If you've lived under a brick and not heard it yet...please tune into a decent station like Rock Radio UK (other stations are available of course..but we don't soak you with adverts!).

Anyway...the track opens at full tilt and it never stops! You can't help but be swept up with its melody. There is something new though...vocal harmonies. This is where Josiah has woven his magic and improved the places that needed a little push. Just this one thing has made a vast difference to Jack's overall sound. But that's not all....you can hear how Jack has improved in every way you didn't actually think was

possible, the Guitar solos are starting to go right off the scale and that was his trademark!!!! So yeah, Constellations really opens your eyes to this album from the very start and it only gets better.

Days Are Gone, now is this different to the single I'd been playing? There seems to be a small amount of added electronic sounds. However, what really gets me is the Guitar sound. It is sounding rich and modern which elevates the track to a fresher level. The track itself is well written, there are little nuances creeping in that on first listen you may miss, when you hear the song a few times, you start to notice a few things here and there and it's that attention to detail that makes a good song sound great.

Bullets just gets to your bones in mere seconds of the start. High octane Rock And Roll which hits the cylinders of your engine and accelerates the heart in a blink of an eye. This is my favourite single by far and I suppose you could call it the title track when you listen to the lyrics. There are a couple of Guitar layers in the track which you may miss at first, but dig a little deeper, this sound would actually be immense if Jack could play two guitars at once on stage, the likelihood of that happening though is next to zero, but maybe he could drag Josiah up on stage just once to see just how it would sound.

Road To Hell...there are many, but this one... A slow burner which allows Jack to maybe concentrate on the lyrics with which he vocalises very well indeed. With one hand on the bottle is a line in the chorus which does



sound a little like he is speaking from experience.

Running On Empty is possibly the story of our modern day lives. Quite a dark heavy opening Riff leads into a fantastic melody and it is one of those songs that sticks in your memory like glue. The chorus harmony is superb!

Rip It Up makes a statement from the very beginning and picks the pace of the album again. I have no inside news on this but I do think it would make a good single. It has all the trademark Jack signature Riffs and melodies, coupled with a great chorus and a mid section solo that is just brilliant.

Love Is The Law is that bluesy, slower Rock track that makes you sit up and pay attention to the music in one simple opening bar. Don't think for a second that it's a ballad or something, it's a kind of retrospective look at why you should pay more attention to love, to not mess around with it. The Riff is simple, yet really effective. Couple this with the vocal sound that Jack and Josiah managed to overlay and you have the two things that really sell this track.

Ok....so there's no easy way around this, the next track is called Don't Let The Fuckers Get You Down. Yep, I am forced to swear for my art. It is that song that sticks two fingers up at those who try to put you down, those who want you to fail or are just plain Dicks. An upbeat track with a spiralling style of Riff that kicks serious ass it has to be said! Yeah, it's not getting played on the Radio..I know I don't get regulated like FM stations but I think Offcom would make an exception for this track.

Overdrive has a dirty sound that really strikes a cord in my heart it has to be said. As it picks up through the song, the sound becomes a little cleaner, only to strike you down again once the main verse kicks in again. `then that mid section, Bloody hell I love that breakdown!!! My favourite track? Probably just for that particular sound.

Stay With Me is the ballad you have been waiting for and it closes out the album in fine style. Simple to start, a Guitar and Jack's vocals. Very Blues based as this is embedded in Jack's DNA. We get that huge chorus that we always love to hear and those quick turns in style and tempo as the track winds itself down that long road. I don't think I've heard anything as good as this in a long while now, an utterly brilliant end to a cracker of an album.



Battles is a fantastic album. Jack has elevated his ability to a whole new level and I can see/hear why he is so pleased with this album, as it is by far, his best work to date. It has everything you want out of a Rock album, it lifts you, it makes you 'want' to listen to it multiple times and when you do, you find something new to fulfil the void in your life that you didn't know you had.

I thought the last album was great, but that pales into comparison with Battles. It will be one of those albums that marks a significant point in Jack's career, it may also be a huge spotlight for the "Big Boys" to notice the band which will propel them into the major league.

All the years of hard graft have led to this point, Jack should be very proud of what he has achieved with Battles, it's flippin marvellous

Dave



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**13TH APRIL - RETRO, MANCHESTER**

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# Drip Fed Empire Revolutionist

I have a hardened soft spot for the style of music these guys are releasing, it pulls at my metal heart whilst playing to a modern sound that is hidden in my core being.

I love Rock, I can listen to it all day and be extremely happy yet there are times I can yearn for something that little bit explosive as a release of emotion. This is basically the whole reason for music, it's an outlet, an outpouring of something that's been pent up inside for a long time. I have to say that when I first listened to this album, I had no idea what it would do to me on a personal level. The overall soundscape to me hit a nerve from the outset, it's like sitting in a darkened room and having your very thoughts probed and accessed, having those thoughts interpreted and played back to you which hits you right between the eyes.

Strong words maybe for a band that you may not have heard from before, yet I don't think Drip Fed Empire are here to pull any punches. I think that every track on this album is here to shake your soul and make you question your beliefs.

So when some people hear an album that is very modern sounding, it has a mix of clean and raw vocal tones and that it is likened to metalcore or industrial....some people will instantly judge and 'know' what the album will be like without bothering to listen. These people are fools if I'm honest. In essence, this IS an overall description of the band's sound but I feel that they have done something more, I feel they have taken this as a strong foundation to what they are building, but they have managed to evolve the sound light years ahead of where many bands of this particular nature are currently at. I do struggle with a lot of metalcore bands as they have only one particular guitar sound and a fashionable cymbal sound which I really am starting to hate, there is no monotone here, each track has been well crafted to create something quite unique each time. A very clever inclusion of Synths and backing tracks give the songs that extra dimension, making the band sound like there are a dozen people involved rather than just 4.

These 4 guys are Jay on vocals and Electronics, Jack on Bass, Jordan on Guitar and Burcher on Drums. (Almost) Westcountry based.....from Bristol, they have had quite a ride so far as they have managed to snag support slots with Cyderbaby favourites Seething Akira, along with Electric Callboy, Attila and hacktivist. I have yet to see them live but after hearing this album, I am sure that they kicked these headline bands asses opening for them! From what I can gather, they have created quite a local following.

Revolutionist is due to hit the streaming platforms on 26th January, probably just before this magazine gets its release, so in theory you can read this and judge for yourselves to what I am talking about, however...sometimes it is best to hear what the band themselves have to say about their music, so I urge you to take a few minutes to view the interview here in this article.

So what are my views on each particular track? The album is not overlong, around 30 minutes. This seems to be a common thing now, when I was talking to Scott from Rival Sons, a band that are polar opposites to this, he said that peoples attention span is becoming shorter so 45-60 minute albums are becoming obsolete. I am starting to see the sense in this argument, Eps are becoming popular and single releases. Much of this is cost driven, yet listening to Revolutionist, I feel that too many more tracks may overwhelm the listener. There is a lot to take in when you listen to these 8 tracks.

Wondering Soul is a short opening into the world of Drip Fed Empire, Electronic led, with quite a dark soul to it, almost willing you to open the gates to hell and let the monsters loose into your subconscious.

Give Me More then takes off at full flight. It's then that you realise that this band are making you look at the dark elements of real life, not figurative beings and thoughts. The vocals on this track are really impressive, you have the almost low-spoken verse which leads into a chorus that shouts its aggression into your face. I am not a great writer by anymeans, so I am struggling to explain just how good the actual music that makes up this track, it is a well woven blend of guitars and Synth/Electronics that carry the entire melody(?). If this is how good the opening track is, then surely they can't keep up the momentum?

MK4 is pure Metalcore at its very best from the outset yet there are signs here of absolute brilliance when the track just drops into something different. I feel this is a prime example of how this band have managed to evolve the whole Metalcore sound forward by decades. That break at 2.45 is just inspired

The Work of God hits very hard, from its quiet beginnings, to the scream in your face statement of its very title. The subject matter makes you question a lot of long held beliefs and while you listen to this track you get the



sense of that inner battle within oneself and those outside influences trying to get you believe in something that ain't quite right! It seemingly comes to a head at 3.15 with an intensity in the track that is absolutely palpable.

Digital Drug, is it all of us that are addicted to that whole internet experience? In reality yes it is. This has to be my personal favourite track with its almost spiral riff at the beginning and the chorus melody. The mid section break and forthcoming explosion of vocal power that closes the track is just brilliant.

Systemreset is just so different, quiet, relaxing..subtle and overall very dark indeed. Do not skip this track as it ties in the entire story of the album.

Arcane is an epic sounding track, blending in a true piano sound to an explosive Guitar hit which is just them opening. The two vocals styles here, gives the song a massive presence in itself, then you add the Guitar and the low end of Bass and Drums, it really is a masterpiece of well crafted song writing. It's so easy to ruin a great song like too much double kick or too much similarity in content, each section of this track has been well thought through and balanced, as I mentioned...it is an epic track and a song that any major band out there

would have wished that they had written. Maybe this is a sign of what is to come in future releases?

Invaders closes the album and does so with style. It is by far the longest track here but it has just about everything you could wish for. Industrial sounding Synths, dirty Guitar sounds, a huge drum sound and crushing vocals that literally take your breath away. It's upbeat in the way that you can feel just how energised the band seem in playing this. It would be good to see them play this live at a gig just to see if my theory is correct.

Revolutionist is there in all it's glory, my words are just a snapshot of how I feel about this album. I'm open to most genres and styles, in reality I only play a few from outside of what I play on the radio because there just isn't enough time in the day. However, I am happy to add this to my regular personal playlist for the simple reason in that it gives me that release, that inner scream at the world. When you have to act like an adult all the time and keep your inner thoughts in check, yet you want to just blow-out. Drip Fed Empire have managed to capture that inner scream and turn it into a remarkable album.

This is just a beginning for this talented band, I feel that they are moulding the future of the music we listen to.



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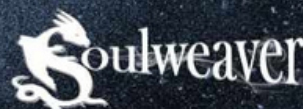
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# Dementia Aware Festival Saturday 20th Jan 2024 The Station, Cannock Words By Ian Owen

## Pics By Ian Owen/Carissa Cyderbaby

Here we are in the middle of the midlands supporting an event purported to be Dave Evans final show as the main promoter/ godfather and saint. Dave has been running these events for many years and raised thousands for the important charity, the reason we are here today. Dave has not only helped give exposure to lots of bands, Dave enabled me to photograph several of his events along my own personal path in photography, so I also owe him a debt of gratitude for his kindness and friendship, I really hope we cross paths regularly in the future. Dementia Awarefest is now taking off nationally so the

events will continue. The extremely capable and thoroughly loveable Rich Forbes and his partner Rockchick Allison Jayne will be carrying the torch with the next event in Coventry at The Arches 16th – 17th March and Birmingham Billesley Rock Club 18th May 2024

Enough of this, today, I switch my attention to the delights on show here in Cannock. The Station is a cracking venue, friendly bar staff, efficient and hardworking and a decent friendly crowd from the start. The only downside for a photographer is the lack of pit

but the crowd are really cool, offering up space to allow us in for a few shots.

I'm not going to go full on in depth with the bands here, as a lot of them are totally new to me, but it's still fun.

First up the wonderfully named Bang Bang Firecracker, a Three piece of power. aggression and control, hailing from the Stoke area. They weren't the luckiest with the gremlins messing with the sound, I think there was a problem with the bass, even so, they ploughed on as soon as they could. An awakening set which relied heavily on the sound of the bass guitar, giving this three piece the desired effect that would appeal to fans of the heavier side of classic rock. The set featured tracks from their trilogy Eps "Hear Evil", "See Evil" and "Speak Evil". Tracks played included Immortalized, 72, Aint nothing gonna change and the one that will always get attention. A dedication to the Original Motorhead, raise yer glass to Filthy Phil, Fast Eddie and of course Lemmy, we got an excellent rendition of No Class. Loud and cool at the same time.



Second on, quite a decent crowd in here considering other gigs going on tonight, we get another band I have never heard of, Kinstrife. I must admit, not what I expected, no set list to be seen or photographed so what can I say. My apologies if I get the song titles wrong to the ones I picked up.....haha! As stated, a surprise for me, they play good time power rock. They have great guitar sound with colourful vocals, sometimes smooth, clear and soulful, sometimes a bit dirty.

The set includes songs from their back catalogue, Rise and Fall, Getaway and my favourite of the set Slow and Easy, a slow builder and the first ballad today (Yeah I know some of ya don't like ballads, me I love 'em, but I love aggression too). There was a dedication to anyone working or serving in the forces, Ground Hammer. Listening to these guys, for me they have a unique sound, I quite like it.... They finished off with the catchy little ditty Make Me!

Third band on, the crowd is really good in here, nice to see loads of familiar faces, smiling, friendly and enjoying the show. Another band that I hadn't had the pleasure of before, Adam and the Hellcats. My god there are a few of 'em those Hellcats and is that a keyboard, I hope he doesn't do any twirling, he'll wipe the rest of the band out!!! Opening the set with, She's a Vampire, there's a lot going on, a cool band for festivals, entertaining and fun, by their own admission....a bit nuts, that's what we want though, entertainment. You may get more of an idea from songs like Queen & Country, Black Witch Bomb or F\*\*K you brain, it's a bit like being in the Baron Frankenfurter's castle, or on the set for the Rocky Horror Picture Show. We are treated to a dedication to a young Lady, Kelly Jones, recently passed away. The track specially written to her, Go Easy and we all share the sentiment, Go Easy my friend. Adam and The Hellcats aren't pretending to be anything other than a fun loving rock n roll band out to party with all that are willing, good fun to watch.



Now we're moving into more familiar territory Circus 66 featuring the vocal powerhouse of Annabelle Zaychenko. I saw this band at Call of the Wild and liked them then, nothing here has changed my mind, kicking things off with Replace the Pain and Jekyll or Hyde. Circus 66 have just taken it up a notch or three.

Annabelle owns the stage, appears to be having fun, chatting with the audience and putting everything into her vocal performance. Songs are from the 1st album, Follow the Black Crow and the follow up album Elements. A little Piece of Magic, is exactly that, a great song. Tonight, we hear a new single Save The Damn World, this song goes down really well. The band play with a punchiness that's sets the bar for those that follow finishing the set with Take a shot and the wonderful Monster, excellent set from Circus 66.

A'Priori are brilliant, that's it, excellent band, banging out excellent tunes and there's only three of 'em. I didn't write anything down, it was too crowded, no tables or light so I just enjoyed the show. I've seen these guys quite a few times now, I think the first time was in a tent at Call Of the Wild, they are building a following and when you see them live, it's totally understandable. Every element of the band sounds excellent tonight, again that's not unusual. We get served up tracks off their two excellent albums A'priori and House of Cards, from memory we got the awesome Watch the world Burn, Shotgun Blues, Black Church and Better Man. Here comes the Reign keeps the mood and vibe rocking . A sing along of Making love with the Devil, Wasted Years and the really catchy Nananana. Such an excellent live band and worth the money on their own, Blackpool's own showing the rest of us how Rock is made.



Black Lakes, a band that for me and a few others, have managed to hide in plain sight. They have a darkness, almost gothic look about them but they seriously kick it. Avarice, opens up the show, with up-tempo drums and a wall of sound, so many influences , some may become more obvious later looking at the setlist. Verity in Flames is the track I checked out last night that made me quite excited to see these guys. It's initially slower but bounces along into a crescendo chorus, becomes more aggressive vocally. Fragments, Break the silence and White Cliffs lead us onto the cover I alluded to. Will Preston (vocals) suggested he was struggling vocally tonight, I hadn't noticed, sounded great to me. One Step Closer -Linkin Park was an interesting cover, for me, it didn't quite work, I spoke to a friend that felt it was a little too fast and that's probably how I felt. That aside, I really like these guys as Dissident finishes their set, they went down an absolute storm.



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The Hot One Two, what can I say about this energetic, monstrous bundle of rock n roll fun. These guys are non stop movement, great sounding entertainment. Another band that I failed to write anything down, just watch and take it in. These guys just don't stop moving and engaging the crowd. Kev Baker and Nick Manners really putting the energy in on Rhythm and lead respectively. I noticed Kev was very expressive at Call of the Wild but Nick is too. Both of these guys pulling faces, throwing shapes and dancing around, the brilliant vocals from Simon West keeping the crowd going with singalongs and encouragement to make noises. They pretty much played the whole of the brilliant album "Superbia". Starting the show with Playing with fire and Bleed on me (the only track not from the album but their EP (Unrestrained). The Fray is one of my favourite tracks, as soon as it starts it rips yer face off. This band are on an upward trajectory, listening tonight, you can hear why, you can also see it. More energy than a lorry load of duracells, this band is a power station. Tonight Rolling Stone moves us on, we get Something Real, You've got it, Is it Hot? These guys write cool rock n roll songs that are classic in style full of energy and passion. This show gave us all the songs we wanted to hear and left us wanting more, as all good bands should. Finishing with a flourish Tie me down gets everyone's juices flowing. The Hot one Two, once more give The Dementia Aware Fest a knock-out blow. Great cause, great crowd and a fantastic show. Well done to all involved. Awesome night and The Station Cannock an excellent venue for the party.otH



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# The Interviews From Dementia Aware Fest, Cannock.

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## Getting Hotter By The Second The Hot One Two

When I look over the last year, there is one band that springs to mind that has made a HUGE impact on our music scene, The Hot One Two. When I look forward to the next twelve months or so, I believe there is one band that will go from strength to strength and quite literally take on the world.....yep, The Hot One Two.

These guys have already beaten off stiff opposition to snag the opening spot at Stonedead this year which itself has sold out in record time and as of yet, not announced THE headline act.

I've seen these guys everywhere this last year, I think the first time was at Call Of The Wild back in May. Who was this band? They owned the stage as soon as they walked on to it, not only did they play some outstanding riffage but they also entertained us with their various posing and gurning throughout their set.

Entertain...this is the key word here as they just don't stand back and let the music do the

talking, or let the vocalist have the only spotlight, there is something going on at each and every corner of the stage and this endears a band to a crowd because at every point in the set, each gig-goer feels included by every band member and that makes each person in the crowd go home afterwards, talking about what they have seen with their mates. The band have created stand-out memories which last a life time. This is why they were voted to open Stonedead, people who knew how The Hot One Two operate want to see them again, the few that hadn't seen them voted them in knowing that they would provide a great show by reputation alone.

I think the real highlight for me was seeing them play a killer set as the ones to watch at Firevolt. Basically they were asked to open the Saturday in the Big Top, which is a rather large stage for any band, but the boys owned it and played to everyone who was at the festival as I don't think anyone was willing to miss this set (or the purple shots).



They blew the socks off of everyone and it is no wonder that they have been invited to come back and play again this year.

I did manage to get an interview with the guys at the time so that I actually got to know this band... I had no idea where they came from or what they had already achieved. Even a seasoned embittered Journo like myself can be surprised and starstruck by a band they really hadn't heard of until about 3 months before.

So what was to come next? Well, I got a few singles through and started playing them and I was soon to realise that there was an album on the way. Yes I know I can be slow on the uptake at times, I am sure many of you knew all of this before ever I became aware, I miss so much new music at times, it becomes either embarrassing or testament to the fact that I am a little swamped with it all. But, late to the HOT party, I am on board now with the rest of their fans and my job here really, is to convince the few that have missed out on seeing them so far, to search them out and maybe go to a gig or even better, buy their album.



Yes, there is an album! It came out at the tail end of the year, the debut and it is called Superbia. A fair chunk has already been released to the unsuspecting public but there are still a handful of hidden gems hiding in the rough...shall we explore the album? I don't need to ask really as you are far too interested in it from what I have already said!

The Fray fires both barrels at you at the very beginning, where the hell did that come from? They seem such nice guys as well! You instantly get that caffeine hit when you turn this up loud, it gets you buzzing and ready to take on the world. It pretty much sums up The Hot One Two in around 3 minutes, Driven Guitars like they've been stolen with a heavy Bass, Tub-Thumping Drums and Vocal melodies that hook you in straight away...Top that!?!?



Tie Me Down does just that, one thing about this album, it picks you up...gives you a damn good shake and lets you go once its all over and the fat Cyderbaby has sung. This has that catchy chorus to sing along to and a flipping great Guitar solo that gets into your soul, stunning stuff if I'm honest.

You've Got It (I Want It) has a bit more sleeze appeal to the overall Riff which gives the bands sound another dimension, essential if you want to create a well-rounded album which will appeal across the board. Vocal harmonies are a great thing with this band as the vocal style lends itself to the Guitars and vice-versa, it's a bit like asking what came first, the chicken, the egg or Kev?

Is It Hot? By far my favourite track on the album, quick paced, fast spoken boogie at it's very best with a guitar shuffle Riff near the end that lifts the (remaining) hair on the back of my neck..Flippin' awesome!

Feeling Good has a feel good vibe from the very first note. Its got everything there that Def Leppard had at Hysteria, Sing along tune, backing vocals that compliment and cracking musical tones from each member of the band. This has hit written all over it but alas, we don't live in that world anymore unless people like yourselves reader, go out and buy the album and tell your friends all about it.

Something Real is a little bit different, slightly lower tones, slower paced and actually quite deep. I don't say that to trivialise the other tracks, it's just these can have a serious side to them rather than just that fun side we see at the Gigs.



God Forsaken Blues is an absolute belter of a track, it has that hard edged Blues tone with the lyrics that paint an image of a hellraising kid (everyone is a kid at my age). Again, it's another twist of the knife when you think you have these guys

pinned down in style, it shows diversity and an ability to keep us all on our toes. I think I've listened to this track a million times now and I still hear different aspects and nuances hidden in the mix.

Demon Daze is another firm fav.....that opening is brilliant, a simple Guitar sound followed by that awesome Bass line matched with solid drumming. Just when you get a handle on the vocals, it all explodes and blows the cones out of the speakers



The Guitar tone used is so rich and low....it gets into your soul. The breakdown leading into the solos just makes you sing Bah-Dah! Along with the guitars. When you play this in the car as often as I have, you'll start to understand why you get those funny looks when you drive through town with the windows down, stereo up and you're singing along at the top of your voice.

Rolling Stone, possibly the most radio-friendly track for the Non Rock friends to listen to as an entry into this fine band. I have to say though, it's a completely different beast live! I really love the track, it reminds me of those hot summer evenings on a long road trip for some reason..could be related to hearing it Firevolt I suppose.

Playing With Fire is a sure barn stormer of a closing track! Deep and dark but what a fantastic track, It gets you nodding your head in appreciation and reaching for the repeat button to hear the entire album again.

So go and buy yourself a real banger of a debut album, it really is damn good and you'll be sold on the band if you yet to see them live.

Where do the band go from here? The album is out and they've played numerous places, what's left? There are shed loads of dates and places left to play, along with Stonedead. But it's probably best to hear whats occurring from the horses mouth,so what follows is the transcript of our interview at Dementia Aware Fest a couple of weeks ago.

The video is available to watch at the end of this piece, along with the interview we did at Firevolt which is a place where you can see them again in August.

Dave - Hi, this is Rock Radio Uk and I'm talking to The Hot One Two! Hey, how are you, I think the last time we spoke was at Fire Volt, you survived???

Band - Ahh...only just! We had a few beers saturday night. We thrive, survive and thrive. It was great for us actually. really enjoyed it and we're going back this year.

Dave - But that's not all, you won the poll to open Stonedead as well, how amazing is that? I mean, the last 12 months for you guys has been absolutely incredible

Band - it's still sinking in Christmas reserves a lot of time spent, like kind of absorbing everything

(a break for Dead Lakes revealing exactly what lies beneath a kilt)



I think the year that we got planned now, like you mentioned becoming Stonedead poll winners, playing Firevolt again, you know, we've got some fantastic festivals and some fantastic gigs lined up, I think based off of you know, hopefully the hard work we did.

Dave - You've been here, there and everywhere. I mean, an album as well, which is absolutely stunning. I've got an old enough car to have a CD player and it's been in there for three months, I think.

Band - it's been out, it's been wrapped up in terms of bookings in terms of following the stone dead poll was just testament to what we call hot one crew, are fans, if you like come into the crew, they're part of this journey. And, you know, we asked them to get behind the band for voting for the poll and everything else. So we couldn't do without them. No, we genuinely owe everything to them, you know, they work really hard with us. We played multiple cities throughout the year, and we see the same people in every city. You know, it's an incredible community. So, you know, with the album being out it's been very well received, we haven't had any bad feedback, I'd say it's been very, very well received. Yeah. Which it has been, which has been, you know, so humbling.

Dave - It's a step above everything, and you set the bar quite high for the bands coming to be fair.

Band - You say setting the bar high for the other bands to follow. I mean, it's not a competition at the end of the day. And we're in the same way suddenly, with other bands. You know, we look at whether we should be thinking we need to be. One thing that we pride ourselves on is ever evolving, and always learning from every show, every song that we write, it's the next step. We're only as good as your last show. You're only as good as your last single or album. And, you know, we take a lot of motivation from listening and plan to play with other bands. So yeah, this. So last year was a big year with album releases across the whole area. And we're just happy that we managed to kind of get in the mix. Yeah. Some of the best.



Carissa Cyderbaby



Chris Ford Productions



Dave - You are you releasing single after single? I mean, was that conscious decision for yourselves? There's quite a bit of the album already out there.

Band - It was a conscious decision we wanted to have sort of quite a big build up towards the release in order to be I mean, putting stuff out social media, music, sort of waving their arms around before the album came out. So I think the success of the album is a testament to that. I think it's been absolutely beneficial. I think it was a gamble to do but it paid off. Totally. Yeah. As you say we released 60% of our album, it could have been just plateaued and that would have been it But in the end, it all paid off. And there was about four songs that were that I think.....

they were really well received as well and say, We want you to drip feed the singles. And obviously, you want to put your best ones out first and then hopefully grab some attention initially. So it was like at times it's a bit of a gamble, you're left with maybe four or five tracks that you're, you've got to then as the album, but what we found was that a lot of people that have now got the album hadn't heard some of the singles. So you just automatically assume because you've released things, everyone's heard that wasn't the case. They were waiting for the album to drop. And then they had some reviews that said, the drip fed most of the album, and it would have been nice to have a few more songs, but then you've got others that have gone. Wow, that was incredible. So it shows that divide between some of the haves and have paid attention

followed man, some that haven't been drawn in with that release, ya know, a lot of people have listened to the album as an album. Yeah, and it's interesting that people have said, you know, when those songs are coming out of singles, they were saying they were very strong releases. And we just thought, well, when our album drops, are they actually going to live up to the same standard to fit the overall sound of the record. So for us, you know, one of the most positive bits of feedback we keep hearing is, we'll see you live show, you're very energetic. And that's what we wanted to do is catch that energy getting on a record so that when people come see us live, they get the same thing throughout.

Dave - Absolutely, I mean, the singles you put out were great and but it was like, those hidden gems of the rest of the album came together and they're just like, make the whole thing. I'm not blowing smoke.

With Spotify and streaming platforms, you've got to be releasing, you've got to be putting your name out there like you did put your name on people's tongues. Then they go and buy a ticket for a show and it snowballs, I think we've done exactly the right thing. So well done. Hopefully, we're not gonna wait too long for the next batch?

Band - quite a lot of demos in the pipeline. In terms of singles this year, I think we're going to try and focus on engagement and the band brand off the back of the album route. Some gigs under our belt, go into venues that we've not done last year and are on the bill, just working hard. And again out on the road really.





then enjoying the album, enjoy the album because I feel like for the last year, it's always been something we've been working . And finally when it came out suddenly (I don't know about the others.) But as soon as it was out, I was like, Oh, wow, I actually really enjoyed the tracks because we've been so close to them. I hadn't been able to listen to them. And now it's, I think this year is just going to be just sitting back and then working hard still but just enjoying the work we have done before it all starts all over again. But album 2 is in the pipeline

Dave - So what is next? I mean, we're here at dementia Aware Fest in Canock where you headline,. We've mentioned stonedead and Maid in stone Yes,. What else?

Band - in two weeks time we're in Hastings for the first time at the Carlyle and then two days afterward with These Wicked rivers, who we've have been fortunate to get with a couple of times and back in the last year at the parish in the hole, Huddersfield, Majors Fest etc etc

Dave - What would you like to say to people that have bought the album who have listened to come to the gigs What would you like to say?

Band - Well, thank you! Thanks so much, it means the world to us.

We genuinely so grateful and what we try and do is bring them on that journey. With us, you don't want to feel like a 'bad' fan. We want it to be like, You guys have been here at ground zero. And you're following the journey. And actually, you guys were part of this hot one crew, which is a group, it's a closed group. But we're very close to the people that are in there. You know, we post a lot of daily stuff that we do. We get people involved and make them feel like, (family) they know that they know us individually. Because that's important to us. We want that community to feel like they're valued by us, and that we're not just taking people for granted.

Today, but we turned up at the station, we met a bunch of people that we've met over the last year, had a beer with them, you know, How's

your new year? Christmas? Fantastic. Next year, the next one, you know, it's great to see you again, you know, you know, you're not, you know, they're your friends.They become friends. And then you know, that's what we want from people that maybe haven't seen our live shows come up and have a beer, have a chat, join the crew, and we'll see you on the next show.

Dave - Well, I'm not gonna hold you up too much longer, I think next band are about to start so we'll probably get drowned out. Thank you very much. All the very best for this coming year. I think big things are happening. Thank you very much.

It's down to you guys now, whether you have heard the songs or seen them live. I feel that this is one band that will make a huge impact to the music scene in the coming years. We have all come across bands that we had hoped will make it big, some do and some fall by the wayside which is a shame. However I think these guys are hungry for it and at the same time humble enough to know that it's you guys reading this article that will make all the difference. If you don't know The Hot One Two yet...check them out.

Dave





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## Interview With Starmen

Cyderbaby caught up with Swedish band, Starmen to chat about their latest release, Starmenized which came out in '23.





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