

+ EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS WITH CAPSTAN, AFTERLIFE, SLEEP TALK, GRAUPEL, AND MORE!

FINITE

ISSUE 06
OCT. 2020



ALESANA
TALKS PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE!



st. wolf

New
Release

DEFYING
CHAOS WITH



EDITOR'S NOTE

Ghostly greetings!

Six issues / six months of doing this magazine, I couldn't be more thankful to have this platform to connect with many different artists, musicians, brands, and fellow content creators - this zine series has opened a lot of meaningful connections to me and my team in the last few months and have allowed us to have a global reach. We've got readers all over the world now, our project from little Philippines reaching to the US, UK, Australia, Canada, and all over Europe: Finite Fam Worldwide baby! If you've been here since the beginning or you're new, thank you so much for reading!

Also want to give a special shout out to the people outside our core team of 5 who offer us their time and skills, our contributing writers Micah, James, Tony, AJ and new graphic designer Kyzster! Thank you boys!

Every dark soul's favourite season is coming up, and of course in this issue, we are matching our aesthetics with that, so welcome to Finite Zine 06: Halloween Edition! As per usual, you'll find another set of bands we think you should check out in the In Depth section, the emo gods Alesana in Center Stage, and more tricks and treats for y'all! Find out, go scroll - but with the lights on!

Stay spooky,
AK / Karen

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

Always pre production, we are demoing constantly and backing up ideas to come back to or use at the time if it's fitting. We can normally vision the direction of where we want to take a song before writing it, if we are doing records it's a case of what would compliment the next song or what would work as a whole. It's always helpful to understand what you're trying to achieve before spending months on a record, songs will be scrapped and riffs will be moved to different songs, listen to the demos, reflect then improve.

FF: TELL US ABOUT YOUR NEWEST RELEASE 'PRIMEVAL'. WHAT ARE ITS MAIN THEME/S AND WHO/WHAT ARE YOUR INSPIRATIONS WHILE WRITING IT?

It's re-recordings from Defy The Tyrant Demo (2015) & The Primal Chaos EP (2016) we decided to give a new life to the start of this bands journey, it made perfect sense in between Samsara and writing album 3. The re-release Primeval has 2 brand new songs which will be an indication of what we have in-store for album 3.

FF: AT THIS POINT IN YOUR CAREER, DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE ALREADY FOUND YOUR REAL "SOUND" OR ARE YOU STILL OPEN TO ACTIVELY DISCOVERING IT?

It's never an easy question to answer as bands will always mature and take in new influences throughout their writing processes, I think Venom Prison has an idea of how it is meant to sound however as a band we have always wanted to progress and push ourselves further so that will always involve discovering new sounds/influences to blend.

FF: WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE QUALITIES THAT YOUR MEMBERS HAVE THAT HAVE LED YOU TO HAVE FOUND SUCCESS AND RECOGNITION IN THE HEAVY MUSIC SCENE?

As much as I think each member of Venom Prison is talented and has great playing capability, that isn't what makes that person have such great qualities. It's the open minded and creative side to them that makes Venom Prison work, especially with the new material we are currently writing, I think each member is starting to really explore new creative avenues which is really starting to show in Venom Prison, I feel very confident for the future.

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

Being where we are today feels like an achievement, we never set out to do as much as we have but as soon as we knew Venom Prison could be pushed and achieve more we got the urge to see how far we can go.

FF: WHAT'S NEXT FOR VENOM PRISON? ANYTHING YOUR LISTENERS WOULD BE STOKED ABOUT?

For sure, we are writing album 3 and just announced a headline tour if we are able to do it due to Covid-19 but it's safe to say we will deliver a record regardless.

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Graupel

Photo by: Kise Keishi

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

Graupel was formed in 2015. Yuu(Gt) and Julien(Dr) are original members. They have known each other for 5 years. Other members Sota(Vo), Tomo(Ba) and TKG(Gt) were friends of ours before Graupel but they joined Graupel by passing an audition.

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

At first, before 'Bereavement', we were not known by audiences very much but 'Bereavement' changes everything a lot. After releasing 'Bereavement', we got so many new fans and a lot of good responses on social media.

We grew at many points like staging, playing and understanding our audiences especially, how to get them excited, through our first tour, Bereavement Release Tour and hard days of a lot of shows. This is the most growing point in these 2 years and these good changes certainly influenced our new EP 'Fade Away'. We could try new approaches for writing songs like emotional gang vocal chorus and spoken word sections for "Fade Away" and dynamic breakdown sections for "Flashback" and "Relic." We used to write only fast songs because fast songs are well-accepted by audiences who don't know us but now we can try more melodic or heavier songs than before, thanks for the fans who listen to our songs at the show.

FF: WHO ARE YOUR INFLUENCES MUSICALLY AND LYRICALLY FOR YOUR NEWLY RELEASED EP 'FADE AWAY'?

Musically, "Fade Away" is influenced by many genre music, for example, melodic hardcore like The Ghost Inside, While She Sleeps and Counterparts, screamo like Finch and Story of the Year, emo-rap like Lil Peep and nothing, nowhere and mid-west emo like American Football and Mineral. "Flashback" is influenced by aggressive hardcore bands like The Dillinger Escape Plan, Converge, Code Orange, END and Khmer. "Relic" is the mix of classic metalcore like Parkway Drive and As I Lay Dying, and heavy metal like Dragon Force and Children of Bodom. Talking about lyrics, these 3 songs from our new EP are not influenced by specific bands, movies, books or manga. Most inspirations came from my own daily life. Every 3 song is about the passed moment. Theme of "Fade Away" is "What's done is done, don't be nostalgic or emo too much. Just do it and Carpe diem", "Flashback" is people's weakness of addicting to the past moment, past relationships, past successes and the post on social media. "Relic" is about "How modern metalcore bands surpass 00's classic metalcore bands", so this lyric is about "How we can progress our music and we are not just the copycat of 00's metalcore"

FF: COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE RECORDING AND SONGWRITING PROCESS FOR 'FADE AWAY'?

At first, Yuu(Gt) makes a rough demo including guitars and drums at his computer, and we jam it a little at rehearsal studio, we check whether the song has some hook and groove. After that Yuu completes the demo, including all guitars, vocal with lyric and rough drum, then sends it to the other members. Each member checks it and adjusts it in order to make it naturally. After completing demos, discussing with our engineer, Katsuya whether it sounds clear. We got some advice from the perspective of sound engineering. Then songwriting processes are fixed. About recording, we did it at Katsuya's private studio except gang vocals. Yuu(Gt) played all guitars and Tomo(Ba) played bass and Sota(Vo) sang all main vocals. Fortunately, in the gang vocal process, we could get a lot of support from many talented musician, ikey(HER NAME IN BLOOD), YUI(EARTHISTS.), SHVNA, PK(Prompts) and Philippe(Fade In Solitude/FOAD). They sang for our backup vocal and gang vocal parts. It worked really amazing. It sounds much heavier than before. After completing the recording process, we sent all data to Jeff Dunne and he made our songs so heavy and clear. He made magic for us.

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

Very good. The best things: many venues in Tokyo have very good sound systems, bands play really well and the audience are also sophisticated. Worst things: it's difficult to promote ourselves abroad because of language and location. Most of Japanese don't accept English post, so it's hard to promote to both audiences, Japanese and the others by using 2 languages. About location, Japan is an Asian island nation, so it costs a lot to touring abroad because we need to get flight tickets. But, Tokyo local scene is totally good. There are many good band. You should check a lot.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM GRAUPEL IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

We are songwriting for the next stuff, a new EP or album might be out in 2021 and we plan to tour after the borders get reopened. We will go to asian countries, of course. So stay tuned on us. Keep enjoying our music, 'Fade Away' and 'Bereavement' until the new stuff will be out.

SOCIAL MEDIA:



graupeljapan



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

Capstan actually started as a recording project of Harry and Anthony's, as they were both in school for audio engineering (where they met here in Orlando, Florida). The name itself comes from a term used in recording, as a "capstan" is the cylindrical piece on an analog two track recorder that powers the tape head. Also, the first "demos" of the band had a lot of nautical inspiration and themes, and a "capstan" exists on ships, specifically old wooden ships, where the rope from the mast was tied to. Before electronics, it would take 4-6 men to work together and turn the capstan, thus turning the mast and giving the ship its direction. So Capstan to us, is, essentially "5 guys powering the music, and giving it direction".

Anthony was actually a drummer and Harry played guitar, but when they were working on demos Anthony said "can I try singing" and he had this natural sound to his voice Harry loved, so they stuck with him as the vocalist. They then asked Scott, who was a friend of theirs, to join the band, and that shaped it into a real project. Boz moved down in 2014, as he and Harry were longtime friends from the same area in Indiana, and we met Joe sometime around then as well which finally "solidified" the lineup it is today.

We formed Capstan to create something unique, real, and inspiring, which we feel like the music industry lacks slightly these days. It's our outlet to try and build/spread inspiration in a world that needs it.

FF: COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MUSIC-MAKING PROCESS FOR YOUR DEBUT ALBUM 'RESTLESS HEART, KEEP RUNNING'?

Compared to the rest of our EPs, RHKR was our first real step in creating a full length record. I also feel like it was the first time we learned, or started to learn, who we really were as a band. As we're working on the next record, we feel like we're dialing in our sound even more, but RHKR holds a place in our hearts as being the one that really put us "out" there for the world to hear, on Fearless Records, with real support, push, and backing.

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

I believe our band has a sound that is very unique, because we try so many different things. I really think we will always be discovering new avenues and ways to make our music truly "us"; we feel like this new record is even more dynamic and accessible than any other Capstan we've ever written before.

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

Probably getting to play most of the last Vans Warped Tour in 2018. We were the only unsigned band (at the time) on our stage, and it was an honor to be thought of so highly, even at that point, to have gotten that opportunity. That's something we'll never forget.

Close 2nd is signing to Fearless Records, our dream label from the beginning. Such an amazing group of people and we wouldn't trade our team for the world.

FF: WITH TOURS AND LIVE SHOWS GETTING ON HOLD, WHAT'S BEEN KEEPING YOU BUSY DURING THIS PERIOD?

We've been creating some content and doing some streams, which has been a lot of fun, but the last four months has been very focused on writing the next great Capstan record! Can't wait to share...

FF: LASTLY, ANY MESSAGE TO YOUR FILIPINO FANS? WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU HERE IN THE PHILIPPINES!

Thank you so much to anybody out there that supports us. It is a priority of ours to come play for you as soon as we possibly can. We look forward to meeting new people, seeing old faces, and sharing something bigger than ourselves. Keep spreading the word about Capstan!



SLEEP TALK

FF: WHEN AND HOW DID SLEEP TALK BEGIN? WHAT DROVE YOU TO MAKE MUSIC TOGETHER?

BEFORE WE FORMED SLEEP TALK, MOST OF THE BAND WENT TO SCHOOL TOGETHER, ALL WITHIN A YEAR OR TWO OF EACH OTHER SO THE FRIENDSHIP GROUP WAS VERY CLOSE BEFORE A BAND WAS EVEN CONSIDERED. FOR MYSELF PERSONALLY, I KNEW MICHAEL, SLEEP TALKS DRUMMER, FROM TOURING IN MY OLD PUNK BAND, WITH HIS OLD METALCORE BAND. WE BECAME VERY GOOD FRIENDS AND HE ASKED ME TO JOIN IN ON A PROJECT HE WAS WORKING ON WITH A FEW MATES, WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE SLEEP TALK. OUR OLD GUITARIST WAS A FRIEND OF THE BANDS FOR A YEAR OR TWO PRIOR. HE AND I WERE A BIT OLDER THAN EVERYONE ELSE, BUT WE GOT ALONG WELL AND WROTE OUR FIRST DEMO AND EP TOGETHER.

OUR GUITARIST DEPARTED THE BAND AFTER OUR FIRST EP, WITH FRASER JOINING SHORTLY AFTER. FRASER CAME FROM A BACKGROUND OF DEATHCORE AND HARD-CORE BANDS, AND WAS AN INCREDIBLE GUITAR PLAYER, SO IT WAS A NO BRAINER TO GET HIM ON BOARD. WITH FRASER, THE FINAL FORM OF SLEEP TALK IS COMPLETE!

WE ENJOY MAKING MUSIC TOGETHER BECAUSE WE ARE MATES FIRST! WE LOVE HANGING OUT TOGETHER AND SHARE SIMILAR MUSIC TASTES SO WRITING OUR FIRST ALBUM WAS A REWARDING AND FRUITFUL PROCESS.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

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FF: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MUSIC THAT SLEEP TALK MAKES? WHAT/WHO ARE YOUR MAIN INFLUENCES AS A GROUP?

OVER THE YEARS, I FEEL WE HAVE MOVED ON FROM WHAT OUR FIRST EP DEFINED US AS, WHICH WOULD BE MELODIC HARDCORE. DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF THE BAND, A LOT OF US WERE INTO ACTS LIKE SIERRA, NORTHLANE AND A BUNCH OF METALCORE / MELODIC HARDCORE BANDS.

WRITING THE FIRST ALBUM WAS A REAL 'COMING OF AGE' TIME FOR THE BAND. WE WERE MATURING AND GROWING INTO YOUNG ADULTS SO OUR MUSIC TASTES BECAME MORE MATURE AND DEVELOPED AS WE GREW OLDER. I'D SAY FOR THE WRITING AND RECORDING OF EVERYTHING IN COLOUR, OUR MAJOR INFLUENCES CAME FROM ACTS LIKE TOUCHE AMORE, DJ SHADOW, AND VARIOUS PUNK, HARDCORE AND HIP-HOP ACTS. GUESS THE TWO ACTS I MENTIONED WERE MAINLY MY INFLUENCES, EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN BANDS THAT SHAPED THEIR WRITING PROCESS DURING THE MAKING OF OUR FIRST ALBUM.

FF: COULD YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR DEBUT ALBUM 'EVERYTHING IN COLOUR'? WHAT IS THE THEME BEHIND IT AND ITS LYRICAL INSPIRATION?

EVERYTHING IN COLOUR IS DEFINITELY A 'COMING OF AGE RECORD'. DURING THE WRITING AND RECORDING OF THIS ALBUM, MAJORITY OF THE BAND HAD JUST FINISHED HIGH SCHOOL, ENTERING THE REAL WORLD AND FINDING THEIR FEET IN LIFE. THIS COMES WITH SOME ANXIETY, FEAR AND EXCITEMENT. WE ALL DEAL WITH THIS IN DIFFERENT WAYS BUT THE ALBUM ITSELF IS A REFLECTION ON THAT.

THE CONCEPT BEHIND THE NAME OF THE ALBUM IS TO TAKE MUNDANE PARTS OF YOUR DAY OR LIFE, AND MAKE THE MOST OF IT. LOOK AT THE MORE 'BLACK AND WHITE' TIMES AND TURN THEM INTO 'COLOUR'. WE CAN TAKE MOMENTS IN LIFE FOR GRANTED, AND WE WANTED TO TAKE A STEP BACK, AND REALLY CHERISH MOMENTS IN LIFE, WHETHER THEY BE EXCITING OR NOT. WE BELIEVE IT'S IMPORTANT TO SURROUND

FF: HOW DOES THE SONGWRITING PROCESS WORK WITHIN YOUR BAND?

SOMEONE USUALLY COMES TO A REHEARSAL SESSION WITH A RIFF, OR A 'SKELETON' OF A SONG, WITH A BASIC STRUCTURE THAT WE CAN WORK ON AND DEVELOP INTO A FULL SONG. WE ALL LAYER OUR OWN PARTS OVER THE TOP AND NATURALLY FILL EACH TRACK OUT. A LOT OF AD-LIB PARTS OR OVERDUBS ARE DONE IN THE STUDIO WHEN WE RECORD. YOU NEVER KNOW HOW A TRACK REALLY SOUNDS UNTIL IT'S RECORDED, WHETHER IT BE LIVE OR IN THE STUDIO. VOCALS ARE USUALLY COMPLETED LAST, OR AT LEAST WRITTEN WHEN A BASIC STRUCTURE IS DEVELOPED.

FF: WITH THE RISE OF MANY NEW YOUNG BANDS IN THE SCENE TODAY, WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES SLEEP TALK STAND OUT OR DIFFERENT FROM THE REST?

WE ALWAYS TRY AND CREATE SOMETHING THAT MAY BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE. IT'S IMPORTANT TO US ON A PERSONAL LEVEL THAT WE ACHIEVE OUR IDEAS OF WHAT WE WANT THE BAND TO BE. WE FOCUS HEAVILY ON VISUALS, PUTTING A LOT OF OUR CREATIVITY INTO ART AND VIDEOS. WE HAVE DEVELOPED A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR SOUND ENGINEER, JARRED NETTLE, THAT WORKED ON OUR FIRST EP AND ALBUM. HE HAS BEEN WITH US SONICALLY SINCE THE BEGINNING AND WILL EVOLVE WITH US ON ALL FUTURE RELEASES.

WE WANT TO BE DIFFERENT, CREATE NEW WORK AND TAKE PRIDE IN OUR WORK. WE DON'T WANT TO COMPETE WITH ANY OTHER BAND OR TRY TO OUTSHINE ANYONE. WE WANT OUR FRIENDS TO SUCCEED AND RISE WITH US. A LOT OF BANDS THINK THE LOCAL SCENE IS A COMPETITION AND WE USED TO HAVE SIMILAR THOUGHTS. BUT, AS WE GROW OLDER, WE REALISE THIS IS A BAD PATH TO TAKE. SO, WE MAY WANT TO STAND OUT AND BE THE DIFFERENCE WITHIN THE SCENE, HOWEVER IT'S FOR OUR FULFILMENT ONLY, AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE ARTISTICALLY.

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

WE ARE CURRENTLY WRITING! THE COVID PANDEMIC WAS NOT A GOOD TIME FOR US TO WRITE NEW MUSIC, IN FACT, WE WERE MORE DE-MOTIVATED THAN EVER. WE HARDLY WROTE ANYTHING DURING THAT TIME, TAKING TIME TO TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES, AND FORCE US TO HAVE A BREAK. WE ARE BACK AT IT NOW THOUGH, WITH OUR FIRST SHOW IN 2 WEEKS TIME. WE WILL BE TRYING OUT A FEW NEW TRACKS AND WILL BE DEMOING A BUNCH MORE LATER NEXT MONTH.

WE DON'T HAVE ANY SPECIFIC PLANS, BUT WE WANT TO HIT 2021 RUNNING, RELEASING A FEW NEW TRACKS WITH HOPEFULLY A NEW LP READY FOR NEXT YEAR! ALL WE WANT TO DO IS WRITE, ENJOY OURSELVES AND SHARE THE STAGE WITH FRIENDS OLD AND NEW.

ST.WOLF

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

We started out as classmates in college. School forced us to work as a group and we've done that ever since. We've always looked up to a lot of artists from different genres and we'd love to name a few, but at that time our reason for grouping up was we really just wanted to play music given that everybody was hungry for the stage.

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

Recently, we've been big on sending stuff back and forth over the internet. But when it comes to actually finishing songs, it really requires us to be present in one place. Everybody's presence brings a huge difference to our songwriting since it forces us to mold each song with respect to everybody's energy. Somebody usually sends a voice memo that includes lyrics, melody, or a guitar riff, and then the next morning you have a full band demo done by one or two members.

However, this pandemic really switched up our process a bit. We've been doing multiple versions of one song and then we'd have weekly video calls that's intended for everybody to just handpick specific parts to add, keep, and discard.

These virtual meetings can never match the energy that everybody exudes when we're together, but we don't plan on stopping making music anytime soon so this should do for now.

FF: 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?

We think you need to have perseverance and commitment. A lot of artists lose the will to go on before even getting to know their possibility of having a career in music. But most of all you have to have that hunger for creativity. You strive to get better at your craft if you have that hunger. People will notice, and you should never fail to be there for the people who believe in you.

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

Our goal is simply to connect with people. We see ourselves creating art in the future with a sense of purpose. We're hoping by then, we would be an inspiration to others to do their own thing and believe that it will reach the right people. It doesn't matter if it isn't trendy as long as you're doing you.

FF: TELL US ABOUT YOUR HIGHLY RECEIVED RECENT RELEASE "LAPASTANGAN." WHAT IS THE STORY BEHIND IT?

We've been writing a lot since last year and Lapastangan is one of the recently finished ones. We actually opted for holding back with the release of this one. But current circumstances actually forced our hand to put this out, since it's the perfect song for what we were all feeling at the moment.

The song is about getting out of a situation you're in that's undesirable. We catch ourselves in oppression, sometimes from an outside force, or even by your own mind. It's a reminder to ourselves to stand up to these forces, regardless of the fear we feel.

FF: WHAT ELSE CAN YOUR LISTENERS EXPECT FROM ST. WOLF IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

We've been working non-stop during this pandemic. We've all had isolation time and I think that makes this thing that we've been working on so interesting. We've all collected different things in our time away as individual beings and when we meet via video calls, we find ways to glue all those things together. Evolving as a group is always fun. We're very excited to let you hear what we're up to!

SOCIALS: @STWOLFPH | PHOTO BY YSEL BISNAR





AFTERLIFE



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

TYLER: Well I've known the guys in the band for quite some time now, I think I've been friends with Andrew now for 14 years or something haha but Afterlife started in late 2016 while we were in the early processes of writing our EP titled "Vicious Cycle" and the energy was strong so we just rolled with it.

FF: WALK US THROUGH YOUR RECENTLY RELEASED SINGLE 'WASTING TIME'. WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT AND HOW WAS THE PROCESS OF WRITING IT WORKED?

"Wasting Time" was one of the first songs we wrote for the new album and I feel it's very representative of the environment we were in at the time and quite frankly still are in you know? We entered the studio in early march and this was right around when we started seeing the effects of the coronavirus in the US and it just made us all very upset with how our country was dealing with things and something needed to be said.

The virus eventually forced us to leave the studio early resulting in a lot of remote work and the whole process of releasing the song has been over phone calls, emails and a ton of FaceTimes haha but so far the reaction for the song has been nothing short of amazing, I am really happy with how things turned out.

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

We are always looking to evolve, it's necessary I think as a musician when there is so much amazing music out there. We like to experiment with different genres and styles of music and it's prevalent in all of our released music. We love electronics, we love hip hop and rock so we always try to find that perfect harmony and I think we did that on the upcoming album.

FF: WHAT IS YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL AS A BAND.

Personally I would like to make this a full time career and I'm sure the rest of the guys feel the same. We love playing music and traveling so it would be awesome to have it as a full time job.

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

I think it's filled with so many talented bands, there is a lot of good music being produced these days. Some of my favorites are Spiritbox, Fit For A King, Polaris but I could honestly go on and on haha. I think the best part of the scene is that more and more people are growing into the idea of collaboration, it's becoming more of a group effort to elevate the genre instead of a competition which ultimately will kill a style of music.

The worst part I think is the elitism between genres, just because you listen to one style doesn't mean everything else is bad and I think it's good to be open to all styles of music.

FF: WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM AFTERLIFE IN THE NEAR FUTURE? ANYTHING YOU GOT PLANNED FOR THE UPCOMING SPOOKY SEASON?

Given the climate of the world it's hard to really say you know? With the virus it's hard to really plan too far into the future. BUT what I will say if you can expect a new Afterlife record in 2021 and hopefully some awesome touring.

Halloween is collectively our favorite holiday so we are talking about doing something special merchandise wise so be on the lookout for that!



OUT!

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"PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE"

THE BEAUTIFUL MONUMENT



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FF: TELL US THE STORY BEHIND YOUR BAND NAME 'THE BEAUTIFUL MONUMENT'. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MUSIC THAT YOU MAKE?

Lizi: TBM was named after a close friend of mines' son. I was appointed the role of Godparent but sadly that day never came as he passed away before I even got the chance to meet him. His name was Memphis - which is also the name of a lost city in Egypt, known as The Beautiful Monument. As for the music we create... I like to think that it's a mix between A Day To Remember meets The Power Puff Girls - sugar, spice and big open chords.

FF: 'I'M THE REAPER' WAS RELEASED A YEAR AGO, ANYTHING GOING ON IN THE THE BEAUTIFUL MONUMENT CAMP LATELY?

Amy/Lizi: Writing, writing, crying from a lack of live music annddd writing.

FF: WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT BEING MUSICIANS?

Amy: The connection you make with other people. Other bands, other musicians, fans. Everyone. Just feeling connected.

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

Lizi: Well, I personally like to think that we are less shit. We explored a larger range of sounds including some electronic components which has really given our music a more diverse sound/vibe over time.

FF: WHAT WOULD SAY HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT AS A GROUP THUS FAR?

Amy: Probably signing with Greyscale records for our last record. We really admire what that label has done and is doing for the Australian heavy music scene and it's a dream to be apart of that family.

FF: WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO CONTINUE CREATING MUSIC? WHAT'S THE VISION BEHIND THE GROUP?

Amy: To continue connecting with people. Every time a person approaches me at a show to share their experiences it makes me know we are heading in the right direction. We want to keep creating music that shares those experiences in the hope that it makes people feel understood.

ROGUE

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

Rogue started in the Summer of 2017 after Jansen and our producer Jonathan connected for the first time. Excited by each other's creative chemistry and similar influences, they began crafting what would become the song "Divide." During this writing process, the two began reaching out to trusted peers, and Jeffrey was the first choice for guitarist.

FF: TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR LATEST EP 'AEON'. WHAT IS ITS MAIN THEME AND HOW DID ITS SONG-WRITING PROCESS GO?

'Aeon' complements certain topics started on our last record while expanding further into our story. Though political corruption and social manipulation is mentioned, they are but mere puzzle pieces in a bigger world at play. The songwriting process, meanwhile, was strenuous and mentally taxing. We were so eager to make up for lost time following 'Anomaly' that we dove into the process without a game plan. This put a huge strain on the collaborative aspect of the band, to the point that we had to take a step back and completely reconfigure the workflow of the band to make this record happen.

FF: IN TERMS OF LYRICAL CONTENT, WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN INSPIRATIONS FOR 'AEON'?

While past songs have taken influence from artists we admire, the main lyrical compositions were inspired by the instrumentals and a two-week period of minimizing consumption of external media. Cultural factors also played a part, with 'Ethos' having been written with the intention of releasing it during election year in the U.S.

FF: CREATING MATHCORE/PROGRESSIVE MUSIC IS GENERALLY COMPLEX. AT THIS POINT IN YOUR CAREER, DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE FOUND YOUR REAL 'SOUND'?

For 'Aeon,' we feel incredibly confident that we learned from the weaknesses of 'Anomaly' and can find the ethereal balance in the dynamics of our chaotic writing. That being said, we as people and musicians are ever-evolving so it is safe to say listeners should not expect to hear the same record twice.

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

The quirk about the modern heavy music scene is that its best and worst qualities both stem from the metal culture and traditions. The community is inclusive and a place we're proud to call home, but some musicians remain afraid to embrace modern technology that will only help this community grow. The upside of this is the bands who innovate and "think outside of the genre" are the ones who seem to be prospering during the current landscape.

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

With touring not being an option for bands at the moment, we want to continue finding ways to engage with listeners and get the word out as much as we can in this current climate, so we are hard at work on more album content and streaming. Fans can also look forward to an instrumental version of 'Aeon' before the end of the year.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

   [roguebandla](https://www.facebook.com/roguebandla)

FF: WHEN AND HOW DID EASY WAY OUT BEGIN? WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO MAKE MUSIC TOGETHER?

CONNOR: Easy Way Out began three years ago with a series of posts to different local forums and a brief experimental period of trying to find our sound -- as well as a solid line-up. I remember specifically seeing Grant mention something along the lines of "My Chemical Romance" and "no real genre" in his post, and immediately I was like "Aight, bet."

As far as what inspired us to make music together, I'd say we all share a love of writing kind-of hyper-active music and breaking genre limits. That and we all grew up listening to emo music and playing instruments, so it was probably inevitable.

GRANT: Easy Way Out went through so many early phases, that it's hard to keep track of specifics. Essentially we wanted to play something fun and heavy, combining our numerous influences from pop, metal and hardcore. I write a lot of the instrumentals and am heavily influenced by the bands I listened to throughout my life, most notably Silverstein, Saosin, My Chemical Romance, Underoath, Senses Fail -- even Foo Fighters and Soundgarden.

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

CONNOR: Luckily we're a new band in the age of social media, and even though shows have been cancelled because of COVID, we've still been able to grow our fanbase through interaction on Twitter and Instagram. I'm also personally guilty of sending every single person I know our music if they're even remotely interested in metal-like music haha.

AUSTIN: Since the first waves of shutdown began, we've been hard at work discussing how we can continue marketing our music and making content. We knew using the same formula as before wasn't going to work for a band of our size, so we began to brainstorm what we could do to adapt. For a while we started a mini video series called "riff of the day" as a way of posting daily content while we finish up our actual releases and continue to document the process behind writing/recording those releases. In addition to that, we're always interacting with different communities across social media to create a community of our own!

FF: ARE THERE ANY ARTISTS YOU LOOK FORWARD TO PERFORMING AND/OR COLLABORATING WITH?

GRANT: In a perfect world? Silverstein, Underoath, or Beartooth, lol. But realistically, two band's I'd love to collaborate with are Vanish and Savage Hands, the latter being from our local scene around DC too.

CONNOR: Landing a spot on a Beartooth tour would be the dream haha. But in the immediate future, I can't wait to play shows with some of the extremely talented bands from our local scene like Pinkshift, Lotus Kid, and Pulses.

Additionally, our old lead singer Fin has a new pop-punk band called Fourth and 1, so we might see a collaboration down the line, and we'll definitely be playing a lot of shows together, so I'm super excited for that!

FF: CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR LATEST SINGLE 'ARRHYTHMIA'? WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

GRANT: Funny story, it was originally about the time I thought I was dying but it turned out to be a relatively harmless heart arrhythmia. It gave me a lot of anxiety since I was being checked out by doctors for months and didn't know what would happen. That's where we got the name from, and we kept it cause it sounded cool even though Julio's lyrics ended up being about something different.

CONNOR: Aside from where the title came from, 'Arrhythmia' is kind of an inner dialogue; it's written from the perspective of someone who is reflecting on themselves, and feels that their failures and insecurities have caused them to lose sight of what's important, and they feel their failures are their own fault. As Julio explained it to me, it's basically about that constant feeling of not being good enough or feeling like you're not doing enough.

Moreover, 'Arrhythmia' was actually the very first instrumental demo we ever wrote as a band, and the process of re-writing and re-recording of it with new members really helped us solidify the sound we've been looking for, so for the band, it has even more meaning as a song.

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

GRANT: I would love to be able to tour with the bands I look up to. To me, the level of success is not based on how much money you make, but on the opportunities you are given as a band. As long as new and exciting musical opportunities can be found, there is always a reason to keep the band going and continuously improving!

AUSTIN: I would love to be in a position where this band and its responsibilities become my main focus and highest priority. While cash-money-cheddar is great and all, I much more look forward to the freedom to pick and choose whatever opportunities come our way without fear. I think I speak for all of us when I say we want to create a community that's as grateful for us as we are of them, and we want to be able to always put our everything into this band.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT CAN YOUR LISTENERS EXPECT FROM EASY WAY OUT IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

GRANT: Lots of gutturals and power metal solos haha. But seriously, we are sitting on a ludicrous amount of demos, so we are planning on releasing new music soon in the form of an EP, and there will definitely be more in the near future. I hear talk of a full album sometime next year maybe? We definitely have the demo material for it.

AUSTIN: The religious sacrifice of Connor to appease the post-hardcore gods, haha. But on a serious note, since Arrhythmia was released, we have wasted no time in deciding what our next EP will be from the huge stack of demos we currently have. Developing all of these demos into a finished product has been going great and is an incredibly rewarding process. While writing has been great, the lack of opportunities to play shows has been getting to us due to the fact that we're all locked at home practicing and ready to rip. We've found a way around this though and we'll have something for you all sooner than you may think!





Those Without

FF: HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN EACH OTHER AND WHAT MADE YOU FORM THOSE WITHOUT?

This is a bit difficult to answer because it depends on what you'd count as "knowing each other". We all went to the same high school, but in different grades. So even though we haven't hung out with each other during that time we've always known who everyone was. I suppose the most just response to your question would be late 2016/early 2017. The band started the fall of 2016 when Oskar, Dennis and Felix decided to start playing skatepunk. It was really bad. After a couple of (very) unsuccessful months we decided to start looking for a new guitarist. Oskar used to play guitar but it didn't work out as well as we'd hoped. That's where Martin enters the frame.

When Martin joined us we started questioning our musical identity. Was skatepunk really the path for us? The short and simple answer was no. All of us felt comfort and excitement towards a more modern pop punk-sound. The lineup we're still rolling with started taking shape just a few months later. We had recently parted ways with our old bass player and we met Filip at a party, where he managed to convince us a few beers in that he would be the perfect fit for Those Without. He auditioned a few days later, and he was right. So ever since Summer 2017 we've been the Those Without we are today.

FF: WITH LOTS OF EUROPEAN POP PUNK BANDS IN THE SCENE RIGHT NOW, WHAT ARE THE EFFORTS YOU HAVE BEEN PUTTING UP TO GET YOUR MUSIC OUT THERE?

We think it's a mixture of different factors that's gotten our music out there for people to listen to. We had an unfortunate release at the beginning of our "career" (an EP that we rushed to get out) which taught us the importance of planning out releases, spending time on PR and interaction through social medias. With the exception of those things, we've always had an extremely strict point of view when it comes to our method of writing music. Every member in the band has an equal say in what goes and what doesn't go into a song. No matter if it's a song melody, a lead guitar or a drum fill, if someone doesn't vibe with it we find something else. There are no big egos in our song writing process and we all know that the critique that gets handed out when we write our music isn't personal.

We've also been extremely fortunate as to have amazing contacts in the industry and a fantastic manager. That's obviously a huge factor to take into account when we're discussing getting our music out there for the world to listen to.

COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MUSIC-MAKING PROCESS FOR YOUR NEW-EP 'NEON MINDS'?

We started writing Neon Minds in the spring of 2019. Originally we wanted to start writing new music way sooner than the spring, but we had a few shows that delayed to process for a while. The song writing process for Neon Minds looked pretty much the same as it's always done, and as it's still looking. We often start writing songs based off of an instrumental guitar riff or lead that Martin writes, and we all agree whether we want to base a song off of it or not. When we've all agreed, we bring the song with us to our rehearsal. Martin usually writes a cool lead, Dennis comes up with some killer drums for the song and Oskar just hears a melody that would go along with the instrumentals.

This process is not something we have all decided is the best process possible, but it's what seems to work the best for us.

FF: WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOU'VE HAD AS A BAND AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME IT?

The most challenging we've had to go through as a band, which actually happened quite recently even though it feels like ages ago if you think about all of the positive that's happened to us this year, was when Filip left the band. During the summer of 2019 Filip decided to step down as our bass player to be able to focus on his other project. We worked with a different bass player for a couple of months but we quickly realized things weren't the same without Filip. So when we decided to part ways with our past bass player we took a shot in the dark and asked Filip if he wanted to join us again. Our hopes were high but our expectations were low, seeing as we expected him to be busy and decline the offer. But alas, it turned out he missed us as much as we'd missed him. So from the fall of 2019 we were back to the line-up that one would call Those Without today.

FF: LASTLY, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THOSE WITHOUT IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Funny you should ask! We have a BUNCH of projects in store for you. This Friday (16/10) we're releasing an alternative version of our acoustic song Seattle, called "Seattle - Revisited". We decided we loved the song too much not to release an alternative version of it. Keep your eyes peeled on every major streaming platform! On top of that, our main focus right now is on our debut album. We've actually just started the process of recording the album and we cannot wait to show the world what we've been working on. These eleven songs are all so different from anything we've released prior to this. And even though this is going to sound like a cliché, it's the best version of Those Without up to date.

WAXFLOWER

FF: HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN EACH OTHER AND WHAT MADE YOU FORM THE BAND?

Waxflower have known each other for around 4 -5 years. We all met through various bands and projects and came together through a desire to create something special and memorable.

FF: YOU RECENTLY RELEASED YOUR SINGLE 'GETTING BETTER', HOW WAS THE SONGWRITING AND RECORDING PROCESS OF IT?

'Getting Better' stemmed from the realisation that a relationship was past the point of no return. I recorded the song in voice memos on my phone and sent it to the guys and there was an immediate connection. We recorded it over two days last December with Stevie Knight at Electric Sun Studios.

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

For better or for worse, to give your band the best shot the bare minimum usually involves paying thousands of dollars for PR and even more for recording/mixing/mastering. I would truly hate to see the amount of money we've lost being in this band, but it's worth every minute. Other than the money side of things there are the obvious ones like playing shows, printing merchandise, taking advantage of social media.

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

We've had some great opportunities over the last year but I would say signing to Rude Records has been huge for us.

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

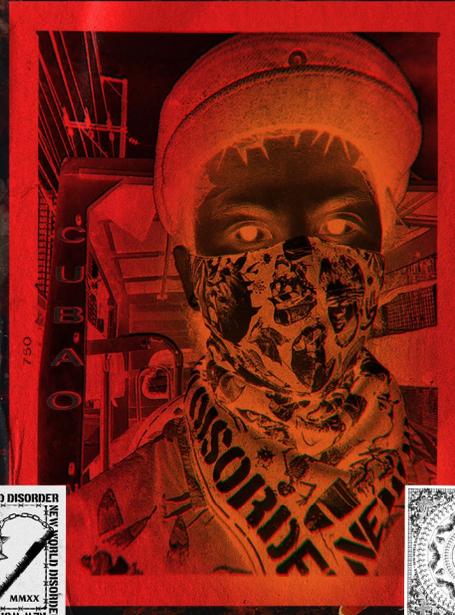
I hope we never find a sound that we settle in to for too long. We will always be an amalgamation of our influences and emotions. Who's to say what those will be in 5/10 years time?

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

We're releasing a new single really soon. It's the first track off of our debut release so we can't wait to have it out there and start the new era!

SOCIAL MEDIA:

   [waxflowermusic](https://www.waxflowermusic.com)



SANTINO BARAQUIEL

GRAPHIC ARTIST

FF: TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND. WHEN AND HOW DID YOU START DOING GRAPHIC DESIGN?

Hi! I'm Santino, the cute and badass (laughs) creative director of PULP Magazine. I've been working for PULP and making visuals for the music industry for 10 years. I learned photoshop and graphic design by watching my father edit photos for his business when I was younger. My earliest memories include trying to photoshop fake tattoos on my selfies, haha! and designing stickers and posters for a number of metal gigs in my hometown.

FF: HOW DOES THE CREATIVE PROCESS WORK BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR CLIENTS IN COMING UP WITH THE IDEAS AND LOOK OF EACH PROJECT?

It's hard to explain but I'll keep it short, the number one thing to avoid is letting the client tell you "do whatever you want", I know it may sound like it's easier that way, but I actually avoid this route for less revisions. Always ask them first what they really want. That's my golden rule! The next important thing is research. I spend lots of hours doing conceptual research and planning the art direction first before presenting and executing the project. (sorry for my boring answer! haha)

FF: WHO ARE SOME ARTISTS WHOSE WORK YOU MOST ADMIRE AND HOW DO THEY INFLUENCE YOUR WORK?

There's too many to mention, but I must credit those who inspired me back when I was just starting out: RED SLIM! I remember him during Multiply, Friendster, and Tumblr days. He's one of the most hardworking designer and merchant in the local scene. He's one of the first who inspired me to design for gigs! UZI EMPRADO & NICOLO NIMOR! Man, these two are Cebu's OG when it comes to branding and graphic design in the music and merchandising scene. They introduced Nick Automatic and Black Bile to us! Need I say more? The last one is not a person but a brand: PULP. I've always been a fan of the PULP Magazine and PULP Summer Slam design aesthetic. I remember the first time I saw the PSS7 & PSS9 poster, I told myself someday I'd make posters just like that!

FF: YOU HAVE ALREADY WORKED WITH SOME OF THE BIGGEST BANDS ALL OVER THE WORLD WHETHER IT'S FOR PULP MAGAZINE, AND OTHERS. ARE THERE ANY OTHER ARTISTS YOU ARE HOPING TO WORK AND/OR COLLABORATE WITH?

Yeah! It's an honor working with Slayer and other big names in the music industry (thanks to PULP) but my ultimate dream is to design for RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE! And also, 2NE1 (sucks that they disbanded), Blackpink, Twice, and Itzy! Haha

FF: WHEN CREATIVE BLOCKS HAPPEN, WHAT DO YOU DO TO OVERCOME IT? WHERE DO YOU USUALLY LOOK FOR INSPIRATION?

I just spend a lot of time on social media, share memes, watch movies and do other feel good activities. I try not to be so hard on myself, take some rest, and enjoy the little things to refresh my mind.

FF: WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN A FEW YEARS? DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD STILL BE PROVIDING VISUALS FOR THE SCENE?

Well, to be honest I want to retire due to my ongoing health issues. But fuck it! I don't think I will be able to let go of designing. There's always room for improvement so I'd like to study and learn new ways to hone my craft instead. As of now, I'm working on my own brand and design studio.

LORD OCAMPO

FF: WITH THE LIVE MUSIC EVENTS BEING POSTPONED, HOW DOES IT AFFECT MUSICIANS AND PEOPLE WHO WORK BEHIND THE SCENE? HOW HAVE YOU BEEN COPING PERSONALLY?

Many roadies lost their income because of the postponement of gigs and a lot of bars have closed because of the pandemic situation. The bands are also coping since this has been their bread and butter and not being able to do this for months now have definitely affected their livelihood. The situation is not easy. As a part of the Roadies Club, we have thought of a way of helping out those that are in dire need by setting up online gigs and sought help from bands who are willing to perform in the show. The proceeds of the said online gigs were used to provide additional funding to the less fortunate roadies and managed to help them with their financial needs. I myself have been using the time to spend more time with my family, which I think is the best way of coping with the current pandemic crisis.

FF: YOU HAVE ALREADY WORKED WITH SOME OF THE BIGGEST BANDS IN THE COUNTRY. ARE THERE ANY OTHER ARTISTS YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH?

All time dream - The Eraserheads, The Teeth, Parokya NI Edgar, Kamikazee, Greyhoundz
For foreign acts, if given the chance, Deftones, Foo Fighters, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Weezer, 311.

FF: LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WHAT'S BEEN KEEPING YOU BUSY DURING THIS QUARANTINE?

I have been fond into cooking and decided to venture in the food industry. Since there are no gigs, I recently started a small business called Food Kartel that serves quick fix meals for our customers, mainly rice bowls. I am really looking forward to expanding my business real soon even when everything goes back to normal.

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

I have been in the music scene for quite some time, working behind the scenes as a roadie for Franco and got the chance to be a road manager for Queso when the band got back together for a reunion concert. Then Gabby Alipe asked me to be his personal roadie for UrbanDub. When UrbanDub changed their management, the band decided to have me as one of their technical managers and eventually became part of the artists management group called Nemesis Music Group, together with Gabby Alipe and Carleen Panganiban.

I have been a music lover myself, watching live gigs and have been interested on how the instruments, the vocals and all of these elements would sound good together. It is a plus that I know a few things about music given that I myself is part of a band called Maple Syrup and I have a background when it comes to band setup. I am also a fan myself and it is a fulfilment that we get to produce good sound when the band plays onstage with no hassles. Becoming part of the bands that I love is just the icing on the cake.

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

When we arrive to the venue and find out that the tech rider (stage requirements) that we asked for was not followed that could compromise the band's performance. We will have to do some realtime troubleshooting while the band is playing onstage just so we could get the show going.

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

We do not run out of gigs, whether it is mainstream or underground, you can always watch them anywhere. You get to choose which music genre that you want to watch as there is a lot available in the alternative scene. I would say that there are a lot of talented music artists that have yet to be discovered and all you have to do is explore and widen your options.

I guess the only negative side that I see is that those that are undiscovered have yet to be seen as some people are not aware that this kind of music scene exists. That's the very reason why Nemesis Music Group was created - we have a vast array of bands that are not focused on one music genre in the alternative scene, such as UrbanDub, Faspitch and Autotelic.

Photo by: Evidensya and Roxanne Nebres

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ALESANA

When you think of the gamechangers of the post-hardcore genre, you'd be hard-pressed to not have the name Alesana immediately float through your mind. With instantly recognizable tracks like *Seduction* and *The Thespian*, the Raleigh, North Carolina natives have been mainstays in the metal world for an astounding 16 years and counting. And, despite their last full-length album coming out way back in 2015, they still have one of the most dedicated fanbases in the scene.

Their 2006 release *On Frail Wings of Vanity and Wax* and 2008's *Where Myth Fades to Legend* are two of the cornerstones of what many people early on deemed "screamo". They followed these classic albums with three bangers in 2010, 2011 and 2015, all of which made up what is referred to as *The Annabel Trilogy*. The six-piece are one of the originators of post-hardcore, listed alongside bands like *Underoath* and *From First to Last*. Their music has some of the best staying power of anything released in the late 2000s and early 2010s and still holds up today.

We recently spoke with lead singer/guitarist Shawn Milke to discuss the past, present and future of what is already a legendary band.

PHOTOS BY THRILLHOUSE MEDIA
WORDS BY ANTHONY YOUNG
INTERVIEW BY KAREN GONZALEZ



 
ALESANA


ALESANAOFFICIALIG



FF: HOW ARE THINGS IN THE BAND BEEN LATELY? WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO DURING THIS QUARANTINE?

SHAWN: Things are great, all pandemic things considered. Everyone is scattered around at the moment focusing on family and other projects. Personally, I've been doing a lot of writing during the quarantine and luckily for me I'm able to continue my responsibilities for Revival Recordings while at home. Pair that with helping to homeschool my three boys and I've definitely been keeping busy!

FF: HAVING BEEN AROUND FOR MORE THAN A DECADE NOW, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR JOURNEY AS A BAND IN A NUTSHELL?

SHAWN: Like a dream come true. We have so many years of great memories from touring the world and having the privilege of writing and recording albums that fans love and wanted to hear. Our art has built a dedicated, cult-like fan base that we are very grateful for all these years later.

FF: WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES THAT GOT ALESANA TO ACHIEVE THE LEVEL OF SUCCESS YOU GOT IN THE ALTERNATIVE SCENE?

SHAWN: We have always put our art at the forefront. We made a conscious decision very early on in our career that our music and the creation of our universe was the most important piece to the puzzle. Without a true devotion to what we were creating it would have all felt like a rouse. We wanted to create and build something that we could always be proud of regardless of the level of success or attention it achieved.



FF: WHAT COULD YOU SAY HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING THING/S YOU HAD TO FACE AND OVERCOME AS A GROUP? HOW DID YOU PUSH THROUGH?

SHAWN: I would say being away from our families and loved ones for very long, extended periods of time. There was a point in our career where we went over five years straight of 300+ days on the road. We had goals and we wanted to reach them and the best way for us was with intense hard work and dedication. That is when and where our strongest bonds formed with one another was helping each other keep our spirits high while being away from home for so long. It's a cliché but Alesana are brothers. We've seen the world together.

FF: OUT OF ALL THE CLASSIC TUNES YOU'VE GIVEN US OVER THE YEARS, WHICH ONE REMAINS YOUR FAVOURITE?

SHAWN: That is a tough question for me, and I imagine most songwriters. Every song we've done holds a place somewhere in my heart and in my mind. I can say that the songs I've enjoyed most playing live over the years are Hand In Hand With The Damned, Fatima Rusalka and Nero's Decay.

FF: WHAT ARE THE KEY DIFFERENCES YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE ALTERNATIVE MUSIC SCENE FROM WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED IN 2004 TO TODAY?

SHAWN: It was far more DIY back in 2004. There was less of a reliance on things like Social Media, obviously, and it was really more about grinding. A lot of bands today, when they don't see immediate results or their fan bases do not grow exponentially overnight, seem to throw in the towel or immediately rebrand. There is something romantic about the scenes of the early 2000s. It was a lot of bands grinding together, forming bonds and really helping each other out. I wish that spirit could be revived in today's scenes.

A vibrant, high-energy photograph of the band Alesana performing live on stage. The lead singer, Shawn, is in the foreground, wearing a black t-shirt and playing a guitar. Behind him, other band members are visible, including a guitarist and a drummer. The stage is lit with warm, orange and red lights. In the background, a large, stylized white graphic of the letters 'at' is visible. The foreground is filled with a dense crowd of fans, many holding up their phones to capture photos or videos of the performance. The overall atmosphere is one of excitement and connection between the band and their audience.

FF: IF YOU WERE TO GIVE ADVICE TO THE YOUNGER VERSION OF ALESANA, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELVES? WHAT COULD YOU HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY IN THE BAND?

SHAWN: Keep staying true to yourselves and the goals you have. It is going to get hard and it is going to take long but in the end you will have created something that makes so many people happy. One thing I personally would have done differently is not have listened to so many outside voices when we were writing and recording *Where Myth Fades To Legend*. There was a certain way we wanted to do that record but we allowed industry veterans speak louder than us and we ultimately followed their lead. I still love the record, but the version in my head is better. But, everything happens for a reason as they say and learning from that experience played a huge role in us seizing our creative freedom moving forward.

FF: THROUGH ALL THESE YEARS, ARE THERE STILL THINGS YOU WANT TO DO OR TRY IN ALESANA? MAYBE A COLLABORATION OR A PROJECT YOU STILL WANT TO ACHIEVE?

SHAWN: My goals for Alesana never sleep, there is still a lot we hope to accomplish. Taking our music and our records and our books and trying to translate them to other mediums is a big goal of mine.

FF: WHAT'S NEXT FOR ALESANA? WHERE DO YOU SEE THE BAND IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

SHAWN: We have been writing and we have a lot of very cool things on the horizon. In 5 years I see us still loving being Alesana, still hitting the road as often as we can and sharing our art with the greatest fans in the world.

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IVAN: The Exorcist
JAY: Shake Rattle & Roll

ORCA

ZOREN: The Evil Dead, Insidious
ATOM: Casper
GELO: Conjuring 2

SIMILAR//INTENTS

ENRIQUE: Saw series
JOEMEL: Edward Scissorhands
RAMON: Shutter, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre
EMIL: The Blair Witch Project
BOK: Insidious

FALSE CONTENDER

PAUL: The Wailing
BANJONE: Dawn of the Dead, The Thing, Get Out, The Mist, Midsommar, Orphan
THOMAS: The Exorcist
MARTIN: Hellraiser
YONG: 13 Ghosts

FRAGMENTS

NIKO: Nightmare On Elm Street
CARL: The Babadook
FELIX: The Nun
DUNN: The Evil Dead

FINITE FAM REVIEWS



No Good Left To Give Movements

Review by: Micah Go

Creating an eventual cult classic can, afterwards, often put bands under a lot of pressure with fans anticipating and asking themselves, "What's next?" and just completely make a lot of them fall off the face of the earth. With regards to this, how did Movements' long-awaited sophomore album fare? Let's see.

"No Good Left To Give" exhibits the melancholic emo-punk sound that Movements is known and loved for and is once again coupled by heart-piercing and fine-flowing lyricism that latches on to you and perhaps, in my opinion, is even more refined in this one along with their sound exhibiting a grittier and more honest tone that perfectly matches the confessional-like messages that culminate into twelve tracks that showcases a band that knows what they are doing and want to create.

The album presents powerful impressions throughout its entirety and takes you on an emotional rollercoaster that brings the listener to realizing its pain and raw emotions and make you feel them until its very end. It is an album that stands on its own simply by how impactful it can be like its predecessor while still setting itself apart.

So, does Movements have no good left to give? On the contrary, there's a lot here for everyone to receive. One simply has to let themselves feel something once more.

For fans of: Citizen, Moose Blood, Basement, Tigers Jaw

Favorite Tracks: Skin To Skin, Tunnel Vision, Garden Eyes, 12 Weeks, Seneca, Moonlight Lines, Love Took The Last of It.

SCORE:

Where Only Gods May Tread Ingested

Review by James D. Clark

What many consider the kings of the 2010's when it comes to Slamming Death Metal, the Manchester madmen that are Ingested perhaps have really found their crown by changing their sound.

Applying their slam roots into a more deathcore-oriented sound, Ingested put their stake in the ground to challenge the extreme metal community in trying to match their perfect balance of heaviness, atmosphere, gargantuan sound and otherwise eclectic mash-up of so many metal sub-genres that are built to appease old and new metalheads alike.

The band brings an arsenal of weapons to the table to create one of the best all-around metal experiences of the year for those who like it at its heaviest, but the band does not use that heaviness as a crutch.

There is so much technicality and respected songwriting throughout the album that every song is unique and refreshing: so now walk "Where Only Gods May Tread."

For Fans Of: Vulvodynia, Dyscarnate, Enterprise Earth

Favorite Tracks: Black Pill, Leap of the Faithless, Another Breath



SCORE:

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SCORE:

Slow Decay The Acacia Strain

Review by: Micah Go

The Acacia Strain is without a doubt a household name in the 'core scene for being a band of almost two decades and, now, 10 albums under their belt. Releasing an album in a day and age where lots of younger groups are making a name for themselves left and right begs the question of whether or not a band like are still holding up and standing out like they did as one of the early 2000's metalcore trailblazers.

Their 10th full-length effort "Slow Decay" is a monstrous amalgamation of everything brutal in metal. The 12-track release showcases so many elements on top of its overall dark, deathcore foundation with blackened death metal atmospheres and a gloomy, almost doom metal pacing that match the dark themes of the album's lyrics.

What results is an entire album built to destroy every listener in its path. It's a full-on crowdkiller's dream soundtrack that is meant to generate ninja kicks and face punches in a mosh pit. Although, while this may be its strong point for many, anyone else looking for a drastic difference between each track would perhaps find themselves lost and empty-handed as the album is really just a straight-up dissonance-fest of death-core and that's saying a lot with all those aforementioned extra elements.

In conclusion, this album may not be for everyone but it's still a brutal effort that absolutely decimates and just proves that The Acacia Strain are still alive and kicking and if that's your thing when it comes to your metal, then this album is the one for you.

For fans of: *Fit For An Autopsy, Whitechapel, Thy Art Is Murder, Despised Icon*

Favorite Tracks: *Seeing God (feat. Aaron Heard of Jesus Piece),*

The Lucid Dream (feat. Jess Nyx of Mortality Rate),

Crossgates, Inverted Person, Chhinnamasta, One Thousand Painful Stings (feat. Courtney LaPlante of Spiritbox)

A Quiet Place to Die Alpha Wolf

Review by James D. Clark

Riding into the release of *A Quiet Place to Die*, Alpha Wolf had massive expectations on their shoulders as being one of the hottest young bands in the metalcore community: essentially they had a massive amount of expectations on their shoulders and needed to deliver something that would kick the teeth in on everyone that doubted them.

They did that and more with this record, in fact they may have delivered what could possibly be the landmark album for future metalcore bands chasing that nu metal album.

Loaded with some of the most unique riffs in the game and aided by an absolutely insane vocal performance filled with raps and growls alike, comes a record that rifles through rage, regret, loneliness and tragedy that very few can replicate.

Whether it is a middle finger to the sky or a gun to the head, there is no amount of emotion that Alpha Wolf doesn't cover in this odyssey of fury.

Favorite Tracks: *Don't Ask..., Akudama, Restricted (R18+)*



SCORE:

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Yōkai Within Destruction

Review by: AJ Almoza

There's no doubt that the band took a massive risk here trying to stick out and have their own identity. And this is just the beginning for them, as this will open the doors for Within Destruction to continue exploring and having influences from other genres. Musicians that stand out will always be talked about more because of the uniqueness they bring to the table, and Yōkai is a perfect example of that.

Is there room for improvement? Absolutely, but they're definitely going through a direction that is giving them space to grow and do what they want as a band, and that is something that can go very well, if done properly.

SCORE:

ohms Deftones

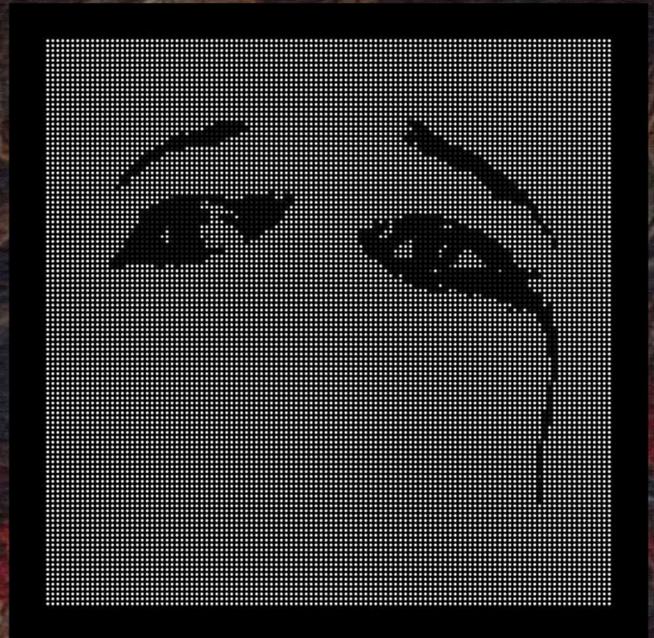
Review by James D. Clark

Deftones have been one of the most influential bands of the past 20 years up and down the metal and rock spectrum, having had their familiar sound spread to bands that play anything from shoegaze alt rock to the heaviest of atmospheric metalcore.

Their range is immaculate and their reach even more so, and yet on their 9th studio album "Ohms" they learn how to reinvent themselves by adapting to a new metal landscape while still being unapologetically them.

Shifting their sound to painting a digital wasteland of the 21st century, "Ohms" brings down-tuned guitars to an ambient, beautiful level that the band turns into an elegant art.

Whether in creating booming breakdowns or painting an ambience that dips into the territories of vaporwave, the band provides one of the most captivating and catchy metal records of the past year. Their stage is set for the 2020's and it is beyond beautiful.



For Fans Of: Loathe, Chevelle, Tool

Favorite Songs: Ohms, Radiant City, This Link is Dead

SCORE:

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ISSUE NO. 006