

AUGUST 2020

ISSUE NO. 04

FINITE

THE



**ALL HAIL
SPIRITBOX!**

"WE WANTED TO INSPIRE MENTAL
FORTITUDE AND RESILIENCE."
BLEED FROM WITHIN TALKS
"FRACTURE"

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS
WITH: HOLDING ABSENCE
NOISEMAKER
CURSES
LUNARLIGHTS
AND MORE!**



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AUGUST 2020
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EDITOR'S NOTE

STREAM
悪玉



intefam



Hey, punks!

Allow me to get a little bit personal with y'all. This quarantine has really been taking its toll on me lately. Four whole months of not being with friends and without LIVE SHOWS?! This has all got me feeling alone—big SAD! Thankfully, I have this platform that allows me to meet a lot of exciting new friends and connections even upon being stuck at home all the time. I get to interview some of my favourite bands and of course, share all of it with you our readers! Every issue we put out, our readers increase in numbers as well and that makes my heart swell. Our team LOVES celebrating each release by reading all your positive comments and then what comes next is we work twice harder. Thank you for supporting this small project, we'll always reach higher and ~~higher~~ ^{BIGGER} each time!

Anyhoo — WELCOME TO ISSUE # 04!
This time around, we got the chance to shed the spotlight with ~~yet~~ another set of two of my favourite bands right now, BLEED FROM WITHIN, who released probably the Album OF the Year™ 'FRACTURE' which is one straight up ^{fucking} amazing modern metalcore record ~~you should listen to~~ (I listen to it everyday since I heard it, it really is THAT good); and the exquisite metal powerhouse SPiRITBOx, the new project by former Invested Aberrance members (Queen) Courtney LaPlante and husband Michael Stringer, that if you haven't heard about yet, you probably live under a rock, hehe. Also inside you will find super talented artists that we as a team have been listening to a lot such as HOLDING ABSENCE, CURSES, PALEPATHS, etc etc etc... Just find out for yourselves! And you're welcome in advance ♡ SALAMAT for reading, hope you enjoy this one!

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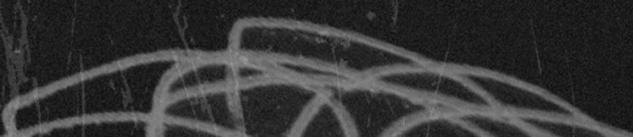
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Ghost hugs,
AK/Karen



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OUIE SANCHEZ



ABOUT

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Photo by: Guy Cowger

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU FORM CURSES? WHAT INSPIRED YOU GUYS TO MAKE MUSIC TOGETHER?

After most of us played together in other local bands for quite a while, we all came together and formed Curses in late 2013. We all shared the same musical interests and had written music together before Curses, so for the most part, we all inspired each other to write the music we did together.

HOW HAS YOUR MUSIC EVOLVED SINCE YOU FIRST BEGAN PLAYING MUSIC TOGETHER?

Since then, not only has our music held the same powerful components that we started with, but it has also evolved as we always encourage and inspire each other to experiment in growing on and changing these components to find new sounds based on our experiences and interests.

HOW HAS WORKING WITH ONE OF THE BIGGEST LABELS IN THE METAL INDUSTRY (SHARPTONE RECORDS) IMPACTED THE BAND ESPECIALLY AS A SELF-MANAGED INDEPENDENT ACT?

After joining the Sharptone family, we've been nothing but grateful for everything they've done for us and the new opportunities they have opened for us. We are beyond excited for what's to come with their assistance.

'THE DOOR IN THE WALL' WAS RELEASED A FEW WEEKS AGO. HOW WAS YOUR LISTENERS' FEEDBACK? WAS IT SOMETHING YOU ANTICIPATED? TELL US MORE ABOUT WHAT THE TRACK AND VIDEO IS ALL ABOUT.

We really enjoy hearing all the feedback we've received on "The Door in The Wall". We chose this song as our music video and first single because it best shows our musical evolution from "Chapter I" and "Rest" into our new sound we've developed in "Chapter II". We also consider it our "Door" into what's to come.

COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE RECORDING AND SONG-WRITING PROCESS FOR YOUR SOPHOMORE ALBUM 'CHAPTER II: BLOOM'?

Our writing process is never a set in stone structural process, rather we experiment with some new effects, or find an interesting guitar riff, loosely track some cool ideas, then work on that piece by piece. The recording process is very similar in that we stay open in experimenting with the music as it is being made to turn it into something we didn't anticipate on initially. We all work together to find our sound.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE TO ASPIRING BANDS?

Our advice to new aspiring bands has always been the same bland but extremely important answer: PRACTICE PRACTICE PRACTICE. Practice to a metronome, practice to a track. In our opinion, growing with your instrument is the most crucial component when it comes to evolving as a band and expanding your sound.

Interview by: Jam Oliver

SOCIAL MEDIA:
f t i @officialcurses

FF: TELL US HOW PALEPATHS BEGAN. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO GET TOGETHER AND MAKE MUSIC AS A GROUP?

All of us (except AJ) met in high school. Circa 2014 in the small sunny city of Olongapo. That is where it all began. Four young boys in two separate bands trying to compete against each other during the school's annual band competition. Both our bands held a mutual love for heavy music and we guess that's how we became really close friends. Before graduating we still wanted to pursue different avenues in music outside our beloved alma mater so we decided to form a band. Begged promoters to put us on shows and after a few "no"s and "maybe next time"s we eventually got on as openers. Released a few songs and toured tenaciously. And eventually met AJ while on tour. That's how it all started!

There's two things that inspired us to create music together. One is our love for hardcore music with melodic sensibilities. We've seen bands from Olongapo come and go because of conflicts in influences and fortunately for us when we try to write songs, we kind of communicate telepathically on what kind of music we want to create and that inspires us truly. Second, we treat each other as blood brothers and feed off each other's energy. Being together for well over 6 years really brought us close and that makes it very inspiring to think that our relationship goes over the spectrum of being band mates.

FF: AS A FAIRLY YOUNG BAND, WHAT ARE THE EFFORTS YOU HAVE BEEN PUTTING UP TO GET YOUR MUSIC OUT THERE?

Hardcore taught us to DIY! We really do best to get stuff done on our own. Recording, designing merch, being our own PR, talking to promoters, putting up tours, etc. We make sure to use all the energy our youth gives us. Money comes from our own pockets too! We could probably buy a car or something with all the money we put in the band.

Photo by: Niko Cezar

PALEPATHS

IF: IS THE SOUND YOU HAVE RIGHT NOW SOMETHING YOU'RE CONTENT WITH OR ARE YOU STILL OPEN TO DISCOVERING A DIFFERENT ONE?

It's definitely something that we could be content with given it's literally the reason why we wanted to form Palepaths in the first place. But given us being a young band it's already acknowledge by all of us that we probably would incorporate different influences in the future as we grow. But we're certain that it's still going to be sad and loud!

FF: WALK US THROUGH YOUR LATEST TRACK 'UNDESERVING'. WHAT IS IT ABOUT AND WHAT IS THE ACCOMPANYING CINEMATIC MUSIC VIDEO INSPIRED WITH?

Literally, 'Undeserving' is sort of a soliloquy Maki had about the things he's been dealing with at the time. Seeing how depression staggers us as well as our friends and family we felt like we needed to address it somehow both lyrically and sonically. For the music video we thought it was cool to do a one take shot for the first half (showing us passing the POV to each other as a sign of connection and just going off during the latter to manifest anger and pure raw emotion.

FF: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE LOCAL FILIPINO HEAVY MUSIC SCENE TODAY? WHAT ARE THE BEST AND WORST THINGS ABOUT IT?

Very much alive! This year alone even with the pandemic going on we still managed to release some pretty banger records. Most of the scene people from cities we love to play in are very nice and the camaraderie is strong as well! The worst thing is probably how most bands seek western approval for their music.

FF: WHAT HAVE YOU GUYS BEEN UP TO DURING THIS QUARANTINE? AND WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM PALEPATHS IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

A lot of video games and staying indoors!

We're also slowly finishing up our album. It's been slow in progress due to difficulties in the resources we have to produce it. But we make the most of out the situation by being more intricate in terms of writing. Expect the record pretty soon and we're also doing this rescheduled Luzon tour with TNG, Turntides & Nay, We Made It. Keep an eye out for those!

Interview by: Karen González



SOCIAL MEDIA

- [palepathshc](#)
- [@palepaths](#)
- [@palepathsadcore](#)

HOLDING ABSENCE

FF: WHEN AND HOW DID HOLDING ABSENCE START AND DECIDED TO MAKE MUSIC AS A GROUP?

Holding Absence formed as a band back in about 2016. It was a project amongst friends that kinda escalated really. James is the only remaining founder member, and Ash, Myself and Scott all joined the band one at a time. In reality, Holding Absence is just a band that formed out of the Cardiff music scene and all the bands that used to play in it over the years!

FF: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE KIND OF MUSIC YOU MAKE?

LOTS OF PEOPLE CALL US DIFFERENT THINGS: -POST-HARDCORE, EMO, SHOEGAZE, METALCORE. HONESTLY, I ALWAYS JUST SAY THAT WE'RE AN EMOTIONAL ROCK BAND. WE TRY NOT TO PIGEONHOLE OURSELVES TOO MUCH IN REGARDS TO GENRE!

FF: WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE BAND? WHAT ELSE CAN YOUR LISTENERS EXPECT FROM YOU IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

As I said, we're working very hard on new music! We hope that once the pandemic disappears we can tour the world and play as many places as possible. Fingers crossed!

FF: LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE TO ASPIRING BANDS? WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BREAK THROUGH INTO THE SCENE?

Say something that means something, work hard and be true to yourself. If you do all of that, your success will be far more personal and you won't be so reliant on external gratification.

FF: TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR DEBUT SELF-TITLED ALBUM. WHAT IS ITS MAIN THEME AND HOW DID ITS SONGWRITING PROCESS GO?

he self-titled took a long time to make, but we're super happy with the outcome. It's an emotional journey, showcasing all the stages of love, good and bad. I really tried my best to exercise a lot of different emotions in regards to love and am very proud of how it all worked out in the end. We're already looking toward album two with excitement!

FF: 'HOLDING ABSENCE' ALBUM WAS WELL RECEIVED CRITICALLY AND COMMERCIALY. BACK WHEN YOU WERE WRITING IT, DID YOU EXPECT THE RECEPTION TO BE AS HUGE AS IT BECAME?

Not at all! We've always just released and written music for ourselves. It's a cathartic experience when it comes to writing songs for this band; an success or gratification is just a bonus.



GET CONNECTED:
HOLDINGABSENCE.COM @HOLDINGABSENCE

WORDS BY: KAREN GONZÁLEZ PHOTO BY: BETHAN MILLER



Photo by: Imyoung Choi

END THESE DAYS

Interview by: Jam Oliver

FF: HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN EACH OTHER AND HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO MAKE MUSIC TOGETHER?

We started back in 2014, when Busan's local scene kids had a strong sense of brotherhood. Everyone knew and respected each other since we spent so much time together. So some of us naturally moved on from the previous bands and got together to start End These Days. It wasn't easy to start fresh and recruit new faces since the music scene in Korea has been operating on a very small talent pool. It was too difficult to find the vocalist so Yul, originally a guitarist, switched his position to vocals. The other remaining founding member is Wookwon. Our ex-members are still close friends. Mogi and Wan used to be touring support members but recently joined the band as regulars. Interesting dudes overall.

FF: IT'S BEEN THREE YEARS SINCE THE RELEASE OF YOUR DEBUT ALBUM 'AMBIVALENCE'. HOW DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE GROWN AS A BAND SINCE THEN?

We had more of a hardcore band vibe with the album Ambivalence though the sound was closer to metal. From touring different Asian countries, we learned how amazing it is to have people from different cultural backgrounds can relate to us with our common love for heavy music. We felt proud to have started a band. Also, playing live shows and touring with great bands taught us a lot, like which aspects we should work on more.

FF: WHO ARE YOUR INFLUENCES MUSICALLY AND LYRICALLY FOR YOUR NEWLY RELEASED EP 'DEAD END'?

Musically, we tried to incorporate a wide variety of styles—from legendary classic to the latest trends—that shaped our conscience. Each song feels different as a result. Lyrically, we focused on expressing how our generation was destined to feel hopeless and powerless against unforeseeable misfortunes that we call the future.

FF: COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE RECORDING AND SONGWRITING PROCESS FOR 'DEAD END'?

Our vocalist Yul writes sketches that are complete with all parts and tempo changes and what not. Other members then either add onto or help arrange those bases. Lyrics go back and forth between Yul and the bassist Wan. Wan used to live abroad so it's helpful to have him to work with English lyrics.

FF: DO YOU HAVE A BRAND LOYALTY WITH YOUR INSTRUMENTS OR WILL YOU PLAY WHATEVER IS AVAILABLE? WHAT MADE YOU CHOOSE THE INSTRUMENTS YOU HAVE NOW?

Mogi (G): Gonna stick to Kiesel since they offer the best value and options for customizable guitars. Kemper also seems solid and versatile enough for me to use at least 10 more years.

Wookwon (Dr): My first pedals were Tama Standards, then I switched to Iron Cobra. Now I use Speed Cobra. There are faster direct pedals out there but I prefer the feel of chains. Zildjian cymbals will always be a must. Roland RT-30 + TM-2 have been helpful when I had to rush setting up for live.

Wan (B): Yamaha has been doing a lot for local Korean musicians, from running academies to hosting competitions for endorsement spots. I love the company. I use BB735A and it's great for any amps, since it can switch between passive and active, and it offers a combination of P and J pickups. It's been great and this will be my only bass for playing as End These Days. I use other instruments for other bands.

FF: HOW IS THE LOCAL METAL SCENE IN SOUTH KOREA LIKE? WHAT ARE THE BEST AND WORST THINGS ABOUT IT?

Korea's local heavy music scene has gotten incredibly smaller. Early 00's were the best. Venues were full and bands were everywhere. Our era here isn't glorious at all. Not as many people enjoy the concept of live shows. Can't even guarantee ticket sales for global hotshots. Bands rarely enjoy commercial success here so most bands stay unmotivated for a long time then they vanish. (Except for some Idol pop bands that train under big entertainment corporates.)

The good thing about this though, is that even a slight effort brings a sudden attention. We're also lucky to have some great bands that keep playing and making music. Perhaps the best part of the current scene is the quality of audience—they go crazy and they know so much about music. We hope to see more new bands to resurrect the heavy music scene here.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM END THESE DAYS IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Dead End EP was an excerpt from our second studio full-length. We're still working on it to get new stuff ready by the end of this year, or early next year if things go wild. ETD will bring you something fresh so keep in touch with us. Thank you for reading, and thanks for featuring us. Finite Fam!

SOCIAL MEDIA:

   [endthesedays](https://www.instagram.com/endthesedays)

LUNARLIGHTS



FF: WHEN AND HOW DID LUNARLIGHTS BEGIN? WHO/WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN INSPIRATIONS THAT MADE YOU START A BAND?

JOSE: The band all started with Eron and Mav, who were classmates back in college. The two of them and the original members of the group were listening heavily to Angels and Airwaves and Thirty Seconds to Mars at that time, and they wanted to put out original songs inspired by that genre. Several years went by and the band parted ways with some of the original members, then they recruited Me, Kit and Miguel to fill in their spots. Because of the lineup changes, you'd notice that the type of material the band has produced before sounds different from our latest releases. Currently, I would describe the type of music we play as a mixture of pop-punk and alternative rock.

FF: HOW DOES THE CREATIVE PROCESS WORK WITHIN THE BAND? HOW DO YOU WRITE SONGS?

Usually, I bring in a song I've written at home to our practice then I play it for them. The guys let me know what they think of it, then we decide if we keep it or scratch the idea. If majority of the band is good with it, we jam it out in the studio, then make a few tweaks here and there. After that each of us polish out the individual parts each of us came up with. Then we record it and make a demo in the computer. As to what comes first, it would depend, but most of the time the music comes first then after its been nicely structured, I write the lyrics next.

FF: IT IS SAFE TO SAY LUNARLIGHTS HAVE BEEN RISING QUITE FAST IN THE LOCAL SCENE. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES A BAND HAS TO HAVE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE OPM COMMUNITY? WHAT ARE THE EFFORTS YOU'VE BEEN DOING TO GET MORE NOTICED?

Its actually been a slow and steady rise from our perspective. The band has been around for quite a while now, 7 years to be exact. And though our following is not that big, on the other hand, our fan base is not that small. We're somewhere in the middle.

On becoming a successful band in today's industry, a couple things come to mind. One would be to try to stand-out not just in the way you sound but in the way you present yourself. People today are driven by experience, so it's going to be up to you how they would remember, the way you perform, how you dress up on stage and the way you interact with them. Second, I think it is ideal to partner consistency with follow through. Its not just about being consistent with releasing and promoting new materials, it is also important to follow it through with content related to that release to keep your momentum growing. It wouldn't hurt as well to have a mindset that you as a band are providing a service to your followers. Providing them with content to get their minds off of their problems and personal issues is an essential part of what you do as an artist, specially with the world's current situation because of the ongoing pandemic.

FF: A FEW YEARS FROM NOW, WHERE DO YOU SEE THE BAND IS GOING? WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN GOALS?

I've always thought that the band has a lot of potential to be one the best in the country even before becoming part of it. A lot of doors have been opened to us, specially after we signed with Tower of Doom. The goal would be to remain at least relevant and to move people with the music that we make. People coming up to us on our live gigs, and messaging us on our social media accounts because of how they've related to the music we make is the major driving force to why we continue doing this even after all these years. Another cool thing that we are aiming would be to collaborate with our favorite artists and musical heroes in the near future and touring the country and the world while playing our music would be great.

FF: TELL US ABOUT YOUR HIGHLY RECEIVED RECENT RELEASE "T.Y.T.". WHAT IS THE STORY BEHIND IT AND THE ACCOMPANYING MUSIC VIDEO THAT CAME WITH IT?

The song is about giving each other the time and space to grow and work on yourselves. Sometimes its best to just let the person go and let them figure out what they want to do with their lives and hopefully at the end of that personal journey, they'd come back to you and if not you'd have to be able to live with it and be happy for each other. We are very humbled for how the song has been received. We've seen a lot of our followers quote some of the lines of the song on Twitter and Instagram. Some even make lyric art out of their favorite lines and personally as a lyricist seeing that kind of appreciation for your work is very rewarding.

We wanted the video to be in line with the bitter-sweet feel of the song so we thought that a slow paced music video with fit right in. We didn't want the video to be overly dramatic so we tried to make the video as "artsy" as we can, hence the use of projectors, visuals and other elements like an old television and telephone to convey the subtle melancholic message of the song. Personally, this is my favorite music video that we've ever done, because of the fulfillment that we were able to create something by ourselves, from the concept to the production. It was a total group effort from the five us and a few of our friends, plus we shot it right before the government announced a lockdown, so this one is truly unforgettable.

FF: YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING BUSY DURING THIS QUARANTINE BY DOING LOADS OF ONLINE GIGS. WHAT ELSE CAN YOUR LISTENERS EXPECT FROM LUNARLIGHTS IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Yeah, we got a few online show lined up in the coming months. We're planning to do one with a full production, so hopefully we could get that one done soon. Also, we are looking at a late August, early to mid-September release date for our next single and music video, depending on how the Covid situation will unfold, but those are just some of the things that we and our fans are looking forward to.

Sable Hills



COULD YOU GIVE US A BACKGROUND ABOUT HOW SABLE HILLS STARTED AS A GROUP? WHO/WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN INSPIRATIONS?

Sable Hills was started in 2015 by our vocalist Takuya and guitarist Rick. Both were in a band together before Sable Hills. After their band had broken up, we founded Sable Hills. Our music is inspired by old school metalcore like As I Lay Dying, Unearth and August Burns Red. We mix old school metalcore with modern metal elements.

WITH THE RISE OF UPCOMING YOUNG METAL BANDS IN THE MODERN METAL SCENE, WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES SABLE HILLS DIFFERENT FROM THE REST?

Sable Hills combines modern metal sounds with old school metal vibes, which most young metal bands don't. Most bands today are stylish with many sound effects. Of course we don't say it's wrong, we love it, but they tend to ignore the legacy of old school metal to pursue new trends. We have respect and take inspiration from both old and new metal. We think that makes us different from the rest.

SO FAR, WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED AS A BAND AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

The release of our first full album "Embers" was the biggest challenge so far. We didn't have connections with major record shops or media because we were an unsigned band. Fortunately, we were able to find Fabtone Records and they still support us now. They helped us pretty well. We could have not released the album successfully without them.

WHAT IS YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL FOR THE BAND? WHAT DRIVES YOU TO CONTINUE BEING IN THIS BAND?

Our goal is to be a headliner of some of the world's biggest Rock or Metal festivals such as Download Festival, Wacken Open Air, or Soundwave Festival. Right now, we're looking for a way to make our music be recognized outside of Japan as the first step.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR NEW EP 'FLOOD', WHAT IS THE MAIN THEME OF THE ALBUM AND THE THREE SONGS IN IT?

The inspiration of our EP 'Flood' are the matters surrounding us these days, including the virus problem. The main theme is to resist the "Flood", meaning our problems in our lives, and to struggle with adversity in "flood". While we were making the EP, Covid-19 surfaced. At first we never thought we would make the theme about the pandemic but we noticed the initial theme fits the virus situation as well. Then we changed the lyrics of one of the tracks "Divisions" and made it about the coronavirus.

WHAT CAN YOUR LISTENERS EXPECT FROM SABLE HILLS IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Actually we're making new stuff right now. No one can be sure when the next live shows will be. And we are not the exception. So the only thing we can do as a band is to create music. We've not moved on to recording yet. But the songwriting is almost complete.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

 [sablehillsweb](https://www.facebook.com/sablehillsweb)  [@SableHills_](https://twitter.com/SableHills_)  [@sablehillsjp](https://www.instagram.com/sablehillsjp)

**IN
DEPTH**

NOISEMAKER

NOISEMAKER

NOISEMAKER

NOISEMAKER



Interview by Jam Oliver
Photo by Maciej Kucia

FF: WHAT'S THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME 'NOISEMAKER'? HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN EACH OTHER AND WHAT MADE YOU FORM THE BAND?

The band was first formed by HIDE (guitar) and I (vocalist, AG). After that YU-KI and UTA, who were playing in another local band at the time, joined us. Ten years have passed since then.

We chose the name of NOISEMAKER because it means people making music and sounds in a way that is borderless. Because we love all kinds of music. When we had to decide our band name before our first show, the venue asked us on the phone. And when I had to answer it suddenly jumped out at me, from the name of my favourite compilation album, NOIZE. So that's where it comes from!

FF: WHAT GENRE OF MUSIC DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR WORK TO BE? WHO ARE YOUR MAJOR INFLUENCES?

In a broad sense I think rock music describes it. Maybe alternative suits us better though. We love all kind of music so honestly, I think it's hard to categorise us under one genre. Because we specifically don't want to be bound by anything. Our major influences are Linkin Park, Muse, Foo fighters, Incubus, Rage Against the Machine, Deftones, U2, Chevelle, Imagine Dragons, OASIS, Limp Bizkit, and so on.

FF: WITH THE RISE OF MANY YOUNG JAPANESE BANDS, WHAT ARE THE EFFORTS YOU HAVE BEEN PUTTING UP TO GET YOUR MUSIC OUT THERE?

We always think about what we can do, that other bands can't do. In today's music industry, most bands work with producers, and that can lead to a certain taste or sound becoming common across bands.

We produce all our songs and sounds ourselves. HIDE creates and controls our sound, and he's the one who will manipulate it. And in terms of art, sometimes we will work together with other artists we love but most of the time we draw and create all the designs and jacket covers and merch etc. by ourselves. It's DIY around here. I think that to be able to call yourself an artist, you have to be creating something with your hands, right? These days, bands like ours are rare in Japan.

FF: WHAT DO YOU THINK IS YOUR BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT SO FAR AS A BAND?

Even after being NOISEMAKER for this long, we are still in complete control everything to do with our band ourselves. We are from Hokkaido in the north of Japan, where we had no choice but to do everything ourselves. There were no creatives or managers or producers around to help us so we had to be all those things for ourselves. Thanks to that, we can still self-produce now and remain strong as artists.

FF: DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE FOUND YOUR REAL "SOUND", OR IS THIS SOMETHING YOU ARE STILL OPEN IN DISCOVERING?

Yeah! I think we actually found it recently. I don't think there's any other music in the world right now with the same balance or nature as ours. Especially in this neck of the woods, the rock music scene is heavy on metal, screamo and emo bands with heavier sounds and riffs. We have a quite different sound from that, almost opposite. Still, I think we'll go on evolving and changing, just as all humans do. We still have growing up to do. I'm looking forward to seeing that change, too. I get bored of the same stuff. Curiously, our individual stories always find their way into our music. Because of that our sound will never stay the same.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT'S IN STORE FOR NOISEMAKER?

Because of the coronavirus, our H.U.E. Tour has been postponed. The final date of the tour is scheduled to take place in the biggest venue we've ever played, and we are hoping we can still fulfil that, although the future situation is uncertain at the moment. In the meantime, we will keep creating our art and music. Everyone is having a hard time with life at the moment, but we can get through it and come together someday.

We want to do a world tour someday. We want to see you at a venue somewhere in the world!

NOISE-MAKER.NET
— NOISEMAKER —
— NOISEMAKER OFFICIAL —

FF: WHEN AND HOW DID CHNDTR BEGIN? WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO MAKE MUSIC TOGETHER?

April 2016, we jammed and unexpectedly became band-mates. We are inspired of each others dreams and thats drives us to create more songs.

FF: BANDS THAT PLAY SIMILAR TO YOUR SOUND ARE CURRENTLY POPULAR IN THE FILIPINO MUSIC SCENE; WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES CHNDTR STAND OUT FROM THE REST OF THESE BANDS?

We stand out because of our supporters specifically to "Mimaws Community". Their unconditional love and support for the band is our inspiration to always do our best!

FF: ARE THERE ANY ARTISTS YOU LOOK FORWARD TO PERFORM AND/OR COLLABORATE WITH?

Moonstar88, Barbie Almabis, Kamikazee, UrbanDub, December Avenue, Rico Blanco and Chito Miranda



FF: SPEAKING OF COLLABORATION, CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR LATEST SONG 'HINDI MASAYA' WITH I BELONG TO THE ZOO? WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Chin: I wrote the song last year as I was planning to add a collaboration for our next release, luckily, I was able to have a good conversation with Argee and he just said "Tara, game". So I've sent the demo to him on FB messenger then that's it we have invited him in the studio. Damn, he was so amazing and very professional. To share, after the recording he was saying "Grabe kayo, pinabirit nyo ko". It was a fun experience. We haven't had a chance to sing the song together but soon we will.

FF: WHAT IS YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL FOR THE BAND? WHAT DRIVES YOU TO CONTINUE BEING IN THIS BAND?

To share our music until we reach 90 haha!, to be a music icon in the future, to be known internationally and as promised, we will never stop until we get there. We as band have the same vision, goal and understanding, so that drives us to be in this BAND.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT CAN YOUR LISTENERS EXPECT FROM CHNDTR IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

We promise that we will never stop on exploring for a new manila sound that we'll always give to our audience



Photo by: Jomar Sabroso / Renuel Fallone

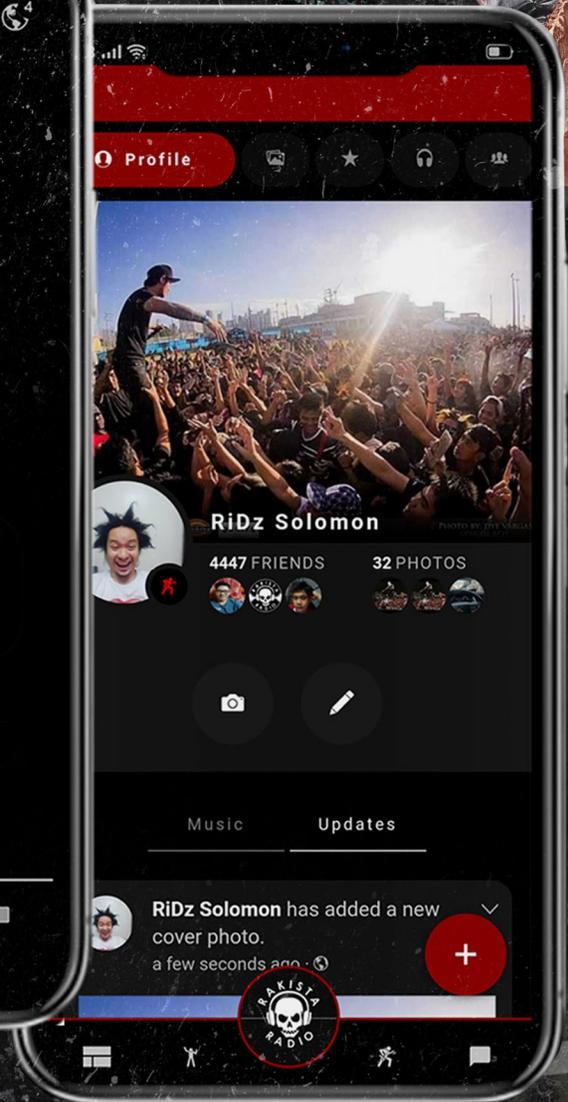
Interview by: Karen González

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FF: WHEN DID YOU START TAKING PHOTOS AND AT WHAT POINT DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU WANTED TO DO MUSIC PHOTOGRAPHY?

I started taking photos around 2002. I was actually more into filming but then my grandpa gave me his old Pentax SLR and I just enjoyed taking pictures of my friends skateboarding. Before I moved to America, I shot a couple of shows in my city (Cagayan de Oro), I think it was a Chicosci show (lol) but I never really thought of it as anything. It wasn't til 2006 when my cousin asked to take pictures of his band, when I realized, this shit is really fun (and I get to see shows for free haha). I took it more seriously and here we are!

FF: WHAT ARE THE BEST AND WORST THINGS ABOUT THE ALTERNATIVE SCENE IN THIS DAY AND AGE?

My favorite thing about the alternative scene is that everyone is so creative and hands-on, a lot of people in this scene come up with the coolest things from records, to merch, zines, art, fests, shows, even film, you name it, people in the scene are so involved with it. DIY forever.

Unfortunately, theres still a lot of inequality in this scene, (and i think it goes for everywhere) theres still a lack of representation and opportunity given to women and the LGBTQ community in our scene today. It's so sad coz I personally know so many of them that would absolutely kill it, musicians, photographers, merch people, graphic designers, but they're always not in the mix of things.

Also, I absolutely hate elitists.. These people are the ones that make a scene absolutely a shitty place. Like stop being so judgey, you didn't invent punk or hardcore or metalcore or emo or whatever you're being a big baby about. Just enjoy it like a normal human being. Theres no rules. Well theres no rules,

Interview by: Jam Oliver

JOE CALIXTO

"shutterhappyjose"
Photographer

FF: WHAT TIPS CAN YOU OFFER TO BEGINNER PHOTOGRAPHERS SPECIFICALLY WITH REGARDS TO CONCERT LIGHTING?

My first tip, this is the most important of them all, make sure you enjoy what you're doing. Have fun shooting shows. You don't have to be all serious to be professional. Remember, you're shooting a concert coz you're a fan of music. I still do it, I've shot some of the biggest bands and still lose my mind in the photo pit. Just have fun!

As for lighting, each show is different, I started out shooting small venues and house shows and they're usually okay with flash but for bigger venues or full production concerts, you just gotta be quick and play around with it. Wider aperture, fast shutter speed or vice versa. Also don't be afraid to bump up your ISO. Grain isn't all that bad. Also blurry images doesn't mean it's a terrible shot. Photography is subjective and it also applies to concert photography.

FF: WHAT'S YOUR GO-TO GEAR WHEN IT COMES TO DOING CONCERT PHOTOGRAPHY?

Well my current setup is a Canon 6D. As for lenses, I don't have a lot coz I don't need a lot. I currently own a Canon 17-40mm L, a Tamron 70-300mm and the ever so trusty 50mm 1.8. This is literally all I need for what I do and if I do need something else, I can always rent.

FF: WHAT KIND OF TOOLS DO YOU USE FOR POST-PROCESSING? CAN YOU EXPLAIN YOUR WORK FLOW?

Most of my post I do in Lightroom. If I do have to fix stuff, I just open the image in Photoshop but that's very rare. My work flow is quite simple not much crazy edits, although I do hate backlogging, I must edit right away or else I lose interest haha.

The one thing I do love about Lightroom is I can make presets. Before, I used to edit EACH photo individually. That was so time consuming.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO CONTINUE TAKING PICTURES?

Seeing all my photo peers absolutely kill it motivates me to keep taking photos. Everytime I see someone post new work, I just wanna go out there and take all the pictures!

Also, getting messages and comments from people I don't know telling me how much they love or appreciate the work I do, drives me to keep going!

KNOCKED LOOSE

TOUCHEA MORE

THE MAINE

TURNOVER

THE STORY IS OF FAR

SOCIAL MEDIA:

 @shutterhappyjose

**IN
DEPTH**

CHELSEA CORONIN OF

FAMINED RECORDS

Interview by Karen Gonzalez

FF: WHEN AND HOW DID FAMINED RECORDS BEGIN? WHAT IS THE VISION BEHIND IT?

It actually started back in 2012 I believe, founded by Rick Fortier. I took it over back in 2014, as I was just starting to go to college for music business and I was looking for a more serious commitment. At the time I was working on my own company, and so I pretty much ended up just merging the two, keeping the acts we wanted to work with, and I just kept going from there. What prompted me to pick it up and continue the legacy Rick had started was the fact that I wanted to be able to bring musicians that I thought deserved more attention, to light. I can name so many bands I've listened to in the past and thought "why aren't they bigger? Or famous?", you wouldn't believe. So, for me, that's always been the leading and driving force behind every decision we've made. We don't care where you're from, what your genre is, if you're a live act or an internet band. We just want to bring you the attention we believe you deserve: this tactic has brought us acts such as The Afterimage (under Rick), WINDRUNNER, Time, the Valuator, Speaking With Ghosts, HARMED and more. All bands I personally enjoyed, that I still jam on a daily basis, and that I am confident will make an impact worldwide.

FF: IS IT IMPORTANT FOR YOUNG BANDS TO WORK WITH A RECORD LABEL AND A MANAGEMENT TEAM?

I wouldn't necessarily say that young bands have to work with either, as if the partnership doesn't happen at the right time, it can be detrimental. If artists are hungry for more, willing to put in the works and have the talent, but lack the connections or knowledge in how to further their careers, that's when someone like a label or a manager come in handy. Some bands can do all of this by themselves, some don't even know how to set up a Spotify profile, I've seen both extremes. This is not to say that it's mutually exclusive: just because you can do it all DIY, doesn't mean you couldn't benefit from a manager/label, as you might want to take more time writing and recording rather than having to worry about marketing, press, endorsements, touring etc. So, it very much comes down to where the artist is, on their path, and what their goals are: a partnership can be beneficial, and a great boost, if done right. While I don't take sole credit for any of our bands moving on to bigger and better things, I am confident that we've helped, along the way, to help them get o their next step in their careers, and we might've even expedited the process for a few of them. Talent speaks for itself, but a good team can help you get it noticed faster, if the commitment is there from both parties.

FF: WITH THE RISE OF MANY NEW ACTS IN THE MODERN METAL SCENE, WHAT DOES IT TAKE FOR A BAND TO BREAK THROUGH IN THE SCENE TODAY?

Now more than ever, content is king. It's always been a matter of being creative and having catchy music, as if you don't turn heads, it doesn't matter how good your music is. Playing the best song ever written, to an empty room, is pointless. Since the pandemic, I find it even harder to stay afloat, sometimes, as it feels like everyone has kicked into gear and is heavily relying only on marketing to keep their numbers and relevance afloat – rightfully so. Some might disagree, but I see breaking through as a multitude of factors: catchiness, marketability, drive and a little bit of luck – sometimes you have to be in the right place at the right time, to expedite the process, if everything else is already there. There's no real formula to make it, unfortunately, but I do believe that everything I mentioned plays a part, whether it takes a band one song to go viral and start ascending, or a few years and albums under their belts.

FF: HOW CAN YOU COMPARE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ALTERNATIVE MUSIC SCENE TODAY TO WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED DOING WORK WITH FAMINED RECORDS BACK IN 2014?

I'm sure that if I sit and think about this properly, I can come up with an ongoing list of things that have been different, but I think the most striking one, to me, has been promoting music online: I recall chatting with a friend a while back, maybe even a year ago, who mentioned that one of his old tracks racked up thousands of views back in early 2010, through a YouTube channel, and was expecting the exact same to happen with a new single, through the same channel, in 2019-2020. When the desired effect wasn't achieved, the first response was disappointment, but in hindsight, a lot has changed since then. While YouTube is still a go to for music videos and visual content, Spotify is currently sitting atop the list of DSPs who are very much ruling the digital world out there – generally speaking. Back in 2010, Spotify was nowhere near the giant it's become currently, so I can see why more people would be inclined to follow YouTube over anything else. But times have changed, music is very much digital as much as it if physical now (and not to knock down CD/vinyl/cassettes whatsoever), and YouTube isn't necessarily the #1 source for new music anymore, as much as it used to be. Streaming has definitely revolutionized the way we consume music, and the sooner people catch up to that – I know of some agencies/labels who never really did and are now struggling to keep up – the sooner they'll be falling back into step with everyone else.

FF: WHAT'S IN STORE FOR YOUR BRAND AND YOUR ROSTER OF BANDS IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

A lot, I hope. We've steadily been growing since 2017, and it's been an uphill battle at times, but it's something we've always overcome. I strive to keep finding new artists to work with and bring to light, and I have a few more lined up this year that I cannot wait to start promoting and announce – and some of our older artists are gearing up to record their sophomore release with us, so I am very much looking forward to that as well. Overall, our goal is simple: keep growing and keep bringing new music to anyone who'll listen. Hopefully, people will connect with our vision, and our music.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE TO YOUNG, ASPIRING BANDS?

There's so many things I could say about this, and so many directions this question could take, it's hard to pick just one. I think, overall, I suggest bands to get their ducks in a row before launching their project. And while it might sound obvious, this goes beyond having artwork, masters and a social media page, as there is much more to a release: give yourselves time to drop a song, don't rush because you want people to hear it. Prep properly, have a marketing plan in mind, secure some press and do some social media outreach to get your music shared. Connect with your fans, give them insights into your music, your writing process, what lyrics mean to you, etc. Have everything ready before releasing the music, be it an outline, or something set in stone, and then go ahead and launch, so people will be willing to tune in, if you've laid down the proper groundwork. Of course, it's not a rule that will work every time, but it has made our releases more successful over time. What goes on behind the scenes is just as important as the music you put out there for our consumption.



SHO HIKINO

Sound Engineer

FF: WHEN AND HOW DID YOU START DOING WORK AS A SOUND ENGINEER? WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO PURSUE IT?

In my case, I'm both a studio and a live sound engineer. So to start things off, like most of the musicians and artists in the music industry, we all wanted to put our ideas out or send them to our bandmates or friends. After recording Salamin's album, Hello Anxiety in 2010, I had ideas in my head and I needed to record them asap since I didn't want to lose them. This was the start of it all. I didn't know anything about sound engineering at all; I just plug my guitar cable straight to my desktop's mic input with a 1/4" to 3.5mm converter. Yep. Cringe-worthy. LOL. I was just so into learning it I Googled my way, watched Youtube videos, but there weren't a lot of tutorials back then. 2013 I became a sound engineer for an audio-post house for advertising. I handled sound designing and music arranging for TV and Radio commercials, film, and short AVPs. Sound designing is a core element in being a good sound engineer, I believe. This is where I sharpened my skills, ears, thinking, methods, etc. This was where my knowledge expanded. Just watching and talking to my seniors and colleagues, I really learned a lot about the ins and outs inside the studio. After a few years I became UDD's exclusive live sound engineer, Carlos Tañada (UDD's Guitarist) recruited me and eventually became their staple guy.

Now moving on to live sound engineering, this is a bit different from studio sound engineering. First you need to know what console/mixing board you're supposed to use for each event. I learned them all through experience and your usual friends Google and Youtube. I asked if I didn't know something about the board and applied my studio engineer knowledge. I saw a big difference in how you do things during live events compared to studio sound engineering. To name a few, you really need to factor in acoustics, live stage sound, optimal sound level, and not just knowing how to use the board. So basically, to your fullest ability and capability, you gotta bring out the best audio experience possible not just for the audience but everyone else in the venue. This is just the tip of the iceberg if you ask me, I can go into detail but maybe in a separate interview. Hahaha!

Interview by: Jam Oliver

SOCIAL MEDIA:

 hikinosho   @shohikino



Photo by: Tom Balon

FF: WHAT WOULD YOU REGARD AS THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF BEING A SOUND ENGINEER?

For studio engineers, you just gotta grind your way until you reach that level where you know your mistakes and how to address them. This covers a lot of things (which I can't elaborate here) besides the required skills for being a studio sound engineer, you gotta have the right mindset, drive, grit, and proper communication skills. This is if you want to go beyond being just the robot mixing guy.

For live sound engineers:

Communication with all the production people, organizers, and suppliers to pull-off the perfect event without the hassle. If there are any, it's how you tackle, address, and solve these problems by troubleshooting. During the show proper itself, it's not actually hard. The show runs for around 2-3hrs, and most of the time you're only gonna be on the board for just the duration of the segment of the band you're handling.

Sound check and preparing before the show is also one I have to include here. Most people don't know how much time and effort the behind-the-scenes guys put to prepare everything just for the perfect show.

You only have one chance during the show. You can't repeat the show, so you gotta be prepared for anything that may happen and how to address and solve it. For example, as simple as it may seem, feedback occurs during most live events that include bands and singers. If this happens during the show, it's either you didn't soundcheck and properly tune everything, or you fiddled with knobs and didn't do something properly, it may be EQ, compression, gain, etc. (Too long to explain here haahaha!)

FF: WITH BEING IN A BAND (AOUI) AND BEING A SOUND ENGINEER/MUSIC ARRANGER, HOW DO YOU MANAGE YOUR TIME DOING ALL OF THOSE ALL AT ONCE?

My passion is still music, but everyone's gotta eat and pay their bills. Being a sound engineer/music arranger is my job, but I love what I do! I have fun and learn from it a lot until now. We don't stop learning, we learn new things—may it be technical or just for fun or self-satisfaction. To put it simply, sound engineer/music arranger by day, band stuff at night or during my free time. You also need to know your priorities since it's really hard to juggle with both if you don't know how to.

FF: WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES A YOUNG ASPIRING SOUND ENGINEER SHOULD HAVE?

If you take interest in being a sound engineer whether be it studio or live, first you gotta learn how to appreciate the hard things behind it—the magic happens when all the nitty-gritty stuff is done. Honestly, it's not easy as some may take years before they get a hang of it, and to master it is a different story. If you hate hearing or listening to things repeatedly, then you're in for a surprise. You need to practice your patience, hard work, time management, grit, will to learn and adjust, adapt, and proper communication skills. These are just a few of them. But if you love music or just a techy person, you'll have fun for sure. You need to see the fun and joy in mixing and if you do, you'll never get tired of it and you won't even think you're working. It feels more like you're playing a video game in the hardest level. At first it's frustrating, but if you keep on pursuing it, eventually the challenges go away and it will be more fun to do. Just like drawing, painting, or any art skill for that matter, it takes time to master it.

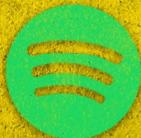
FF: LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN A FEW YEARS?

Oh, this is actually a pretty hard question for me, lol. Well for sure I'll probably still be doing music, performing whether it's by new means or back to our old usual ways. Maybe a Grammy award-winner, who knows? Anyone can dream right? Hahaha-ha!



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EXPLORING THE FORCE OF POSITIVITY

WORDS AND INTERVIEW BY KAREN GONZALEZ
PHOTOS BY TOM J D ARMSTRONG

Modern metal is alive and well, maybe even better than before, and Glaswegian metal powerhouse Bleed From Within proves that with their latest offering, their sixth studio album 'Fracture'. Overall, their sound is familiar, never missing anything a metalcore fan would expect from a heavy band--crunchy and melodic riffs, hard-hitting choruses, and neck-breaking breakdowns. 'Fracture' is something one can easily connect with musically and lyrically, their deep understanding and mastery with their craft shows through each track they ever put out; and this makes them a total package of a group.

We spoke with guitarist Steven Jones on the message behind this new record which is channelling the power of positive energy, and all things 'Fracture'!



FF: HOW ARE THINGS IN THE BFW CAMP LATELY? HOW HAVE YOU GUYS BEEN HOLDING UP DURING THE QUARANTINE?

It's been an interesting time for us, with the release of the new album amidst a global pandemic, not being able to tour the album immediately and gauging response solely from online feedback has been very interesting and certainly a new experience for us as a group! The fortunate thing is that the response has been overwhelmingly positive, and I dare say we're more excited than ever to hit the road when this is all over.

FF: WHAT WAS THE CREATIVE PROCESS LIKE DURING WRITING 'FRACTURE'? WERE THERE ANY KEY DIFFERENCES WITH WRITING THIS ONE COMPARED TO YOUR LAST ALBUMS?

The creative process for 'Fracture' was very different from our last albums. With 'Fracture', we were essentially touring the entire time we were writing, with songs coming together in backstage areas hours before we hit the stage, and on days off between festivals in remote locations around Europe. I think that because we were in that 'live show' environment while these songs were coming together, we really wrote from that perspective, with a subconscious focus on what was going to work well live and making songs that were going to be huge when we take them to the stage. It was very different from 'Era', in that way, because Era came together during a multi-year live 'hiatus' for the band, where no BFW shows were played between 2015 and 2018, with the band struggling on a number of fronts due to mismanagement and being taken advantage of in past situations. The music industry chewed us up and spat us back out by the time 'Era' was being made, and that album came amidst a very defiant, whilst also uncertain, period in the band's career. There were moments when we didn't know if we would continue being a band during that time. But 'Fracture' was a breath of fresh air in that sense, and came from a place of complete certainty of who we are and what we want to do as musicians, and as people. The writing process for this album was very rewarding and had a much more positive vibe all round. I think this can be heard on the album, particularly in songs like 'The End Of All We Know', 'A Depth That No-One Dares' and 'Night Crossing'. The band had a newfound energy and we certainly used it to our advantage during the writing process!



FF: WHO OR WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN INFLUENCES MUSICALLY AND LYRICALLY FOR 'FRACTURE'?

Musically we draw inspiration from a number of artists across all genres and subgenres within metal, it'd be hard to pick just a few as main influences because the writing process for BFW is such a collaborative effort overall, and with members like Davie P being a massive fan of Black Metal (see A Depth That No One Dares outro...), Ali and Scott arguably being more 'old-school' metalheads and Goonzi and I listening to the most modern metal out of the group I think... it really does become an amalgamation of sounds and styles by the time we hit the record button. Lyrically, whilst there wasn't one specific concept for the album, the message with these songs is more positive and uplifting than ever before. With the trials we faced in the years leading up to 'Era', it was so refreshing to find ourselves emotionally in a place where, no matter what else was uncertain in our lives, this band was our rock, it was going to keep rolling no matter what, and especially being in such a positive position with our music for the first time in a long time... we really channeled that positivity into the lyrics. Whilst some songs like 'Fracture' and 'A Depth That No One Dares' are the most 'real' and honest we've ever been on record, and touch on tougher and arguably more negative subjects like mental health and grief, rest assured that our message is clear and consistent even in those darker, moodier songs. You, we, and I, have the strength to overcome.

FF: WHAT IS THE STORY BEHIND THE ALBUM NAME AND ARTWORK FOR 'FRACTURE'? WHAT IS THE MAIN THEME AND HOW DID YOU GUYS COME UP WITH IT?

The artwork was made by our bassist and resident artist Davie P. His work is incredible, and after he made the artwork for 'Era' we knew it would be right to have him at the helm of the art for this one too. The artwork itself represents a figure suspended in a moment of time, bearing the wounds of that which came before them, in defiance of it. There is an undeniable strength in that image, and with 'Fracture' we wanted to inspire mental fortitude and resilience. Life isn't always easy, and we don't live in an ideal world, especially in 2020 with the current state of affairs. It's important to accept and acknowledge the demons of your past and find ways to overcome them.





FF: WHAT WERE THE MAIN CHALLENGES YOU'VE FACED WITH THIS RELEASE? WAS HAVING THIS PANDEMIC WHILE EVERYONE IS AT HOME CHANGED THINGS OR AFFECTED WITH PROMOTING 'FRACTURE'?

Certainly from a promotion side, the cancellations we've been forced to make have been truly gutting. We had our biggest and best year down on paper, ready to go. I'd hate to sit and complain about it though, as everyone is in the same situation here, and I find some comfort in the fact that we're not alone, despite the unfortunate circumstance. It would have been different if we were cancelling due to something unfortunate which only affected ourselves, then you would feel unlucky... but the entire world is facing the consequences of this pandemic, and I'm in no position to feel hard done-by. In the end, however, I think that sticking with our release date was worthwhile, we'd been teasing a new album for months after the release of 'The End Of All We Know' as a single at the end of last year, and it would have felt wrong to have waited any longer. We certainly saw some benefit to sticking with our release as well, with more people than ever stuck at home looking for things to do, perhaps more have found their way onto listening to the album!

FF: YOU HAVE BEEN PUTTING UP IN DEPTH TRACK-BY-TRACK INSIGHTS ABOUT THE ENTIRE 'FRACTURE' ALBUM ON YOUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL, BUT WHICH ONE IS YOUR PERSONAL FAVOURITE/S AND WHY?

My favourite song on the album for a long time there was 'A Depth That No One Dares', I think it has a great groove, and is atmospherically next to none on the album. However, with time, I've grown more fond of 'Ascend' and 'Pathfinder'... so perhaps one of those would tip it off the top!

FF: WHAT AND HOW DID TRIVIUM'S MATT HEAFY COME ABOUT IN BEING FEATURED IN YOUR HARD HITTING TRACK 'NIGHT CROSSING'?

We met Matt in Luxembourg while both BFW and Trivium were on separate European Summer tours in 2019. We had a day off so he invited us along to their show in Luxembourg, having been a fan of the band and posting about us a few times on his social media. We have huge respect for Trivium and Matt himself so we're really excited when he started sharing songs from 'Era' and talking about the release when it came out in 2018, and we jumped at the chance to go hang out and meet for the first time last summer. We had an awesome night and ended up exchanging contacts, then later in 2019 when we were finalising demos for 'Fracture', we knew we had this long guitar solo section in 'Night Crossing', and Goonzi and I hadn't written anything solid for it yet. I forget whether it was Goonzi or Scott who initially reached out to ask him, but one of them shot him a message asking if he'd be down to feature on the song, to which he accepted gladly! He ended up streaming the entire tracking process of the solo on his Twitch, which was really cool to see as we tuned in and were commenting back and forth about what to do with it, it was an interesting time! We're very grateful to him for deciding to be a part of it and couldn't be more happy with his part - I've had the pleasure of spending countless hours figuring out the shred part at the end of the solo and I can't say I'm very excited to be attempting it live for the first time soon enough! Matt is an unreal player.



FF: WITH THIS FIFTH STUDIO ALBUM, WOULD YOU SAY YOU'VE FOUND YOUR SIGNATURE SOUND IN YOUR LATEST RECORD OR ARE YOU STILL OPEN TO DISCOVERING/INCORPORATING NEW ELEMENTS TO YOUR SOUND?

I think the rest of the band would agree when I say that I think we've certainly 'established' a 'Bleed From Within sound' with both Era and Fracture. I think in these last 2 albums we've fallen into our own, know what we're good at, know what we like, and have endeavoured to make the best songs we could and also to keep things interesting with experimentation, whilst staying true to the sound we have established for ourselves. We've had a lot of fun making these last 2 albums and as we continue to write and grow as musicians, it's hard to say where we'll go next and what new elements we will incorporate, but I think it would be unreasonable to close ourselves off to anything and as things stand I think we will be very open to trying new things on the albums to come, and try to expand on what we have now created.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT'S NEXT FOR BLEED FROM WITHIN IN THE NEAR FUTURE ESPECIALLY ONCE THIS WORLDWIDE PANDEMIC ENDS AND LIVE SHOWS ARE BACK AGAIN? MAYBE A 'FRACTURES' TOUR?

European Headline Tour is finally happening, details of that to come shortly. Our Summer festival season for 2021 is filling up and we're talking touring plans as early as Feb 2021 at the moment, until then we have a very cool online show experience in planning which we hope to launch very soon, we'll be keeping on top of content with more videos and behind the scenes content to come, but yeah. In spite of not being able to play shows yet, we have a lot going on still, and for anyone interested I would advise following our social media accounts and getting connected with us for all the extra content and cool things we're working on which are yet to come!



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Spiritbox

Blessed Are The Grotesque

Words and interview by Karen Gonzalez
Photos by Gavin Thane and Kyle J

Vancouver, Canada-based modern metal outfit Spiritbox is the lovechild of husband and wife duo Courtney LaPlante and Michael Stringer, who are now joined with bassist Bill Crook that has begun to take the modern metal world by storm upon surfacing in October 2017. Ever since then, they immediately gained a cult following and are being raved about non-stop in the alternative music community. With their complex yet groovy, eerie but familiar heavy instrumentation matched with vocalist Courtney's haunting, beautiful and powerful vocals, Spiritbox is unforgettable from the first listen. Truly one of the most creative and unique acts to rise today.

In this exclusive interview with their siren Courtney, we dive into the band's swift rise to success and how they were able to pull it off, their fascination with the paranormal, and much more on the robust force that Spiritbox brings.



FF: YOUR SOUND HAS PLENTY OF ELEMENTS AROUND IT THAT MAKE IT UNIQUE—HOW DOES THE CREATIVE PROCESS INSIDE THE BAND USUALLY GO? HOW DO YOU FORM YOUR SOUND?

COURTNEY: We used to write separately, Mike would bring a full instrumental to the table, and then I would write my vocals. These days, I try to be a part of Michael's process so that if an idea pops into my head, I can quickly record myself and we can start building the song around my vocals. I feel like it is helping us create better songs.

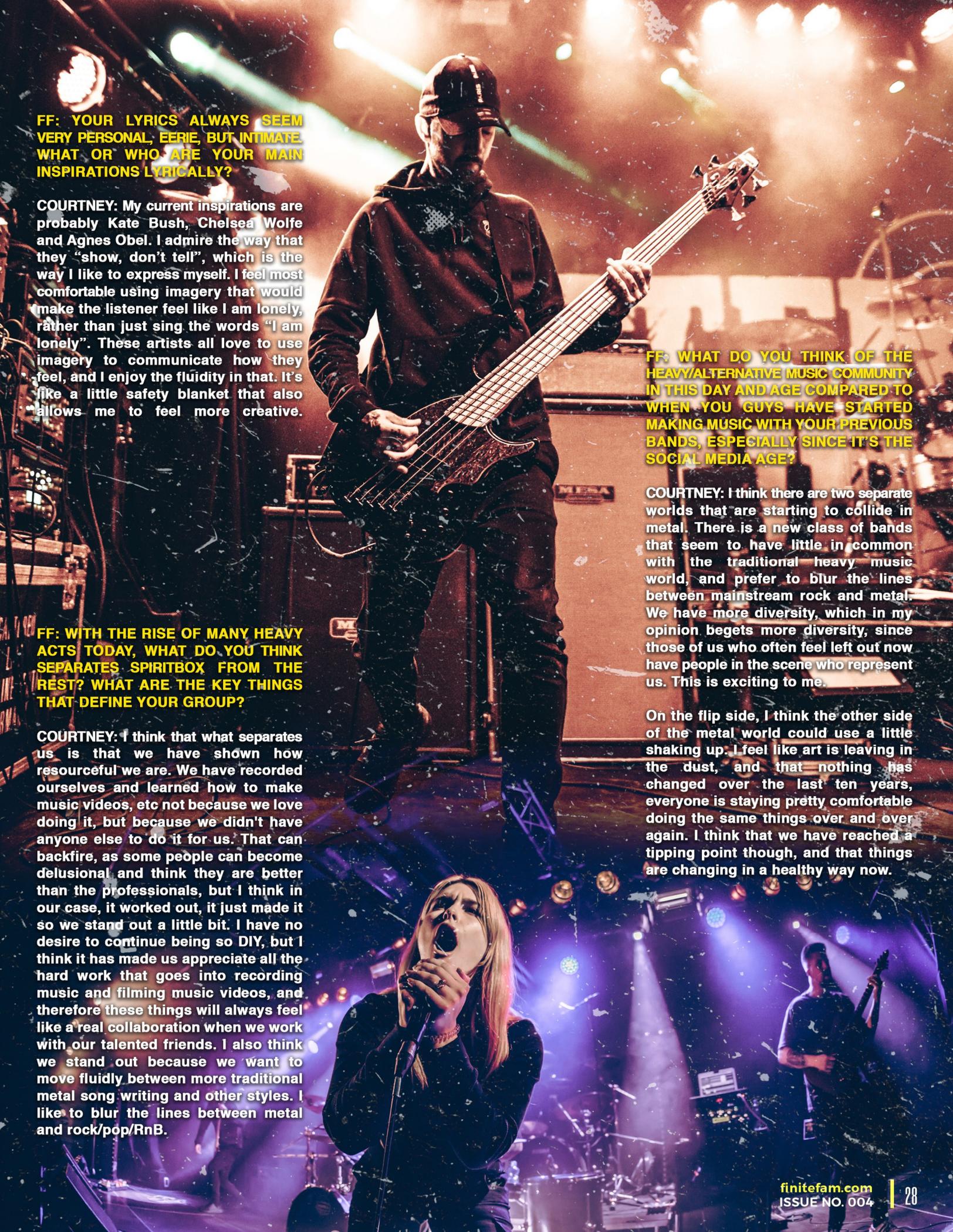
FF: IT IS KNOWN THAT YOU USE EVP (ELECTRONIC VOICE PHENOMENA) RECORDINGS WITHIN YOUR TRACKS AND DURING YOUR LIVE SHOWS. COULD YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT THIS INCLUSION OF PARANORMAL AND MACABRE THEMES IN YOUR MUSIC?

COURTNEY: We have always tried to incorporate some sort of static/EVP recordings in our music, because we are so fascinated by the noises an actual spirit box creates. It's like a subliminal message within our music. We love anything to do with the supernatural, even though we are skeptics. It almost feels like a writing prompt for me, creating an odd atmosphere helps us create interesting songs.

FF: WALK US THROUGH YOUR HIGHLY ANTICIPATED NEW SINGLE "HOLY ROLLER"! WHAT IS THE THEME AND STORY BEHIND IT? WAS THE ACCOMPANYING MUSIC VIDEO INSPIRED BY THE FILM 'MIDSOMMAR'?

COURTNEY: I still can't believe we pulled it off. We recorded this song and filmed this video spur of the moment with little planning, because we wanted to do something fun and productive during this quarantine. I guess you could say the video was inspired by "Midsommar", we love the cinematography in that movie. It's so bright and sunny the entire time, which I think is a great contrast to the subject matter. Would we have come up with me wearing a flower crown and dancing around a weird structure if that movie had not come out? We will never know! Everything we do is mostly inspired by us needing to be resourceful. We have filmed most of our music videos ourselves and with the three that we did not film, we still had to get creative with a limited budget. So my first thought is what is an inexpensive, novel idea? Well, Bill's friend got married recently, let's use their fake wedding flowers. Bill's wife Ashley is a professional makeup artist, let's let her create insane special effects makeup on me!

My lyrics were inspired by my fascination and hatred for the cult leader Jim Jones. I hate that guy but I can't seem to stop seeking out more information on how something as awful as Jonestown came to pass.

A full-page photograph of a musician playing a bass guitar on stage. The musician is wearing a dark hoodie, a baseball cap, and dark pants. The stage is lit with warm, orange and yellow lights, creating a hazy atmosphere. In the background, other band members and stage equipment are visible.

FF: YOUR LYRICS ALWAYS SEEM VERY PERSONAL, EERIE, BUT INTIMATE. WHAT OR WHO ARE YOUR MAIN INSPIRATIONS LYRICALLY?

COURTNEY: My current inspirations are probably Kate Bush, Chelsea Wolfe and Agnes Obel. I admire the way that they “show, don’t tell”, which is the way I like to express myself. I feel most comfortable using imagery that would make the listener feel like I am lonely, rather than just sing the words “I am lonely”. These artists all love to use imagery to communicate how they feel, and I enjoy the fluidity in that. It’s like a little safety blanket that also allows me to feel more creative.

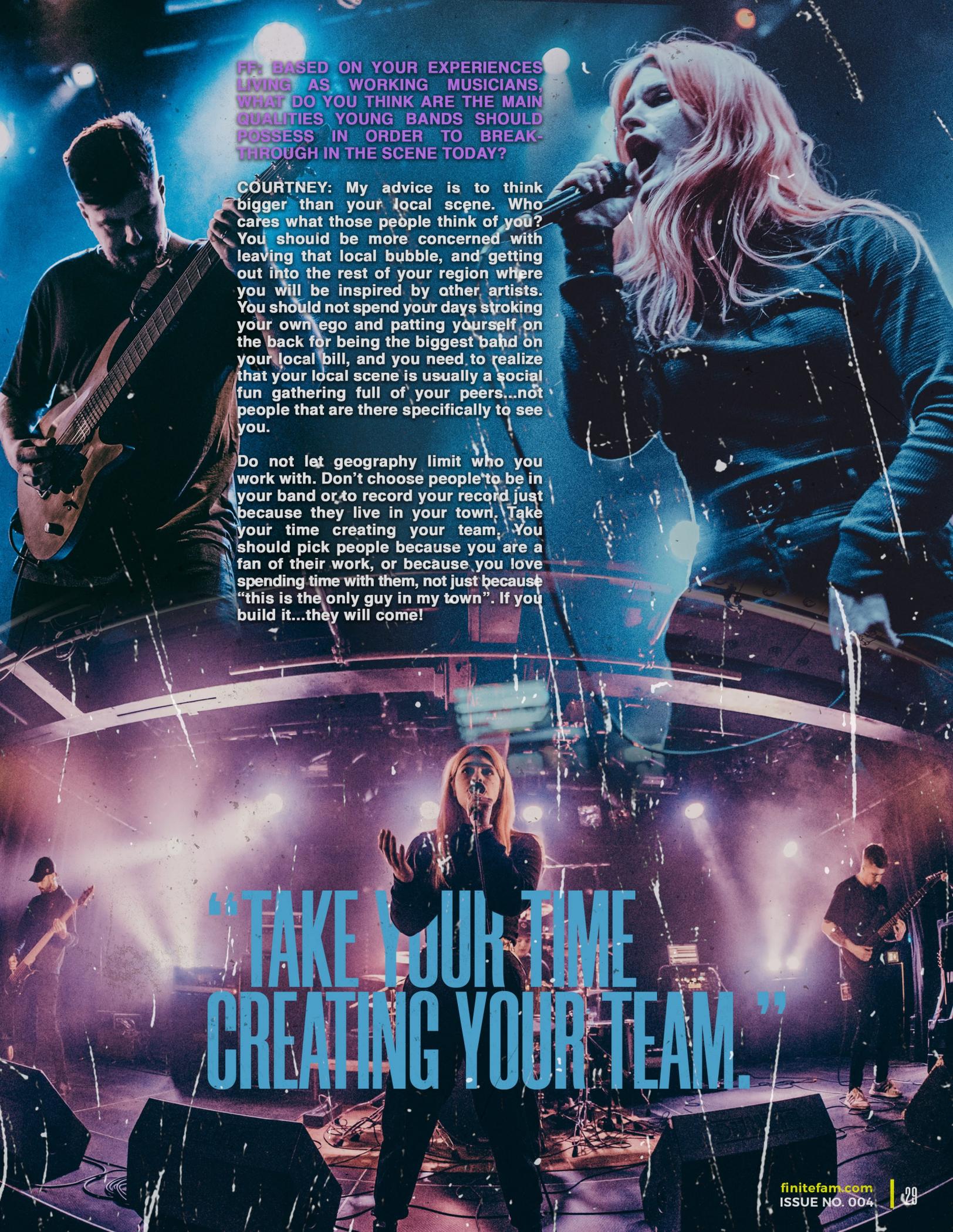
FF: WITH THE RISE OF MANY HEAVY ACTS TODAY, WHAT DO YOU THINK SEPARATES SPIRITBOX FROM THE REST? WHAT ARE THE KEY THINGS THAT DEFINE YOUR GROUP?

COURTNEY: I think that what separates us is that we have shown how resourceful we are. We have recorded ourselves and learned how to make music videos, etc not because we love doing it, but because we didn’t have anyone else to do it for us. That can backfire, as some people can become delusional and think they are better than the professionals, but I think in our case, it worked out, it just made it so we stand out a little bit. I have no desire to continue being so DIY, but I think it has made us appreciate all the hard work that goes into recording music and filming music videos, and therefore these things will always feel like a real collaboration when we work with our talented friends. I also think we stand out because we want to move fluidly between more traditional metal song writing and other styles. I like to blur the lines between metal and rock/pop/RnB.

FF: WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE HEAVY/ALTERNATIVE MUSIC COMMUNITY IN THIS DAY AND AGE COMPARED TO WHEN YOU GUYS HAVE STARTED MAKING MUSIC WITH YOUR PREVIOUS BANDS, ESPECIALLY SINCE IT’S THE SOCIAL MEDIA AGE?

COURTNEY: I think there are two separate worlds that are starting to collide in metal. There is a new class of bands that seem to have little in common with the traditional heavy music world, and prefer to blur the lines between mainstream rock and metal. We have more diversity, which in my opinion begets more diversity, since those of us who often feel left out now have people in the scene who represent us. This is exciting to me.

On the flip side, I think the other side of the metal world could use a little shaking up. I feel like art is leaving in the dust, and that nothing has changed over the last ten years, everyone is staying pretty comfortable doing the same things over and over again. I think that we have reached a tipping point though, and that things are changing in a healthy way now.



FF: BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES LIVING AS WORKING MUSICIANS, WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MAIN QUALITIES YOUNG BANDS SHOULD POSSESS IN ORDER TO BREAK-THROUGH IN THE SCENE TODAY?

COURTNEY: My advice is to think bigger than your local scene. Who cares what those people think of you? You should be more concerned with leaving that local bubble, and getting out into the rest of your region where you will be inspired by other artists. You should not spend your days stroking your own ego and patting yourself on the back for being the biggest band on your local bill, and you need to realize that your local scene is usually a social fun gathering full of your peers...not people that are there specifically to see you.

Do not let geography limit who you work with. Don't choose people to be in your band or to record your record just because they live in your town. Take your time creating your team. You should pick people because you are a fan of their work, or because you love spending time with them, not just because "this is the only guy in my town". If you build it...they will come!

**“TAKE YOUR TIME
CREATING YOUR TEAM.”**

FF: YOUR DEBUT LP IS EXPECTED TO BE OUT IN 2021. COULD YOU GIVE YOUR LISTENERS A HINT ON WHEN IT WOULD BE OUT AND WHAT WE CAN EXPECT FROM IT?

COURTNEY: Well this pandemic is changing our plans. We have the full length ready to go, but we cannot all meet up to record it since we are all separated by citizenship. The Canadians can't get to the USA, and the US citizens cannot get up here. I am not stressed out about it though, that's where our resourcefulness will save us. I know we will get creative and think of the best way to get our music out. I think this album is going to feel very down tempo and dark at times, and I think my singing will feel a little bit more understated. That is the interesting thing about having to wait to record it. The longer we wait, the more our music evolves and changes.

FF: ULTIMATELY, WHAT IS YOUR GOAL AS A BAND? IN A FEW YEARS, WHERE DO YOU SEE SPIRITBOX?

COURTNEY: My goal is to have this become my sole profession, while always staying true to who I am. I want to be able to provide my family with whatever they need to be happy in life. The best part of this whole thing is that we do not have anyone telling us what to do or who to be, we can proudly make whatever music we want to make. In a few years, I see us on tour with bands that inspire us to become better musicians and better entertainers, and I hope to finally get to travel the world with this band and play for all the people that have lifted us up over the years, when they come to our show. I want to use my platform to lift up other women. When one of us succeeds, it brings us all closer to success.

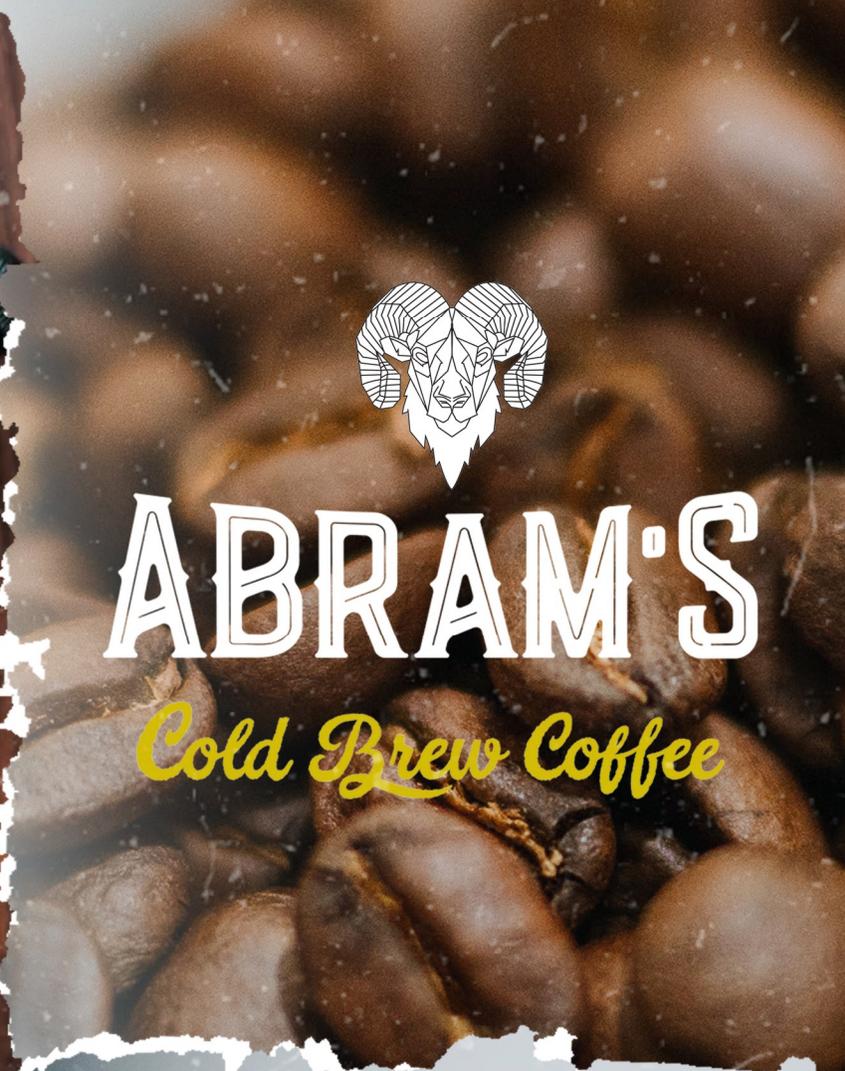
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ABRAM'S

Cold Brew Coffee



It's been a year since the first ever FINITE FEST, one of the best days ever--the launch of our very own music festival! We wanted to look back on this special day, so we asked some of the bands and attendees who joined us...

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE FINITE FEST 2019 MEMORY?

About a year ago I played in the Philippines with Of Virtue as a part of a tour of Asia. It was my very first time going to the Philippines and growing up I always wanted to go, but never got the chance. It was and I will always say that it was a blessing beyond belief to have music and drumming take me to the country of my heritage.

I've met so many new friends I wouldn't hesitate to call life long buddies and old friends whom I only knew online.

The whole experience left me speechless.

Just seeing support like this for a band literally all the way across the world and to be drumming for that said band (Of Virtue) was unreal.

I will be forever grateful for this. Now my next goal is to play there again and hopefully soon!

Please check out the band Of Virtue and Finite Fam!

Both of these guys are doing AMAZING things for the music community!

Also let's not forget Oliver G. Kamyszew for helping be a part of this tour and has supported my projects countless times.

Mel Torres
Asylus

First gig ko ulit after ng near death experience ko. - Julian

Solid foodtrip ng Siomai Exit! - Mark

Sakin din lahat ng FT! - Marko

Isa sa pinaka magandang lugar at event last year, sobrang organized at napaka ganda venue at line up!

Sana next year ulit after ng pandemic ma invite ulit kami! Hahaha at sana marami pa foreign bands makilala at mapanuod.

Salamat Finite Fam!

Brickcity

Siomai Rice and the tintera. Charot! My most memorable experience would have to be the first time I saw Bric, I was just standing there still in the state of amazement, after their set I got a shirt from them and Kuya Jacques gave me their last piece of Hat for free.

Sometimes, it is not even about the band or show, it is about the experience with others, esp. sa set ng Of Virtue, I'm pretending to sing along even though I didn't know the lyrics.

Finite Fest was one of the silver linings of the year 2019.

Akim Flores

So I think I'd have to say my most memorable moment of Finite Fest was being able to be surrounded by likeminded people who share the same passion and love as me when it comes to music and keeping the local scene alive.

Seeing how supportive everyone was and the energy everyone brought with them really made me feel like I was a part of something special.

But most of all, Finite Fest was especially special and holds a special place in my heart because it was the first time our band was able to go overseas and play a music festival. I got to bond and grow closer to my band mates and we made some pretty crazy and laughable memories.

Really can't wait to go back!

Allison Gentry
ARKM

It was not just an ordinary gig for the day, everyone was like a big family celebrating.

Eventhough some of the people there were just strangers to me, I never felt lonely throughout the day. It was my first time to be a part of the organizers of a gig and it really was my pleasure to be there since I got to witness the first ever Finite Fest held in Manila.

I think my most favorite and memorable moment during Finite Fest 2019 was when I finally got to watch one of my favorite bands there which is Delaney. I finally got the chance to meet them and jam to their songs together with great people around me. It was surreal and I definitely, definitely would want that to happen again and looking forward for the next Finite Fest that will happen in the near future.

Crislyn Genson

**Who do you want to see live for the next Finite Fest?
Let us know at
contact@finitefam.com**

FINITE FAM REVIEWS



Parasite Eve Bring Me The Horizon

Review by Micah Go

Ever since the release of the band's genre-bending album "amo", I've constantly been waiting for what Bring Me The Horizon is going to come up with next. Their single "Ludens" was diversely entertaining and as for "Parasite Eve"? Well, let's see.

I had no expectations for this song as by now, I know the band will do something to surprise us ever since they opted to shed their metal skins in lieu of a more experimental one. However, this one took some getting used to. It is quite catchy, with a few riffs here and there and a nice breakdown of sorts, albeit containing a few elements that rather slow the momentum for me although I guess it's what you get when experimenting with a new sound (or a mixture thereof) and I believe that's a good thing for a band looking for growth. "Parasite Eve" might not be immediately infectious as it seems but overtime, it can grow on you and just makes me wish to see what other surprises Oli and company have in store for all of us.

SCORE: 

god of Fire (feat. Ryo of Crystal Lake) Fit For A King

Review by Micah Go

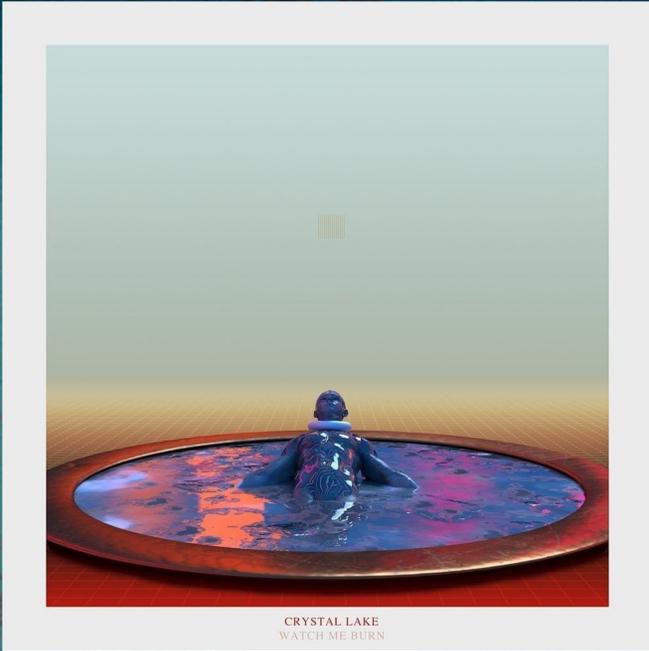
If the fact that this track is a collaboration between Fit For A King and Ryo of Crystal Lake doesn't excite you, then I don't know what will. Those two alone are some of today's metal powerhouses. Combine them together? One hell of an unstoppable force.

The track itself is an endless onslaught of pure breakdowns that, although a bit too repetitive for my taste, pummels you to the ground from start to finish as if the inclusion of Ryo's raging vocals weren't enough to make this track monstrous than it already is. This is something that I rarely see Fit For A King do as they often opt for that dark, atmospheric melodic sound they've been known for. Along with the weird yet interesting industrial elements interlaced throughout the song, this song definitely has me pumped for what the band will do differently especially with their new album and if this track is any indication, then we better get ready because Fit For A King are surely bringing the apocalypse with them.



SCORE: 

FINITE FAM REVIEWS



CRYSTAL LAKE
WATCH ME BURN

Watch Me Burn Crystal Lake

Review by Micah Go

If you know who Crystal Lake are, chances are you've probably heard some of the best metalcore in recent years. And that's no exaggeration by any means. Their latest offering "Watch Me Burn" speaks for itself and is perhaps the perfect track to encompass these behemoths from the land of the rising sun.

This song is nothing but proof that Crystal Lake are at the top of their game right now and have no plans of stopping any time soon. It is a track that not only sounds massive, it feels ambitious and strong as well as it flourishes the band's unique execution of melodic-yet-heavy, guitar driven brand of metal very well. Coupled along with that anthemic flair Crystal Lake has long been known for and of course, Ryo's diverse monster vocals, this track is sure to get anyone's fist punching the air and heads banging along all throughout.

SCORE:

Holy Roller Spiritbox

Review by Micah Go

To perfectly sum up "Holy Roller", it is this eerie metal track constructed seamlessly to its core that it becomes sort of like a haunting pop song that just doesn't want to leave your head the moment you hear it for the first time. It's highlights are the contrast between the creepy and harsh vocals (which GREATLY added to its catchiness) and the barrage of groovy riffs that are just so perfectly placed that one can't deny how perfectly cohesive this song is. No gimmicks. No unnecessary bits. What you hear is what you get and if this isn't enough to get you into them, then listen AGAIN because this is the kind of metal we all deserve and Spiritbox is here to bless us with it.



Spiritbox

Holy Roller

SCORE: