

in English, German, Swedish and English

SECOND
ISSUE

METAL SHOCK TIME

METAL SHOCK
WORLD PREMIERE
We Believe
We Can Do
Anything...

Deadly Report
DANGEROUS
SWEDISH WOLVES
Attack UK!



Roland Grapow
Talented Or Not
I Have A
MASTER PLAN

Almost Everything About
Record Companies

Featuring Spitfire Records Founder, Paul Bibeau





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Click On The Numbers To Fly!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

By MST CEO Mohsen Fayyazi

I do not like autumn, nor rain in cold weather. Water may oxidize iron, but it really depends on the quality of the steel. The better the quality means you are eternal. That's why we are here, because I believe in order to reach to the highest level of quality, we need to know many things, especially today in the 21st century, which is famous as the age of information. Metal Shock Times was created to give you as much information as possible. Including everything you need to know about the STEEL music industry and what's going on.

We all know that Record Companies play an important role in the music industry, but there are a few things that everyone does not necessarily know. In this issue, we promised to gather some useful information for you, to improve your knowledge and make it easier for you to understand how the process works. I personally went and discussed this with several managers from different companies and also asked some artists, and I received many good answers from them. I also contacted Jaap Wagemaker from Nuclear Blast Records, which is the biggest company in the metal music industry today. He accepted my request, but unfortunately he couldn't make the interview in time. It's a shame, because it would have been great if I could have asked him my questions. I'm sure he is one of the best people to answer them, but I hope he is ok and everything is well with him.

Another thing that you should know about Metal Shock Times is that it's not easy to write, design and create an online magazine like this. We are only a small team with a limited budget, but of course strong and brave of heart enough to carry on and keep moving forward. We would be grateful to receive feedback from you: if our magazine is good or bad, we would like to hear it from you. Be our critics, supporters and friends, help us to improve and be our wings, as we believe you are MAGIC.

Wish you all the best and METAL.

TOP SHOCKING NEWS

- [TARJA TURUNEN Is A Mom!](#)
- [STONE SOUR: Corey Taylor And His Favorite Tattoos](#)
- [SLAYER Christmas Sweater Available](#)
- [SLASH Bassist TODD KERNS – “Trapped In 5 Star Prison Cells”](#)
- [FLOOR JANSEN Says Reaction To Her Joining NIGHTWISH Has Been Better Than She Could Have Dreamed](#)
- [CLIFF BURTON's Pre-METALLICA Band TRAUMA To Perform At His Birthday Celebration](#)
- [DAVE MUSTAINE Slams CNN Founder Over Soldier Suicide Comments](#)
- [VADER: Back To The Black 2013 In Europe. Kick Off In Mid-January!](#)
- [Would TARJA TURUNEN Go Back To Nightwish?](#)
- [Swedish BLACK ROSE: Reveal The Artwork For New Album “Turn On The Night”](#)
- [MASTERPLAN – New Lineup Revealed; Bass Recordings For New Album Completed](#)
- [METALLICA's Lars Ulrich Spotted In Fargo With New Model Girlfriend](#)
- [WOLF: New “WOLF'S BLOOD Hot Sauce” Available](#)
- [HELLOWEEN – Sneak Peak At Straight Out Of Hell Artwork](#)
- [ALICE COOPER Says BLACK VEIL BRIDES Is ‘Doing Something Right’](#)
- [NUCLEAR BLAST Online Poker Launches](#)

ARE RECORD COMPANIES NECESSARY?

By Mike Paradine

It seems every time you turn around, you get slapped in the face with countless bands releasing their material without the aid of a record company. With so many home recording programs that can deliver professional recordings at very low cost, are record companies still necessary?

Internet music sites such as iTunes and CD Baby give the struggling artist a venue to distribute and showcase their music. And there lies one of the problems.

Anyone can upload their music whether it's good or bad. Many bands and artists self produce their own albums without the proper knowledge of doing so and thus, release a sub par product. One of the most important parts of a record company's goal, whether it's a major label or indie, is the quality of music it releases to the public. A company that has been around long enough knows that in order to attract customers and keep them, the quality of their product has to remain the same. If a band releases a new album on let's say Nuclear Blast, you know that regardless of the genre, you will get a good sounding CD. So one meaningful action of a record company is the quality of its product.

One of the other main problems facing the DIY route is the budget for advertising and promotion, or simply put, time and money. Empty pockets are the musician's main obstacle and money to promote is almost none. Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, etc are your basic venues for self advertising and they do help a band get the word out, whether you are a start up or an established act. Record labels especially independent labels, have an advantage to that as they can pinpoint a certain demographic and advertise toward them. They also have marketing teams, press teams, connections to radio stations and accounting departments. Companies have the people who put in the time and have restricted deadlines that must be followed to release material. Of course this can be done by oneself, but that would take up a lot of time that could be spent on writing new material or playing live.

These are probably the two biggest selling points between DIY or signing with a label. So the question, "are record companies still relevant?" the answer is yes. That in turn becomes, "So what is better, the major or indie labels?" It's no news that the big labels are having major problems. They are still trying to figure out how to keep up with the digital age. Plus they don't really care about bands/artist unless they have a commercial song that they can exploit. Look at Aerosmith, every album has that sappy, love ballad song so they can pedal that a hundred times, over and over, to the masses. It used to be that for every new original artist that made it big, they then turned around and signed a thousand copy cat bands (see Gun n Roses and the bands that came right after them) which over saturated the market. They now realize that the public never fell for that and they lost tons of money.

If you're lucky to be chosen by the big cats, great! They have a global reach that would benefit any band. But that's a million in one shot. If you're in a metal band then times that by a thousand. The big labels also used to give bands a 5 album deal where they gave a band enough time to develop and hopefully have more of a chance at commercial success. Today if you don't sell a million copies on your first album, you're done. Not much artist development anymore. At least back then, a band could have a cult following and continue on.

On a better level are the indie labels, especially for metal. Though they may lack in size and funds, they do seem more artist friendly. Some will only sign bands that fit a certain genre and this is good for a band. Fans don't have to sift through unwanted music styles to find new bands. They also are smaller in size which means you get more of a one on one relationship and more of a personal touch. This mostly stems from the fact that they have a smaller roster and can spend more time with their artists. A big plus is that the owners started their label out of a real love of the music which would reflect in the type of bands they sign. And as long as the owner has good business sense and is honest with his bands, success can be made for both the artist and label.

Of course we all heard the horror stories about bands being ripped off by the big companies, but this can happen with indie labels as well, so caution is always advised. But with so many record labels realizing that there are other ways to release music, it isn't in their best interest to revert back to those negative practices. They would put themselves out of business in a hurry. The best way to simplify a big record company is that they are like a bank. They will finance recordings, tours and any business related items, but you have to pay them back and that's usually with profits from album sales. With smaller indie labels, the artist usually pays for the recordings, mastering, artwork, etc but they also may get a bigger royalty

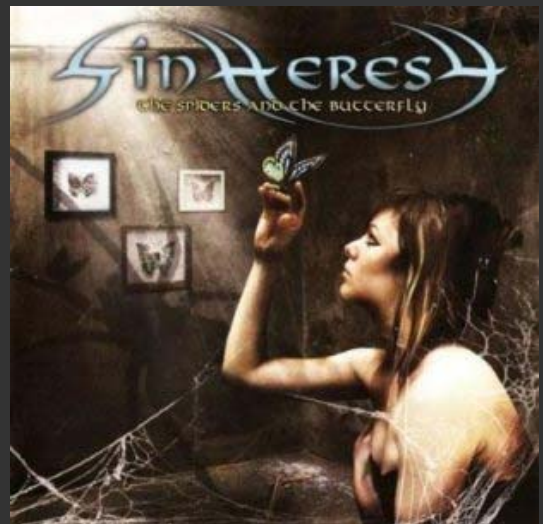
percentage or other advantages to cover their costs. There are no pay back costs. It makes for a good working relationship.

So, are record companies relevant? By all means, the answer is yes! The question is which route to take, either major or indie. Now if you are lucky enough to be courted by the big boys, more power to you but in my opinion the scales tip in favour of the indie companies. Once you're under the wing of an independent label, you can take it from there. There are several other avenues that could be discussed but because of space restraints we'll have to end here. Either way, good luck to you, and keep metal alive!

REVIEW: SINHERESY "THE SPIDERS AND THE BUTTERFLY - EP" (2011)

By Dylan Raine

In short from the very beginning we are thrown head first into a wonderful array of melodically textured intros, before the rich vocal beauty of Cecilia Pettrini comes in with her operatic voice and really expands the musical properties of this track. Combining the gentle Pianos, Synths, heavy drumming, powerful guitars and the most enlightening solos "The Spiders And The Butterfly" is really a great EP to kick start the eventuality of an exceptional album. As the songs move forward Sain comes in and adds to the richness of all the textures throughout, simply expanding these magnificent tracks a little further. If we think it couldn't get any better than this, you'd be mistaken as the solos come in to expand the harmonies beyond anything my mind was expecting to hear.



There isn't a moment where you think it is going on too long, actually quite the opposite, it leaves you with the "I want more" feeling.

If you enjoy the best parts of Nightwish, Epica, Within Temptation, then Sinheresy's "Spiders And The Butterfly" EP is really going to interest you.

METAL SHOCK FINLAND has several special promotional offers for you so you can spread the word faster about your rock or metal materials. If you are interested, you just need to CONTACT US!

ROLAND GRAPOW, TALENTED OR NOT, I HAVE A MASTER PLAN

By Mohsen Fayyazi

Roland is in his studio today, perhaps very busy with recording, mixing, writing lyrics, deciding about the names and ... etc. He is careful, he wants the best quality because he is leading MASTERPLAN, one of the best active power metal bands. But it was not like that all the time, years ago, when Roland was 12 years old, his father bought him a guitar and sent him to a tutor for learning. After a couple of times, the teacher went to Roland's father and told him that he could not see any future for Roland in music.

Was that the end of this story? NO, of course not. Who said that teacher could see the future? Roland didn't give up, he carried on and he progressed so far that one day he had a request from the mighty Helloween to join the band. And now I can say, talented or not, he really has a master plan!

I recently conducted an interview with Roland Grapow. Many interesting subjects were covered during the talk, including the band's upcoming album, the departure of vocalist Jorn Lande, and also the controversial subject surrounding the firing of Roland from HELLOWEEN.

Roland commented about the upcoming MASTERPLAN album:

“We are not leaving the Masterplan path too much, but everything we have – the melodic part and a little bit progressive, I would say we're a little bit more powerful and I'm also mixing the album this time. I want to get a little bit more modern, as the sound we have was created 10 years ago. I'm really looking forward to presenting a new band and a new start with Masterplan. We're still having the typical sound with melodies, but the drummer is amazing and plays a lot of crazy shit!”

When discussing with Roland about when he and Uli were fired from Helloween due to musical and personal differences, and what he thinks about Helloween in general, he answered:

“Statements from bands and managers always have to say something like that, but basically it was just some personal kind of problems we had. I felt very secure in Helloween. In the middle of the tour I said something to Michael and Markus and I said my opinion about something. I wanted to make something the best for the band and I think they misunderstood me, like I wanted to be leader. I was telling the truth and that's how I am... It was a great time in Helloween ... but I am happy when I left the band after “Dark Ride” because it's one of my favourite albums, It changed my life totally ... To be honest the first line up of Helloween was the best but of course I have to say when I was in the band, it was a great line up as well ... I was very disappointed when I saw that they changed the style to get into the Chameleon direction, I think Helloween would be much bigger if they would continue with the style of Keepers albums, I think Helloween could be as big as Metallica today.”

I asked Roland what kind of plans he had to support the album and he replied:

“Yes, we'll tour. I think that's one of the reasons we made the line up changes – not everyone could always tour, or someone always spoiled it. We didn't tour for 5 years. Especially our new bass player from Finland, he's really ready to go out and tour. And as he is Finnish, we should go to Finland! We're also playing the metal cruise for Wacken and some other things we can't really talk about yet.”

Whilst talking about music, including the popularity of power metal, Roland said:

“I listen to everything – pop, classical and metal. I’m open minded about music, if it’s good, it’s good.

Helloween, Gamma Ray and Blind Guardian were the big influences in German power metal, especially noticeable when I went to Japan. But I don’t think it’s at it’s high peak any more. The end of the ‘80’s was amazing, it was easy to make great music and people were buying everything.

I agree that Keeper I and II were the best albums and I didn’t like the change after that.”

Discussing the record industry and sales today, Roland expressed the following:

“It’s getting worse and worse. I’m lucky that my label, A+M, are happy with the Masterplan sales.

I agree that smaller bands are suffering and not selling many albums any more, even the bigger bands like Dio and Motorhead.

I think the live scene is more important and festivals are getting bigger, that’s the future.

Quality always survives, even if record sales aren’t that big. But people are buying more t shirts and tickets for live shows, so that works as well.

There are a lot of fans still there, we see them at places like Wacken, but things are really changing. Maybe we need something different to solve the problem.”



To listen to the whole interview, check out the following [link](#).

REVIEW: HOLOGRAM EARTH “EP” (2012)

Reviewed by Nima Hedayati

Hologram Earth is a 5 piece progressive metal band from Amsterdam founded in September 2011. This EP is the bands first release and I can honestly say that it is a solid record.

'Facing Creation' is really heavy and had me instantly moving my head. After a short phasing drum roll, you are greeted with a beastly death growl and this is the best way to describe the vocals on this EP as a whole. Nice warm textures created by the guitars and bass and very balanced sounding in the mix. Throughout this track the heavy guitar chugging will keep your head nodding.

'The Labyrinth' opens with a distorted chord progression backed by Luuk van der Velden's signature Tom rolls. Following the intro is a satisfying sludgy guitar riff which frequently breaks down into a quirky sounding bass part. The third track called 'Graveyard Planet' opens with heavy syncopated riffs, following a really strange time signature. Again you get that really heavy sludgy style of guitar playing, with the occasional accented pinch harmonics. At just over the 2 minute mark, the track breaks down into a really peaceful section with a beautiful soft bass line; this is quickly interrupted with more brutality in the form of Michiel Meurs vocals. Overall a very cleverly written song!

'Dichotomised' opens with Asian sounding 'Tabla' drumming, which gradually gets replaced with a full drum kit playing a similar Asian pattern; this is done to great effect and it proves the skill and versatility of the drummer. The guitar riffs are relentless on this track and dispersed with ambient dissonant chords. The track suddenly ends on a mysterious note, leaving a warm fuzzy feeling inside.

Overall this EP is awesome. Very accomplished playing and the production is crystal clear. The song writing is intelligent yet full of catchy and memorable moments. I will most certainly come back to this EP for more listening enjoyment and look forward to hearing new releases from this great band.



RECORD LABEL, ARTISTS, FANS: THE TRIANGLE OF POWER

By Mohsen Fayyazi

Record companies can be small, indie, or they may be part of a large international media group, or somewhere in between, or even they can be a part of a larger record company but trade under a different name that they called 'sub-label'. But no matter what kind they are, they have their own similarities and differences in manner, goals and style of how to do their jobs.

Within the music industry, most of the artists and bands are reliant upon record labels to help them in marketing their albums and promoting too. This is a similarity between all of the record companies. But also if we go forward, it can be their difference as well, as in what and how a record label presents its services to the bands. It depends on what kind of companies they are. For example a major record label can book shows, manage tours, market a band's merchandise, and make it available via worldwide stores and other media outlets, and also a bigger company may supervise the output of recording sessions... etc. But bands cannot expect all of these works from a small or local company. I have to mention this here that from 2007, the "big four" music groups control about 70% of the world music market.

The relationship between record labels and artists can be a difficult one. I believe it depends on their goals and even in professional way, which may depend on their personalities. For example, if a major director of a record label likes a certain genre of music, then the bands who write music in that particular genre can have more chance to have a better deal with that company. Nuclear Blast is the biggest indie record label in the metal music industry; it was founded in 1987 by Markus Staiger. As Markus likes hardcore, Nuclear Blast focused on releasing hardcore records by bands like Agnostic Front, Attitude and Stark Raving Mad. But the story comes from when he went to the USA; he saw a gig of his favourite band BL'AST which is a hardcore punk band. He originally titled the label simply "Blast", but he soon changed his mind to Nuclear Blast. Also the music fans can be another element which can affect the relationship between the artists and record companies. If a particular genre of music is favoured by a bigger wave of fans, then record companies will follow them as well by signing more deals with the bands of that genre, and also the bands which are playing in that particular genre are in the better position in their relationships with the record companies. As the successful record companies know from where money comes. An obvious example of this was in the early 1990's, when black metal became more popular in Europe, Nuclear Blast signed many bands, such as Dimmu Borgir and Dissection.

It is simple to expect from the musicians and record labels to focus on the music as pure art, but in reality money and notoriety are their common goals, which I think is understandable. I don't want to explain why though, because it would need a book including psychology and sociology facts. But I can tell you if we add the fans into this game, then we have the triangle of power, in which each player corrects the other parts. However, today another element has joined the party and it seems some rules have been broken. The internet is the fourth fact which has really changed many things in the music industry. We cannot call a band famous if they don't have many diehard fans, but a famous band does not mean that they are rich, especially today with the role that the internet is playing. As perhaps you've heard or read, one time at least about the problems which are made by illegal sharing of downloads. Though I believe this problem can be turned into something useful, IF we know how to manage it. WOLF's Richard Holmgren stated in a recent interview: "It can affect us in a good and bad way. The bad way is of course it's bad for business and people don't get paid for what they put in. The good way, maybe 1000 people a week could get to hear WOLF through downloading, and then they buy a ticket and come to the shows and also buy merchandise. You have to see it in the long term; the bands will get something back from it eventually."

In the music industry, several players are playing their different roles. Some play fairly, and some cheat, but there are some obvious facts; we need the record companies and they need us as well and METAL will survive for sure.

DEADLY REPORT: DANGEROUS SWEDISH WOLVES ATTACK UK!

By Ali Blackdiamond

“Do you miss the feeling you had when you first heard "Number Of The Beast" or "British Steel"? The moment when you jumped on your bed and shredded your air guitar like a maniac? When you took your pen out of your school bag and drew your favourite band's logo on your jeans jacket? When you stood in front of the mirror and banged your head until you tumbled down?”

Swedish “Old School, New Blood” metallers WOLF, were formed in 1995 by vocalist and guitarist Niklas Stalvind and they brought back the traditional 1980’s metal sound with a new modern metal feel to it.

The band have had several line up changes over the years and have released six albums:

WOLF (2000)

BLACK WINGS (2002)

EVIL STAR (2004)

THE BLACK FLAME (2006)

RAVENOUS (2009)

LEGIONS OF BASTARDS (2011)

WOLF now have the established line up of Viper, Tornado, Raptor and Demon, AKA Niklas (vocals and guitar), Anders (bass), Richard (drums) and Simon (guitar) and are soon to begin working on their seventh album.

Back in October, WOLF blasted their way around the UK with English thrashers EVILE. Blackdiamond caught up with the guys in Sheffield and had an interview with Simon, Andy and Richard. You can read some of it below and listen to the full interview at this [location](#).

Simon discussing WOLF’s plans for next year said: “The main focus will be to sit down and work on the new album. We’re also playing Prog Power USA and a festival in Spain, but our main goal is to make the album, then a big tour afterwards.”

When asked about the forthcoming show in India, Simon Johansson and Anders Modd said the following: “We don’t really know what to expect. It could be good or it could be excellent (laughs). It’s arranged by Harley Davidson and Rolling Stone Magazine India. We have high expectations and we’re also looking forward to eating some curry and drinking some Indian beer.”

When discussing the impact of illegal downloads Richard Holmgren stated “It can affect us in a good and bad way. The bad way is of course it’s bad for business and people don’t get paid for what they put in. The good way, maybe 1000 people a week could get to hear WOLF through downloading, then they buy a ticket and come to the shows and also buy merchandise. You have to see it in the long term, the bands will get something back from it eventually.”

I was also told some exciting news about a new product from WOLF in the shape of a hot sauce, going by the awesome name of WOLF’S BLOOD! It is being produced in Austria and the band are looking right now at the best way of delivering it to the fans. The guys said “We are working on some fun stuff that we can’t talk about yet, but we do have a hot sauce coming out called WOLF’S BLOOD. It’s 666 thousand Scoville strength and it makes you howl, don’t drink it!!”

Many laughs were had during the chat, the Wolves are always friendly and easy going. For example, whilst discussing which bands could cover a WOLF song, Richard said “The Spice Girls doing Speed On!!” I think I can live without that one seeing the light of day and personally can’t wait for what I’m sure will be a metaltastic seventh album from the brilliant WOLF, “Metal On!!”

DEADLY REPORT: DANGEROUS SWEDISH WOLVES ATTACK UK! (REVIEW)

By Diane Parkes

EVILE/WOLF/SEPTIC FATALITY The Corporation, Sheffield - 24/10/2012

Masters of Thrash, EVILE, alongside the mighty Swedish Heavy Metallers, WOLF, at the Corporation in Sheffield, most definitely an unmissable gig for me! Ali Blackdiamond and I therefore caught up with them mid-way through their latest tour. Despite it being a cold, rainy, mid-week (work/school) October night, many more obviously thought the same way too as the turnout wasn't too shabby at all for a Wednesday evening !

First onstage were local band SEPTIC FATALITY, but alas I cannot comment on their performance as it clashed with us being backstage interviewing/filming the lovely WOLF guys.

To quote WOLF themselves from their Facebook autobiography section "WOLF is a recording and touring band that don't give a shit about the flavour of the day. They play loud and make no excuses"! What you see is most definitely what you get with these four fabulous guys from Sweden; full-on, traditional, retro heavy metal is what these 'lupine lads' are about, think MAIDEN/PRIEST.....keeping the spirit of the 80's very much alive.

Always greeted with enthusiasm and friendship by these awesome guys, the pre-show interview with Simon, Andy & Richard (Nik was off warming up his voice but still made time to say hi and pose for photo's) got off to a cracking start when beer was handed out to all present. Always eloquent and open, the content of the interview ranged from the new material they are working on for the next album, touring (especially their obvious excitement for the upcoming 'Headlining' visit to India) and even things for the fans to get involved with - alas too top secret to be spoken about just yet! They did however divulge to us their new merchandise product; Wolf's Blood Hot Sauce....hotter than Tabasco apparently and, according to Andy, "it will make you HOWL" Not for the lily-livered amongst us then, and by that I mean ME !!!

I have had the honour of knowing the WOLF guys for some time now and it has to be said that they always give 110% onstage; with razor-sharp vocals from Nik, awesome guitar riffs from Simon (the newest member of the band but that means NOTHING, it is like he has been there from Day 1) the pounding rhythm section coming from Richard on Drums and Andy on Bass, striding around the stage and shaking his ample locks like a blonde Viking warrior !

With whirling hair, awesome stage presence, memorable lyrics and audience interaction I feel positive that apart from the die-hard fans such as Ali and myself, they also gained many new followers that night; people who were there to see EVILE, and quite simply became 'Wolf's Prey' in the process !

Setlist: Make Friends With Your Nightmares, Hail Caesar, Full Moon Possession, Voodoo, Steelwinged Savage Reaper, Skull Crusher, Evil Star, The Bite, K-141 Kursk, Genocide, Venom, Speed On



PAUL BIBEAU: TALKS RECORD LABELS, 1990'S, RONNIE JAMES DIO

By Mohsen Fayyazi

Paul Bibeau created Spitfire Records in New York in September 1998. He developed the company from his bedroom to become one of the premier independent record labels worldwide. DIO, TESTAMENT, Zakk Wylde, Alice Cooper, Sebastian Bach and EUROPE are just a short part of a big list of artists and bands who dealt with Paul's company. In 2005 he successfully negotiated a partnership with Eagle Rock Entertainment (Eagle Vision), a London, England based audio and visual company. And all of this was just a little part of his successful career.



Hello Paul, how are you doing?

I can't complain!

You worked for Warehouse Records & Tapes, Relativity Records, Mayhem Records Inc. and you founded, launched and rapidly developed Spitfire Records. So you know many things about the record labels, would you explain the role of the Record companies in the music industry?

Well, in the old antiquated business model, record labels functioned as follows: the banker, the career path developer, the sound/style creator, the radio hitmaker, the public relations conduit, the video director and the marketing muscle. Those days have long since run its course.

When I started my industry career, record labels were being devoured by multinational corporations. At the same time, radio stations were purchased in large blocks by Clear Channel

Communications, de-emphasizing the disc jockey and their influence on airplay/talent. Record retail had shifted from cool mom and pop tastemaker stores to chain mall and big box outlets that drove up the industry marketing costs by charging enormous fees for retail price and positioning. If you were a label, you had to pay to have your songs on the radio and you had to pay to have your CDs in the stores.

MTV had exploded but was now completely exploited by the new corporate industry. Again, pay per play was the norm and hits/image coupled with a bottomless open wallet became the springboard to stardom for a select few in this brave new world.

Suffice it to say, I hated it. I was a major metalhead and I am proud to say I am still to this day. I worked for the independent label and distributor, Relativity Records. The company included Important Record Distribution (Metal Blade, Roadrunner, Nuclear Blast, etc.), Combat Records and In-effect Records. At the time, we were solely and fiercely independent. Shortly thereafter, Sony Music purchased 50% of the company (corporations never only want 50% off a business) and everything changed.

When I came up through the industry ranks, I felt privileged to be in the game. I was passionate about music, loved to perform music and felt I had my ear to the ground. I felt my love for music coupled with my experience as a professional musician and my tenure running independent record stores would provide the talent I worked with the insight to allow for a competitive advantage. I just wanted to unearth great talent and work in tandem with the band to develop their career. To me, that was the pursuit of happiness. That's what I lived for...

Can you tell me what has been changed from the old days up to now?

Little did I know, the real change had yet to come, MP3's/file sharing and Napster opened the proverbial Pandora's Box and the industry has been in a tail spin ever since.

Label's have little or no pull these days and yet they spend money like drunken sailors at the port of call. Corporate Radio has a shrinking audience and doesn't take chances or try to discover, much less break talent. Record stores are gone and physical product sales continue to decline. Having said that, the industry still thinks they can use their power to break artists from the sky down, not the ground up. There is no patience for talent development so local scenes began to dry up while clubs shut their doors.

Artist and repertoire (A&R) doesn't exist anymore. It is a copycat business. If Nicki Minaj is all the rage, every major label will go on a quest to secure the rights to someone just like her.

I am old school. The business as we know it is in the final stage of agonizing death throes. You know what? I am alright with it! It has to die! I see a new level playing field developing where the cream will always rise to the top. Bands that are smart, write great music and can tour their balls off have a shot these days. If a band is savvy and can use the internet tools at their disposal can build a huge global audience and market their music directly to the fan base.

I have always been a Kiss fan and I witnessed how they become the hottest band in the world. The played every dive bar in every possible market and did it again and again and again. The crowds grew larger, word of mouth spread and the venues got bigger. Kiss didn't need a record label for any reason other than to provide them with the necessary start-up cash to record and deliver their albums to the label. Casablanca didn't give a shit about Kiss. The label was all about Disco. Kiss become the label's cash cow by their hard work through touring and putting on the greatest show on Earth!

Now, bands can record an album on their computer with Pro Tools without the need for a large cash

infusion. Bands can write and craft songs that they feel from the heart. Songs that aren't written just to receive airplay on a shitty radio stations. Bands can proffer their wares on iTunes and other digital sites and make the biggest piece of the financial pie. At the same time, new global markets are opening and yet another generation of metalheads rise to piss-off their parents!

Is this correct that if a signed band does not sell enough, then they would be removed or they won't get as much support as the other bands?

Patience for great talent hasn't existed for a while. I pissed-off many financial partners by spending money to keep bands like Black Label Society on the road to grow the audience and the sales. As the head of labels, I have also had to make difficult choices to "drop" talent because sometimes, there isn't nearly enough time or money or belief in that talent to warrant waiting around for lightning to strike. So yes, it's unfortunately true. I know it sounds evil, but that's the business. That's also the part I hated the most, other than the dicks in Italian Suits, telling me what to do with their money.

I'd like to know your opinion about illegally shared albums, and what record companies can do about it?

You can't rebake a cake, it's a reality. What worries me even more is the popularity of streaming music. Great for the fans, sucks for the songwriters. It takes more than 100 plus streams to equal one download on iTunes. The money for the artists is getting smaller and that sucks. Also, young bands out there reading this - DON'T GIVE ANY RECORD LABEL YOUR MERCHANDISE, YOUR PUBLISHING, YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE ANY MONEY FROM YOUR MUSIC!!!! 360 DEGREE RECORD DEALS ARE NOT FAIR AND YOU WILL NEVER, EVER MAKE ANY MONEY TO DEVELOP YOUR CAREER PROPERLY!!!!

What do you think about the 90's and what happened to the metal music industry that led the old school metal to go down and it was nu-metal that seemed to be on the top?

I have come to realize that everything moves in cycles and why fight it. I love some of the bands and songs from the '90's but like every era, much of it just kinda drops off and is forgotten. Having said that, great bands always seem to develop in the underground with a sound and style that differs to the current fad band(s). Fads suck. If you are a band and your style is no longer the flavor of the month; don't change. It always will come around again. I hate bands that try and stay current with trends. I am all for growth, but don't change what brought you to the dance. I will never forget seeing the CD booklet for Metallica's "Load". It had an alternative looking new band logo, the band had short haircuts, eyeliner, Cuban Suits with Cuban Cigars and Martinis. Not to mention the songs...Don't bother, your band will look like idiots. Stay true to who you are!

It seems today, digital copies are replacing hard copies, and it causes problems for companies, how do you see the future of record labels and the music industry?

Give the fans more! Give the fans more access, behind the scenes material and make them feel part of the band experience. Film the recording process, film the songwriting process, film the fights, film the drunken escapades! You make music for humans to relate to the experience. Share everything with them, your fans will become even more loyal and appreciative. Relate to them on the same level and go out of your way to make them feel special. That's the art that so many musicians miss. Never take fans for granted!

I see the business changing to specialized companies that handle the management of talent as well as the PR, marketing, promotion and booking, all under one roof and in house. I see these new business models working off of a percentage of sales as opposed to the controlling piece of the financial pie. The idea of royalties is going away.

DIO released 2 albums "Killing The Dragon" and "Magica" via Spitefire records, were you in touch with Ronnie during those days? Can you tell me how did you find him and would you tell me if you have any particular memories of him?



Actually, I first meet Ronnie and Wendy when I signed him while at Mayhem/Fierce Recordings during the recording of "Angry Machines". I had a great relationship with Ronnie. I learned a ton from him and I would enjoy his company all the time. With Ronnie, it was never so much about these are the songs that I, Paul Bibeau and the label want you to make. He and I would meet and discuss the overall album concept or direction, he would play some rough ideas or songs to me and he would always be open to hearing my thoughts. Ronnie was Dio and he wouldn't need a guy like me trying to tell him what to do. He was the King and I am honored to have spent so much time with the man in his Court! He was that great as a musician but even better as a human being.

My best Ronnie James Dio memory happened when I was young on the "Holy Diver Tour". He played the Saenger Theatre in New Orleans and my friend Kirk Windstein and I went to the stage door in the alley after the show. We waited to meet him and when he came out to get in his car service, he signed autographs and took pictures with us. I went to take a picture of him as he got into his car and my flash didn't go off. The car took off, stopped, backed up and Ronnie got out. He took several more pictures with me (you can see them on my Facebook page) and invited us to hang with him and the band that night in the French Quarter. That was Ronnie. He was special! Little did either of us know, we would meet again and work together. You see, take care of your fans!

You worked with many rock musicians and bands, and you had a very good career, but I'd like to know your opinion about your past, present and future? What are your plans for the future?

People always tell me to write a book, maybe one day... In many ways, I felt I was becoming the character Paul Bibeau and was losing who I really was in the process. I got tired of fighting with financial partners, I just wanted to work with the talent, make and market great music. That's when I was in my zone. All the rest sucked. That's why I tuned my back and walked away for such a long time. Never called anyone. Never asked for work.

I am honored to have worked with so many great industry like-minded professionals and so many great musicians and songwriters. I must have been involved in well-over 500 projects in some form or another!

Money and career are not important to me. My plans are being are and have been all about being a dad. I have two sons, Robin (15) and Peyton (12). We formed a band seven years ago and I played bass, while Robin played guitar and Peyton played drums. They are now a full fledge band, Bibeau and we are working on their first record for delivery sometime next year.

I still consult and shop an occasional project or two. My desire comes and goes and I recently I

started to launch a new venture and my financial partner unfortunately is dealing with some serious health issues. I eventually want to form a talent agency for management and marketing.

I've heard you're playing guitar and you have a band, would you tell us more about your current projects, what have you been doing recently?

I played music for years growing up in New Orleans. I played in Victorian Blitz with Kirk Windstein from Crowbar and Down, Danny Theriot and Sid Montz. Those were great times and it gave me a unique perspective that most label heads couldn't appreciate. I could always relate to talent because I was on the other side of that fence.

My sons band has a home recording studio and rehearsal space, so I play music with my boys as often as possible. I am enjoying recording as well as some photography and video production. At the end of the day, I remain happy while trying to isolate myself as often as possible from the insanity of society and all that entails..

Thanks Paul for giving me your time. It was an honor.

The pleasure was mine, Thank you and warmest regards!



RAISE YOUR HORNS TO THE METAL: FOR CANCER

By Ali Blackdiamond

Everyone is affected by cancer today, we all have some experience of it and its devastating effects. I have lost friends and loved ones through cancer and really felt I wanted to highlight the following project, in the hope that one day we can help eliminate this monstrosity of modern life.

Richard Ofoski is the founder of the Metal For Cancer project, an organisation devoted to raising funds for cancer research on behalf of the metal community.

In 2011, Richard decided to invite many different artists from the world of metal to unite together, going by the name of the Dragon Slayer All Star Project, creating a very special song, "Let's Unite In Rock". The all star cast included such metal artists as Henrik Flyman (EVIL MASQUERADE), Mats Leven (THERION, YNGWIE MALMSTEEN), Snowy Shaw (THERION, MERCYFUL FATE), Tonny Kakko (SONATA ARCTICA, NORTHERN KINGS), Glenn Drover (MEGADETH, TESTAMENT), Stu Marshall (EMPIRES OF EDEN), Apollo Papathanasio (FIREWIND, EVIL MASQUERADE) plus many more. The aim is for as many music lovers as possible to buy the song from the Metal For Cancer website with 100% of the proceeds going to the Australian Cancer Research Foundation.

Henrik Flyman from the band EVIL MASQUERADE wrote the song and these were some of his thoughts he expressed about it during the interview:

"Basically I wanted to make a song that would cross some borders, for example if you take the old songs from bands like Black Sabbath and Dio, most people into metal like those bands, despite what type of metal they are playing now. Most of the musicians involved grew up with that kind of '80's music. I wanted to make the chorus a melodic anthem style, but not too cliché. So I chose to make it as it is, it's still people uniting, but not that cheesy. As for the lyrics, I didn't want to make it sad, as it's such a sensitive issue and it could still be a good rock song. If you read the lyrics it's still 100% about the issue of dealing with cancer. I think people appreciate that and it would make it easier for people to buy it, as it's just a rock and roll song."

Another amazing cause with an awesome metal song you can just go and download and donate whatever amount you can, easy!



ARCTICFLAME



ARTIST MANAGEMENT

By Matti Remes

When Tarja Virmakari asked me to write about my work as an H&R Productions Artist manager I was at first petrified of the idea. I never showed that to her though :) It is not



easy making money working as a Manager. In fact, although I have been doing this since 2009 it has been merely dimes so far...

I got in to the business purely by coincidence. The first band I played in myself was when I was only 12 years of age. We rehearsed in our garage and even had live appearances at our hometown community meetings. My life was pretty much more or less given over to music after that.

My working life started with me doing 11 years working as a contractor, "normal work" but always working with music on the side. It was an accident that happened to me on a building site that encouraged me to start off as a full-time music manager. I broke my ankle very badly in the accident, winding up on sick leave for over a year. After consultation with a surgeon, the decision was clear; there was no option of me going back into the building trade.

Working with H&R Productions & music has always been more fun than work for me, so it really was not a bad solution at all, even when things get pretty hectic and very stressful from time to time (although if everyone is doing the things they are supposed to do it can be incredible fun and enjoyable too..). Countless planning, double- and triple checking on planned events or campaigns, meetings with the labels & bands, reviewing the received demos, making phone calls, writing thousands of emails and endlessly connecting with people within the industry is indeed very time consuming. Time zones do help things a bit, it eases up the daily planning and keeping in contact with people around the world. But on the other hand it

also ensures that you really don't have any time during the day (or the night for that matter) when you are not working.

"My day starts at 7 am, and ends around 2 am: First thing I do when I wake up is grab my Smartphone, checking the missed calls, and answer any emails that came in during the night, after doing this I get up and brew myself about a gallon of coffee."

The hardest part of my work is to keep my focus on the ever changing music industry. We are living in very hard times, as the industry struggles with piracy and ever increasing amounts of internet awareness, resulting in dwindling music sales. The fact is, that the amount of sales in downloads has exceeded the amount of physical sales, the amount of piracy has grown by over 1000% within just one year. It seems that no-one can accurately predict the direction where it is possible to still promote the music, and it is getting so that barely the costs of it are covered.

More and more labels are reducing the amount of released albums, some even closing down their offices. Many of the potentially and really good bands that do get the album released on a label will not get discovered because of the lack of proper promotion. What it means is that we work as artist managers and are getting more involved in promoting the bands. Some hire a promoter, some (like me) do it by themselves. On the other hand, it has opened a new door for me as I have also been able to offer my promotion services to other labels & bands.

Long before the record industry was "attacked" by downloader's and the people who believe music should be free, the record industry itself compromised its own business through questionable decisions, corruption and the corporatisation of music. Everything was made harder on the people, who actually bought the albums. There was a time when copy protections made it nearly impossible to even listen to the CD on many devices resulting in them downloading the album as pirated instead. This indeed is a big dilemma, and the cost goes to smaller independent artists that need the break.

"The Internet is a bag of music. Get whatever you want online and download them so that you can use them at your spare time. All these are free of cost. So why go to the shop and get the CD's and DVD's that hardly gives you a set of audio tracks? You may or may not listen to all of those tracks.

Choose the track you want and get them downloaded in minutes or get the whole album downloaded. Whatever is your choice of music – POP music, Rock music, classical songs, western songs or your gym music – get them all for free. All you need to have is a decent internet connection and a decent downloading allowance.

Now this is the attitude that exists in the modern world. There is hardly anyone who cares to pay and buy the original version of the music from the shops. And why should they? There is very little separating the original version and the pirated one. " (internet-business.ezinemark.com)

I do not support piracy. But I do understand why people do it; unfortunately this is the current trend we are living in. There are some recent studies about peoples' behaviour regarding music piracy. Surprisingly many or at least some of those who downloaded the album for free ended up purchasing it legally as well. The main reason why people still want to buy the albums, whether it is a physical CD's or a paid for digital download is that they are willing to support the band they like. You have to remember the fact that not one single band is able to create new music forever by covering all the costs by themselves. They need to know that they have fans, who are willing to support the band and who want more material from them.

So... I guess the big question is: Is piracy a loss of income, or should it be considered as a free promotion tool for independent artists?

REVIEW: NECHOCHWEN "OTO" (2012)

By Dylan Raine

Starting with the intro to "Cultivation" is the most well placed use of delay and artificial echoes anyone could ask for in one piece. Followed up by flamenco style playing and effects is brilliantly crazy. If you were or are a fan of Opeth or Aggloch then "On the Wind" will become one of your favourites by far, introducing elements of long choral structures and opening melodies is beautiful in every sense of the word. Taking into account the mystical feel of haunting whispers of native traditions flowing in and out of this song is amazing to hear.

Bringing in the very classical opening of "Otomen'pe (Our Ancestors)" and gentle listening is by far the greatest element here. Introducing choirs alongside a very well played finger-picked classical riff really giving you another insight into the beauty that is or are Nechochwen. Flowing directly into the "Haniipi-miisi (Elm Tree)" with the excellently placed and well written intro riff taking the music into another world and further into yourselves. If that wasn't enough for you then add to this another well written solo guitar section featuring what feels like two harmonies on top of each other playing a melody line which is just enough to take this piece of music a little further into the soul. Before the song finishes you are given Ancestral and Native chanting to enhance this listening experience a little more, this is beyond beautiful, and is simply magnificent!

OtO is everything you'd expect and more combined!



ARE WE SCARY?

By Mohsen Fayyazi

Tears sting in the scared eyes of girl and fall down her face, her heart beats faster and her breathing becomes heavier, the shadow of a big man appears in her eyes and the picture clears more and more with each step closer. A man with long dirty hair, blackened teeth, tattoos on his arms and a leather jacket, a distorted guitar in the background and a mans laughing producing a horror type atmosphere, which can make the hair of anyone go sticky.... Cartoony Mr Bean has a nasty neighbour who wears a black singlet and has a tattoo on his left arm. His hair is in punk rocker style and every time he wanted to do bad deeds, a distorted guitar with a rock rhythm fills the background



Those were some examples from Hollywood movies or even in some cartoons for children which most of us have seen them many times. And perhaps some of you had this experience when going to the supermarket and some people may have stared at you, as if they were seeing an alien or an unknown creature. I don't think leather clothes, Harleys or electric guitars are scary, so perhaps it's just us. "Are we really scary?" is the question that pounds into my head and I'm going to find an answer for it. It seems people kill, destroy or run from anything that they don't understand, or in other words, we fear the unknown.

Now let's take a look on the other side of this case. I had a long vacation, thanks to the internet which was not connected in my part of the world, so I had time to think more, can we really claim that we are all just some innocent people and it's all their fault? Of course not, why we don't try more to explain what exactly Metal is? And why don't we try harder to let the other people get to know us better? There are many more WHYs, but I'm not going to list them all here, although I'm sure we all know the real deal.

We make mistakes, many sometimes, but the question is "Who is perfect?" We had such great members in our club like Ronnie James Dio who cared about poor children. And when most of the pop or rap artists write their music about love, girls with big chests, or their deluxe cars and homes, we write about psychology and difficulties in society, which shows how we care about our people and other things. The point is that people should know that we are just a part of this society and exactly like the others, except that we are Metal. We respect all opinions, ideas ... but we believe Metal is awesome. So now the question is "Do those people fear us because we are unknown?" Or is this because some unknown people want others to fear us because we say the truth, sometimes without fear?

Metal for life!



HEAR TO HELP: ROCK AGAINST CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND ABUSE

By Ali Blackdiamond

Earlier this year, I began noticing posts and hearing interesting information about RACPA UK in the metal community. I was interested to find out more, so I read some articles and found out more from their official facebook page and website. I am so glad I did, as they are one of the most important organisations out there fighting against child abuse and I had to become involved.

Following this, a couple of months ago, Metal Shock Finland were proud to announce their support of a very important organisation - RACPA UK (Rock Against Child Pornography and Abuse). The organisation is run by volunteers on a non profit basis.

This in their own words is what RACPA UK do:

Who we are....

'Simply put we are an awareness campaign group, ordinary people, with ordinary lives, who got involved in something that we all believed in completely, because Child pornography and abuse has no borders, no politics, no religion. It does not see colour, gender, race or age. It simply destroys the lives of everyone it touches.

We are the same as every one of you who reads this parents, step parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters, human beings...only we are shouting out to make heard the silenced and silent topic of child pornography. The risk to children both in cyberspace and the real world from the evil of paedophiles and paedophilia in whatever form or context it may arise.

Because in that silence it flourishes...We hear the silence of the children, and cry out on their behalf.....

.....and all we ask is that you too HEAR to HELP...

The amazing people who work for RACPA UK give their time to organise and attend rock concerts, to reach out to people through the medium of music - "we can reach out to the thousands who want to see reform for our children in the modern world. We make a noise, we cry out for those with no voice of their own. Help us make that cry even louder, so that our children cannot be ignored any longer. Together we WILL break the silence, and make a difference for the children of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.'

Metal Shock Finland are proud to be associated with such a worthwhile cause and I feel all the volunteers who work tirelessly for RACPA UK do a fantastic job in helping to stop child abuse and make people more aware of these issues. They need as much support as possible, so please visit the website and help!



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