

3RD
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METAL SHOCK TIMES

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MAGAZINES

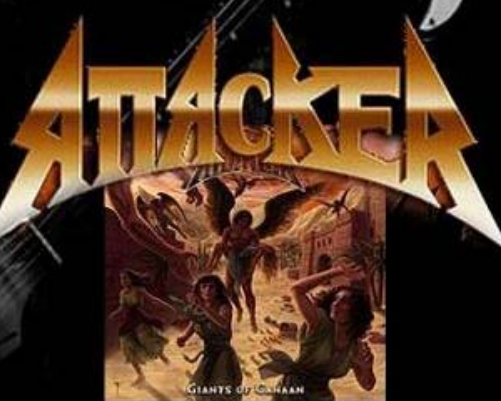
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CLICK ON THE FLAMES TO FLY!

WHAT 'S GOING ON?

By MST CEO Mohsen Fayyazi

Whether you like winter or not, it's going to be finished soon and I hope it goes faster, not because I hate cold weather but as I love colours. Winter reminds me how ridiculous this world can be too, when I think what are the homeless people doing? What little boys and girls can do to warm up themselves a little for one more day. Anyway, some of you who understand what I said, I like to call you my METAL brothers and sisters.

If you followed us on the previous issue, you read that we focused on record companies and their roles in the metal music industry. But in this issue, as you will read we focused on the roles of other people who are very active and important in this industry.

Magazines; printed, online or websites, are have played an important role in our lives for many years and it's not exceptional in the metal music industry. I know myself as a Metal music journalist as I am a part of this industry. So we decided to focus on this topic. I must say this issue of Metal Shock Times is dedicated to all Rock and Metal journalists in this world, all the living ones and those who are resting in peace.

So again we contacted the best people who are active in this subject to give you better and useful information about Magazines; online, printed or websites. We have a few articles featuring people such as Harry Paterson who writes for such big magazines as Classic Rock and Bass Guitar Magazine, Tim Henderson of one of the best active websites, Bravewords and legendary producer Bill Metoyer who had an interview with Katon De Pena (HIRAX) and Juan Garcia (MASTERS OF METAL) for us and you to see the view from the other side. Of course we have another interesting article by our Metal brother, Mike Paradine in this issue too.

Winter is going to be finished soon and Spring will take her place. In Persian culture, Spring is a symbol for many good things such as freedom, lightness and beautiful day. I hope you will follow us on our next issue which will published in the spring too. Also I want to wish you a wonderful Spring, full of METAL and glory. Till then take care. Long live YOU and METAL!



A guitar must be a part of the guitarist, to translate all emotions of their owner to the pure art that we call music. Only a few guitarists could do that and made themselves a legend. Teutonic guitarist Wolf Hoffmann is a good example of them. Everytime he picks up his guitar, we hear only the pure art of true Heavy Metal.

Now the flying master and our beloved legend, Wolf, has a new signature guitar or I better say a new magical music instrument. This magic staff is named 'Flying Fortress' which I believe could be the most beautiful guitar you have ever seen.

It's a Framus guitar product, and an amazing idea of crossing a Gibson Flying V and Fender Stratocaster. It has the traditional V shape but there are also many Stratocaster features.

"The paint job on this particular guitar resembles a vintage WW2 bomber – hence the name “Flying Fortress” - it has aluminium paint with real rivets and bomber decals. This guitar is the ultimate war machine !!” Wolf Hoffmann stated.

For more information about Wolf 's Flying Fortress click [here](#).

Printed Versus Online

By: Mike Paradine



As a teenager growing up in Bayonne, New Jersey, I would meet my friends at the corner of 17th St and Broadway every night, just up the block from my house. We would congregate and bullshit about the days events, standing around doing nothing. These daily conversations would always lead to music. While being bored underneath the street light, this would eventually lead us to walking a few blocks north to the Garden State News store that sold all types of newspapers, magazines and paperback books. We would immediately head straight toward and search out the current music magazines. These magazines were just as important to us as the music itself. It gave us info on who was on tour and what albums were to be released next. Articles on what bands used, which equipment and just the tales of the road, gave an insight to a favorite bands world.

Circus, Hit Parader and Creem were the mags that gave most attention to the larger acts, but also had columns dealing with up and coming bands. I was always interested in new bands and one of the best ways to notice them was usually the advertisements. Back then, it wasn't unusual for record companies to take out a full page, full colour ad in any of the aforementioned magazines. Bands were given a five record deal contract, so it was wise for them to shell out big bucks in the beginning to get their new acts noticed; and it did work. The full colour ads and

artwork popped out at you and it piqued your interest. Bands during the 70's and 80's were very image conscious and with full colour photos, made the bands seem larger than life. Soon, others came into the market, dealing with just hard rock and metal music only, such as Metal Edge, Rip and imports like Kerrang and Metal Hammer.

There was also an area rag called Rock Scene that only dealt with the club scene, mostly in New York City but also on the West Coast. This publication was really important, as it always covered clubs such as Max's Kansas City, CBGB's, The Great Gildersleeves, The Peppermint Lounge and all the sleazy venues, big and small in NYC. It covered the areas bands, which gave them much needed publicity as this was basically the only way to get noticed in a mass fashion. The Ramones and Blondie were bands that were featured numerous times earlier in their careers. While it wasn't in the same league as other magazines, as all their photos were in black and white and was printed on newsprint paper, it was an integral part for the club scene in NYC. Soon after though, it reported mostly on the punk scene and I soon lost interest.

Print magazines at the time were almost like buying albums. You looked to see if your favourite bands had articles about them, or if they had pictures you had never seen before. It was an experience and something that you actually held in your hands, purchased with your hard earned money. Bands benefited immensely from having been written about, as it was the fastest way to connect with a mass audience.

As the 90's came around, slowly the magazines began to disappear. Grunge came along, but rap music soon took over the minds of the teenagers. No longer did kids want to be musicians, so they had no interest in rock magazines. Soon, the magazines that were weekly became bi-weekly, then monthly, and soon were out of publication all together.



As print magazine started to decline, the internet e-zine and blogs began to gain steam. Though the media had changed, the importance remained the same; bands needed writers to write about them, so that readers could read about them. It was and still is, as simple as that. The one problem with this new technology was that anyone with a connection to the internet could now be a rock journalist (or at least think they are). Just as every band in the world could now have their music reached by thousand of listeners, every writer could now have a say. There are just too many avenues you have to manoeuvre to find out the real or good writers/bands from the worst. This takes up a lot of valuable time. You now have to shovel a lot of shit, just to reach gold. At least with print magazines, writers were paid and the companies weren't going to pay for bad writers. You might not have always agreed with a review or an angle of an article, but at least they could write. This can't be said for these internet journalists. Most of these writers do it for free and have no inclination of what it takes to be one. Don't get me wrong, there are a lot of dedicated amateur e-zines and blogs that know what they are doing. They are dedicated people that put the time in and do know that there is a method to writing reviews and preparing interviews and articles. Unfortunately, a lot don't either.

One common problem is the way a review is written. I have seen reviews that basically say, "This band sucks because their songs are bad". There was no further explanation on why he thought the band was inferior. Whether you think someone is good or bad, the writer has to give insight and details on why he has come to a certain conclusion. Another common mistake I have seen is a 'zine may only commit to a certain style of metal, but will review bands not in that style. The band is set up to fail right off the bat. If you are going to only target an audience of say, death metal fans only, than why the hell are you

reviewing symphonic metal? And then giving them a bad review? Common sense is not too common on the internet.

But as there are bad points to internet writings, there also comes a tremendous amount of favourable ones. Many bands now have access to thousands of virtual magazines in which to send their material. It's a lot easier to search the web and find publications that cater to new bands, in different genres and in some cases only from certain geographical areas. This makes getting noticed a lot easier than sending in tapes, cd's etc and hoping that someone will open your package and actually listen to it, as it was back in the day. And most importantly, it is spread much, much faster and can reach all over the world.

In my opinion, while I still love to have the actual product in my hands (same as for CD's), I have to give the internet the upper hand on this subject. While it may take a little time, bands, without a publicist, can get their music and info featured in many e-zines. And with that can come some future rewards. The days of print magazines may be coming to an end and I think that's a shame, but I can't deny the power, swiftness and openness of the e-zines and blogs to everyone. It may dilute the talent pool of good writers and may actually put them out of a job, but the trade off is that it can open the world to other good writers that may have no other way to exploit their talents.

Print magazines are still important, but on a much smaller scale. They relate to a much smaller audience. They are a central hub, where one knows they can get good, or at least respectable journalism, and reviews about favourite bands and music in general. Most print magazines today also have an online site where one can subscribe to, thus showing the writing on the wall, which seems to be inevitable. The king is dead, long live the king!



Bill Metoyer's Zineology

Featuring Katon De Pena, Juan Garcia and Kelli Malella



I, Bill Metoyer, am a Record Producer, Recording Engineer, Mixer and Mastering Engineer. I have had the good luck to work with some of the best Metal, Hard Rock underground bands in the world. Slayer, DRI, Corrosion of Conformity, W.A.S.P., Fates Warning, Trouble just to name a few. Besides sitting behind a mixing board, I have also sat behind a desk at Metal Blade Records as A&R and Product Manager, from the beginning of the label in the early 80's until 2000. When I started in the music business there was no internet. Promotion was done mostly through magazines and fanzines. By the time the internet came into play in this industry, I had made the decision to

concentrate on sitting behind the mixing board rather than a desk. It has been years since I have been involved in promoting bands. Most of the magazines and radio stations I dealt with in the 80s and 90s are long since gone and the World Wide Web has emerged as the new way to reach out to the world. Because of my decision to work in the studio rather than an office, the new ways of promotion are something I have not had to concern myself with. Bands come to me, I record them, they walk out with an album and that is usually the end of my dealing. When the lovely Ali Blackdiamond of Metal Shock Times approached me with the question; the role of magazines and webzines in the music industry, I honestly thought I was no longer qualified to give her such an answer. Then I realized that I am currently working with two bands that have been around almost as long as I have been in the recording business. They have witnessed the transition of magazines to webzines, of broadcast radio to internet radio. So I asked my friends Katon De Pena, lead singer of Hiram and guitarist of Agent Steel, Evil Dead, Abattoir, and currently Masters of Metal, Juan Garcia about the subject.

Katon De Pena, Lead vocalist of HIRAX

First up, I asked my friend Katon De Pena, singer and founder of the band Hiram. I recorded and produced the first two records by Hiram for Metal Blade back in 1985. They are still going strong and are in the process of writing a new record that I will have the privilege to produce within the next few months. These are his thoughts on the subject:

The impact of magazines, fanzines and nowadays the Internet (webzines) cannot be understated. For bands like mine HIRAX and many other bands, big and small ... whether it is Metallica, Motorhead, Judas Priest, etc.

The support of the magazines and fanzines has single-handedly helped keep Heavy-metal music alive. These editors and publishers should be considered heroes for spreading the word and the message of the music. Myself, as well as my comrades (Exodus, Testament, Nuclear Assault, Megadeth, Vio-lence, etc.) started out in the underground, virtually unknown until these people/fans/music critics started writing stories about us. In the early 1980's the thrash metal movement was just beginning. The story of the music is well documented by all these great magazines and fanzines names such as Rockhard, Metal Hammer, Metal Forces, Headbanger, Metal Mania, Metal Rendezvous, Metal Shock, Slayer Magazine, Roadie Crew, Whiplash, Metallic Beast, Aardschok and many more... all over the world/planet. These fine publications have helped to establish every heavy-metal band known to man. So yes, they are very important and hopefully they will live on forever.

Indeed they help promote and support this music. Without them we would be nothing and I would like to personally thank them for their many years of supporting my music!

Juan Garcia, Guitarist of MASTERS OF METAL

Next I asked Juan Garcia, current guitarist and songwriter in Masters of Metal, formerly known as Agent Steel, also mastermind behind Abattoir and Evil Dead. Here is what he had to say...

Any promotion is good promotion and webzines and magazines are a "positive" when it comes to promotion, no doubt about it. It also helps when artists also do their part and jump on board and use social media and promote the webzines and magazines who feature their article.

I asked, "But what do you think the role is of magazines and webzines in the music industry? Do they have one, especially the little webzines? Why is it worth bothering with them? Do enough people see them to make it worth your while to bother with them?"

Juan: Webzines matter for sure; specially in 2013, again as long as it's "shared" with links within the internet "Rock / Metal" community, social media matters, so Webzines matter. Now, as far as magazines? That's a good question. I see the magazines fading out, but there will always be the obvious top Rock/Metal magazines for the purists, and also the music industry, so they can run their advertisements.

I've seen lots of underground webzines and I think it's cool, they feature live reviews; which I am most interested in, it's cool to get a "real perspective," almost fan like live review.

Social media matters so then webzines matter. Print advertisement matters to a point, so magazines matter; also magazines can include cool things like CD's/DVDs inside.

I then asked Juan. "But getting back to the Webzines, Do enough people see them to make it worth a shit??"

Well, that's where people need to get involved and "share" the articles and reviews in the webzines amongst their peers. Remember it's only worth a shit if you give a shit.

I decided to find out what a real expert on the subject had to say, so I asked my friend Kelli "No Shoes" Malella, VP of PR & Advertising for Metal Blade Records. Kelli has worked for Metal Blade since 2001 and has witnessed the transition from print to internet. She told me:

The role of music magazines and webzines is to bring exposure to a band whether that be for an album, tour, or while a band is not active, so the coverage acts as a way to keep them fresh in peoples thoughts, before they go to record their next release. Labels can push and talk about a band as much as they want, but listeners want an objective opinion, so they look to magazines and webzines to get this. Through a mag or webzine, fans can get a heads up on bands to check out, get information on their favourite band who's currently recording, read interviews & reviews, and basically just keep up to date on their scene to make sure they are not missing anything.

So there you have it. 3 prominent people in the music business on their views of the role of magazines and webzines in the music industry.

I feel as if I have to put my 2 cents in... I can tell you that I have done more web interviews in the last two years, than in the previous 29 years of my career. I have also been introduced to more new bands by listening to internet radio, that I would have NEVER heard on broadcast stations. It is my opinion that not only is the internet THE way to promote bands, it is now the main vehicle to distribute music to the world. Record labels will always be around, but they are no longer the only way for bands to get their music out there.

Journalica

Magazines and their roles in the Metal music industry!

Mohsen Fayyazi, Harry Paterson
and Ali Blackdiamond



In order to understand the role of magazines in today's technological world, and the advantages and disadvantages between printed and online formats, we decided to explore the issue further by interviewing an established journalist. Therefore Ali and Mohsen chose Harry Paterson who has had many years experience in different areas of writing, also for several magazines.

Ali and Mohsen: Hello Harry, how are you doing?

Harry: I'm all good. You?

Ali and Mohsen: Good thank you!

Mohsen: To begin with, would you tell us for how long you have been working as a music journalist?

Harry: Well, I started about twenty years ago, mainly covering classical music, actually, and then didn't go near it for nearly fifteen years after that. I was mainly writing about politics and current affairs, then I saw an unsigned band that blew me away, about five years ago, and that was me back on the metal merry go-round!

Ali: That's great, so how do you feel now about your career?

Harry: Pretty good, really. It's varied. I write a fair bit about non-musical matters so it helps to keep my interest up, having some variety to my work, you know? Having said that, it's not easy, freelancing. While the money can be decent, especially from people like Future Publishing who publish Classic Rock, Metal Hammer etc, you never know how much of it is going to cross your path during any given month!

Also, I've landed my first book deal and so I'm not actively pursuing a lot of freelance work, so I've got the time I need to dedicate for that. Sure, I got an advance but it doesn't make up for the opportunities I'm having to knock back day-to-day. It's like most things in life, I guess; striking a balance between doing what you love and doing stuff to pay the bills.

Mohsen: Congratulations, would you like to tell us more about your book?

Harry: Thanks a lot, appreciated. ☺ Well, it probably won't be of much interest to your demographic, nothing to do with music. It's a history of the miners' strike of 1984, a really significant class battle in British history. It's due out March next year to coincide with the 30th anniversary of the dispute.

Mohsen: Ok, how do you see the roles of printed magazines today? Do you think there is anything that can make them even more productive?



Harry: That's a very interesting question. Very interesting indeed. In some ways, they have as much credibility and authority as they've ever had, but there is no denying the readership and circulation of print output is a tiny fraction of what it was in the 70's and 80's.

I'm not sure what can be done no, Mohsen, to make them 'more productive' if, by that, you mean increase their circulation and get more people buying them? In the golden age of music journalism, writers had much more freedom to be themselves; controversy and individualism were the norm. Now, though, editors are under such huge financial pressure they don't have the scope and freedom they once did. They need to make the numbers work for the proprietors, so they often have to play it safe, you know? Feature the same, tired old bands they know will sell the magazine.

Given all that, it's remarkable how much energy and vitality some of them still manage to capture. Alex Milas at Metal Hammer, for instance, does a superb job under very, very difficult market conditions and always manages to keep the quality of the writing at a high level. There are some great staff writers there and they labour under tough conditions. Ultimately, though, print is in its terminal stages. Breaks my heart it say it but it's true. The internet has revolutionised everything and print will, ultimately, be the last casualty.

Mohsen: Yeah I did mean that and also if they can change our destiny (as a metalhead)

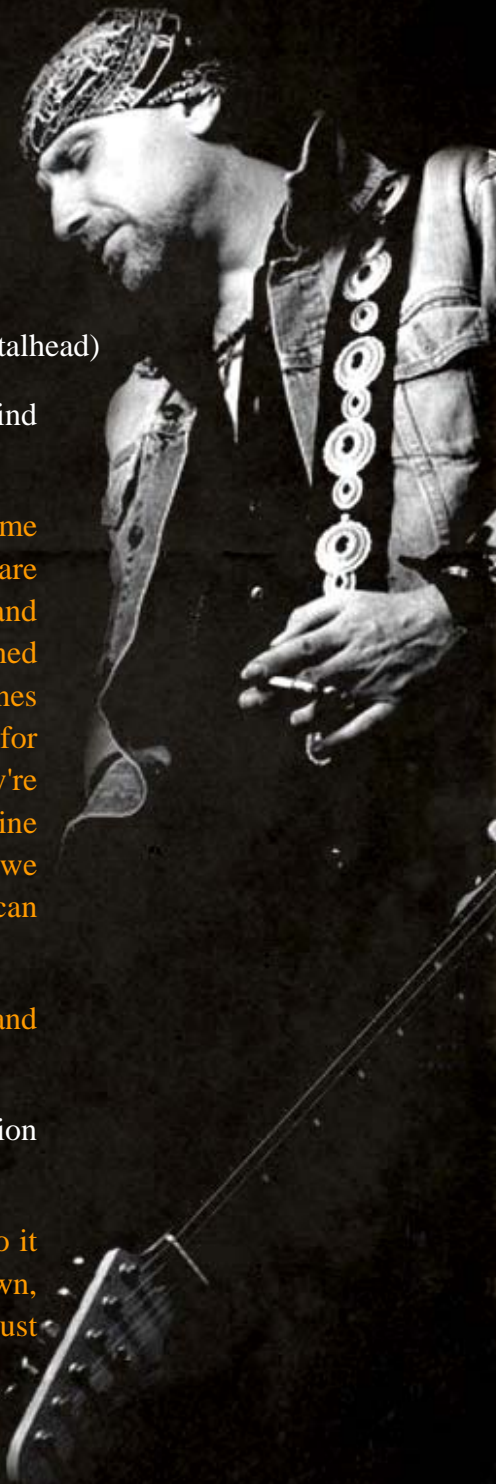
Ali: We would like to know your opinion about online magazines too, what kind of value do you feel their roles have in the music industry?

Harry: Well, the first thing I would say is the quality varies enormously. Some are really dreadful and appear to have been thrown together by people who are barely literate. On the other hand, there are some superb online magazines and one of their biggest strengths is they feature a lot of great underground, unsigned and breaking bands. The kind of below-the-radar acts that the big print magazines can't and or won't touch. That's good for the bands, good for the fans and good for the sites, too. Also, for anyone wanting to break into music journalism they're often a great entry point and I've come across a few writers I only ever see online who I think are really great. And, of course, they've still to have their day. If we accept print is on the way out, then online mags are clearly the future and I can only see them getting bigger and better and more influential.

Thinking about that, most of my work is split, pretty evenly, between print and online magazines so I have a foot in both camps.

Mohsen: Hope we are not one of those dreadful ones! Would you like to mention some of those good online magazines?

Harry: Not all, Mohsen! Your magazine has a lot of energy and enthusiasm to it and the writers know their music. I also rate The Nervous Breakdown, Blabbermouth, The Quietus, Sea of Tranquility and Midlands Rocks, to name just a few.





Mohsen: You said online magazines are a good entrance for beginners, there are two kinds of journalist; experienced and qualified ones. But I'd like to know your opinion about this case, how do you see the difference between them in quality?

Harry: I didn't mean to imply online magazines are strictly for amateurs. Not at all. I meant that it's far easier to get a break and an opportunity writing for online outlets than print ones so, in that sense, they're a great way in for beginners. Of course there are professionals and talented ones, too, writing for online magazines.

In terms of the difference, well, that's tricky to answer briefly but some of the things that would never make it past a print editor are often found all over online magazines. Horrible cliches and crass, clunky similes and comparisons.

For example, the sort of horrible nonsense like "Pounding drums, razor-sharp riffs and powerful vocals." I die a little every time I see things like that. The other thing is that sort of diary entry type rubbish "I arrive early and the crowd is buzzing. The excitement is literally palpable [it's always bloody palpable!] and I'm hoping for a great show!" First person, present tense sort of stuff, you know? Horrible! So, to finally answer your question, lol, I wouldn't expect to see an experienced and half-decent journalist writing anything like that.

Mohsen: Recently, we heard several news stories about some printed magazines which unfortunately had to stop publishing printed issues, for example what happened to Newsweek. Maybe music magazines should get help from record labels or promoters, but that could give them less freedom, which would not be good. What are your thoughts?

Harry: Again, mate, a sad demise but an inevitable one, I'm sorry to say. Ditto The Word and several more. Just another example of how the internet is taking over so much of our culture and information outlets. Why spend, say, a fiver after waiting a month when you can read all you want now, for free, online? I totally agree with you, Mohsen, that the last thing we need are labels having control of magazine content. Those shysters only want to turn a buck and would only be a negative thing for magazines. Then again was it really that different back in the day? The golden age of Kerrang! saw the writers flown, all-expenses paid, all over the world, in the expectation the label would receive glowing slavish adoration for their chosen acts in return.

Ali: Would you tell us what is the most difficult moment in a journalist's working life?

Harry: Well, the thing I find most difficult and tedious, the thing I loathe, abhor and detest with an all-consuming passion, above all others, is transcribing interviews! I fucking *hate* it. It's excruciatingly time-consuming, boring beyond belief and requires 100% concentration, discipline and attention to detail. None of which comes naturally to me, lol! You can't even listen to music while you're doing it ha ha ha! Sadly, it's a big part of any music journalist's life so you just have to grit your teeth and get on with it. Oh, chasing invoices ain't a barrel of laughs either!

Ali and Mohsen: Thanks a lot Harry for giving us your time.

Harry: Nice one, cheers guys. It's been a blast ☺



BRAVE WORDS

Today the internet is a revolution against all traditions that we know. It seems that the bell is tolling for hard copies of music or movies and printed magazines or books are being replaced by digital versions. It reminds me of one certain rule; that this world is based on change and anything or anyone who cannot stay on this constantly moving train, are doomed. Sad but true! However the world has become a smaller place, eastern or western, the distance between us is just a click.

Bravewords.com is one of the most active websites which has posted the latest news about rock and metal music for the last 13 years. They seem to be awake all the time, as their website is always up to date with lots of fresh news. So I, Mohsen Fayyazi thought that Tim Henderson, CEO and Founder of BW&BK, was the right person to contact in order to find out more about the digital world of metal music magazines.

It was a pretty sad day when we actually had to put BW + BK to bed, the magazine, but we were fortunate enough to have started the website. But I think overall we're doing a service to rock and metal fans with the website, because we were only bringing out 10 issues a year. By the time all that information got out to people it was so dated. Today it's so instantaneous – everything from the news, to the music, to the video, so it's really a no brainer. I have people all the time asking if we're going to resurrect the magazine and maybe someday we'll do some kind of anniversary issue. But right now, it's full on web and I've never been busier. I've been in this business pushing 30 years and I thought things should get easier in life as you get older, not more difficult. We were doing 10 issues, now I need to maintain and manage a website 24/7. It's not a 9-5 job, we never close, we have to report all the time, that's our mission.

We've got a great team, we have people around the world. We take advantage of time zones, we're on the Eastern time zone right now. But that's another benefit of the internet, and where we stand these days in the music industry, that we're able to utilise people from around the globe. There's things happening all over anyway, at any given time around the world, there's something going on in the metal scene, it doesn't all revolve around the U.S. or North America. It's really a beautiful thing.

We were forced to stop the magazine in 2008, so we haven't printed in a number of years. So it doesn't surprise me when you hear of major publications, whether based on heavy metal or the mainstream, that are struggling to print. It actually amazes me that there are so many hard rock and heavy metal magazines that are able to survive. I guess it's a tribute to the fans out there that actually buy these magazines. But the future is obviously the internet, and all the best to these magazine publishers, if they can do it, do it!

Tim continued with the following, after we discussed about the roles of passion and inspiration in this business:

We're always inspired by the music to do whatever we do in life, and the passion obviously gets fed in there, but at the end of the day, whether you're running a website or paying a print bill, it needs to be paid. Our costs have reduced big time compared to when we were running a magazine. It cost like tens of thousands of dollars to print a magazine, it doesn't cost tens of thousands of dollars to run a website.

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BRAVE WORDS

Brave Words & Bloody Knuckle



There's a couple of ways to go – I have a website that you're changing content all the time, or I have people that continue to pitch me that they want an online magazine. All that kind of content doesn't change, whether you're laying it out on a piece of paper or you have an online magazine. So in the next ten years, it's going to have to be the cream of the crop. It's the old school people, you can't tell me that kids these days that are holding their iphones and their ipads, that they want to hold a magazine. There's no way. You look at the gimmicks they're sometimes using, like "Decibel" have a flexi disc, "Classic Rock" bring in actual CD compilations or putting in T shirts, which is great for them. I just don't know how long that will last.

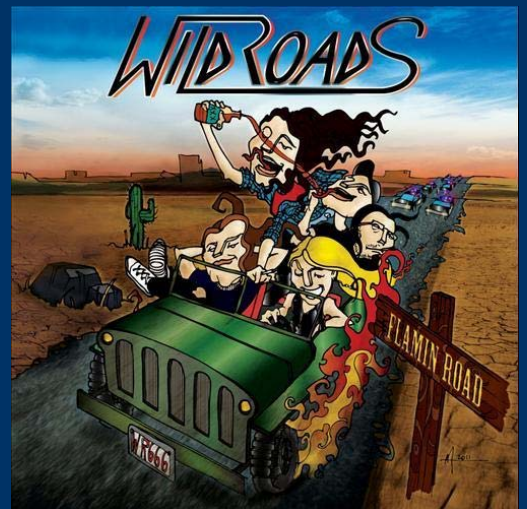
A lot of it we graduated from the magazine, because that was the basis for the entire magazine, to keep things classy and above board. The musical styles always had a very negative reputation, so to be able to write grammatically correct, yeah we try and hold our standards very high. When it comes to submissions, we do try to represent all kinds of genres, whether it be black metal or hair metal. The staff themselves have a number of different passions and favourites, but it really needs to be fuelled by class and we need to be professional. Time is a factor, staffing is a factor, we just can't post anything and everything. If there's something landmark or someone's talking to a major artist like Mustaine or Lars Ulrich or Lombardo, you know what I mean? We try not to discriminate, but we need to draw the line somewhere. We just don't have enough time on our hands to do it.

All I can say is there's better things yet to come for Braveworlds in 2013 and that's all I will say. Lots of surprises this year. Thirteen is one of my lucky numbers, so let's hope that this year's lucky!

WILDROADS 'S RIDING ON A FLAMIN' ROAD (2012)

By Dylan Raine

From the go we are given high octane good feeling riffs and up-tempo beats, whilst the vocals really make you glad you've put this album on. Cavallini's command of the vocals really shows how good this album is from the very start, with the vocal ranges and expressions, add to this the solos and anyone who has ever enjoyed fun-loving blues/rock will really appreciate this take. Making the Wah-Wah scream and using technical tapping sequences is not something we often hear in this type of music, but I'm glad it was here. Back into the enjoyable melodies and well-kept rhythms of Morandini and the drums, before another tapping and tap-slide sequence kicks in. The first song is awesome, give me more!



Song by song it just gets better and better, from the super-expressive riffs and licks, to the absolute command of the Wahs and Tapping sequences, to the speed-picking and technicality of the guitars, drums and basses.

For fans of Joe Satriani, Steve Vai, John Petrucci, Paul Gilbert, Van Halen, ACDC, ZZ Top, and many others. If you love Blues, Rock, Heavy Rock, Good fun-loving music, this is for you.



ATTACKER'S GIANTS OF CANAAN

By Mike Paradine

I have to be honest here. I personally have known the guys in Attacker for many years. As a teenager, they were the first local band to be signed to a label and at that time, it was a monstrous accomplishment. And because of this, they seemed very intimidating until I met original guitarist, the late Jim Mooney (who I found out later on that we were related) in college. Soon I started hanging out with him periodically in local bars and just talking music. Many years later, Attacker and the band I am with now, shared the same practice space over an auto mobile repair shop in Bayonne, NJ. We saw each other very frequently and it was drummer Mike Sabatini who first congratulated us on being signed to our first label. More recently, Mike and I meet about once a month at a local diner and catch up on everything metal.

But now, as a reviewer I have a job to do and all personal feelings are put aside. Attacker's music always struck me as being in the category of real true metal. They didn't have the taste for American metal that was rooted in blues/rock, played at a high volume that was prevalent at that time. Their music was more in the style of the early days of underground NWOBHM and their first album "Battle at Helms Deep" proved this. Their second album, "Second Coming" was a personal favourite of mine. Though the musicianship was strong on both albums, vocalist, the late John Leone, had a better texture and feel for Attackers music, bringing it up to the next level. Don't get me wrong, Bobby Mitchell brought them to the forefront and continued to do so afterwards, but ever so often he would have a whiney pitch to his vocals which would remind me of early Vince Neil. Now after a few setbacks and a new singer, Attacker brings forth their new effort, "Giants of Canaan".



After the intro of "As They Descend" we get right into the thick of the album. "Giants of Canaan" starts right off with a face paced tempo which changes often. The different changes could challenge a song but it all comes together like clock work here. Even the acoustic interlude doesn't disrupt the flow of the song.

The band then takes a different approach in "Trapped in Black". It is more of a straight forward song and has a cool and catchy pre-chorus. The alternating guitar solos that Pat and Mike put together here show how well they work together.

Influences are evident and upfront in the songs "The Hammer" and "Sands of Time". The guitars in "The Hammer" and vocal line in "Sands of Time" both have Iron Maidens "Powerslave" running through its veins.

The fifth number "Washed in Blood" is probably the weakest song on the album. Not a bad song at all but the chorus gets little repetitive for me.

"Steel Vengeance", one of my favourites on the album, seemed liked it could have been a lost song from Halfords, "Resurrection" album .It has the same driving sound and high vocalization throughout that album.

With its galloping rhythm and catchy vocal line, "Curse the Light" is my favourite on the album. Great vocals and good dynamic bass and guitars make this just as good as anything put out by the bigger bands in the last few years. Great song!!!!



Attacker has always been known for throwing in a healthy dose of good old thrash metal and in “Born into Battle” they don’t disappoint. Bobby turns the notch up a bit on his vocals to a more brutal texture for most part. You get your ass kicked on this one!

“Black Winds Calling” steps into the band’s vicious wicked song on the album. The vocal attack turns into an angry tone for most of the song but also uses a small melodic touch to offset the nature of the music. Guitars also scare up some riffs from the early Maiden albums.

From the first notes of “Glen of the Ghost” the listener can reference Iron Maiden’s “Dance of Death”. The same feel, same sound and Bobby brings out his finest Bruce Dickinson voice.

Overall, there are the immediate comparisons to Maiden and Priest but I also hear Helstar, Jag Panzer and sounds from the album “Heart of a Killer”, from Winters Bane, Ripper Owens earlier band, in a few songs. The album was produced by Attacker and Patrick Guden and it shows that you don’t need a big time producer to do a great album. In fact I think a well known producer would have done more harm than good on this CD. I see a lot of bands with a great sound get polished and over done when using one.

The outstanding portion of the album, as a whole, are the performances given by twin maniac guitarists, Pat Marinelli and Mike Benetatos. All I can say is that they fit perfectly together, as in the vein of Tipton and Downing and I’m not saying that lightly. Grinding out razor like riffs mixed with hints of thrashy rhythms, you can actually feel that they enjoy playing off each other’s notes. The solos are inventive and they compliment each song which just adds to the overall superiority of the album. Drummer Mike Sabatini knows when to add fills and when to hold back. This technique lets the song breathe and the listener has various ways to view verses and chorus’s when they come back into play. Now we all know bass players get overlooked most of the time. But here John Hanemann holds the music together like a vice grip that has just enough force to let the rest of the band have the freedom to go off without flying off into space. He ties everything together to solidify the whole sound. Bobby Lucas, well he just does an outstanding job here. Hitting various notes all over the scale, Bobby assumes the role of “THE” metal singer. He has an aggressive side much like Sean Peck of Cage but also channels James Rivera and of course Dickinson. Now while he perfectly uses his octaves to bring that classic metal style alive, the thought does cross one’s mind on how this will translate to live performances.

After finishing the album, you won’t walk away with a catchy chorus burned into your brain right away. What they do accomplish is something even more important, something rarer. They bring back the feeling when metal was like a new present to be unwrapped. To have an idea of what you are going to hear but not fully knowing what to expect at the same time. The sense of anticipation that sets upon your emotions and then feverishly playing an album to full satisfaction. It brings you back to that specific time in metal when all was exciting. That is what you have here. It is something that is lost amongst today’s releases. The only album that had the same effect on me within recent years was WOLF’s “Evil Star” CD. There is only negative critique that I can give. When I listen to an album for review, I put everything dead center. No added treble, no added bass, no added anything. I try and listen to it as it was recorded. I would have liked to hear just a touch of bass or bottom to the whole recording to give the album a little more punch. When I added my personal touch to it, which is just a bit of bass, the bass drum slammed

me in the gut and the songs opened up a bit more. But again, this is my personal way of listening and everyone has their own style so it's more of a matter of choice than anything else.

“Second Coming” was my favorite Attacker album up until this one. Even though it is still young, I doubt that any future releases for this year will surpass this one for me.

CELTACHOR “NINE WAVES FROM THE SHORE” (2012)

By Dylan Raine

Celtachor is a Blackened Folk Metal band from Ireland. Born in 2007, it became a full working band in 2010, melding the influences of black/doom/folk metal together in one combined force. The band sees themselves as the narrators of Irish Mythology.

Technically speaking 'Celtachor' have or rather "are" taking Celtic metal to the next step in interesting music, with their second release to date: "Nine Waves From The Shore". Combining traditional whistles, drums, chants, and black metal to make an interesting listening experience! With enthralling licks and riffs taking centre stage throughout the tracks, there is never a dull moment.

As far as beautiful Celtic instrumentals come it doesn't get much better than "Tar éis an Sidhe". Within the gentle calm before the storm approach, lifting you off to a distant land far away from yourself and the mayhem laid before you. The whistles and the drums together are magnificent, whereas the guitars themselves are just something else. A truly unique and spectacular track!

If you are a fan of heavy black folk metal then you'll really enjoy this album! This album is a listening experience!





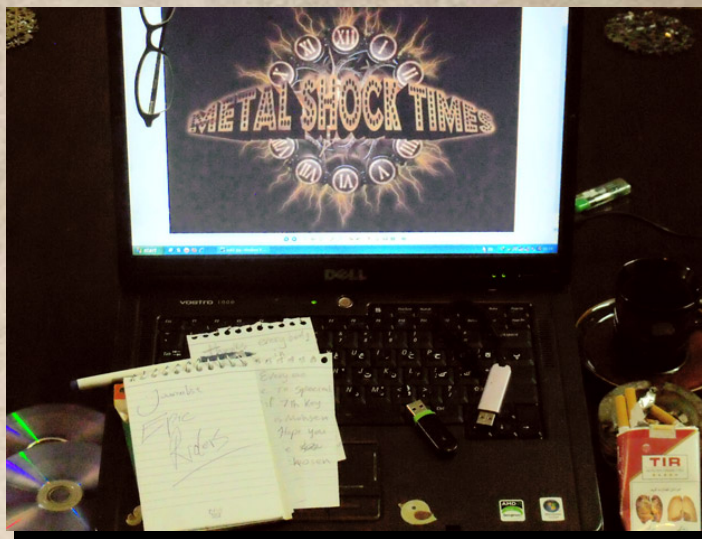
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METAL JOURNALISTS; DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH

By Mohsen Fayyazi

A journalist does a holy job, no matter what they like or believe; there are many times when they must stand up and say the truth, as it is their faith. Even during the hardest moments, when they have to walk between flames and ice, a true journalist just knows the path as they are truly awake and inspired. In other words, they know that they are the eyes which must not close and it is the fate, an unwritten oath.

After several years of working as a metal journalist, I have learned very well that I still have unlimited lessons to learn, but I have some words to say too. To be a good journalist you must bring to the audience, viewers or readers nothing but truth. So you should be able to see any occurrence or event from different views, in order to figure out the truth. The most important lesson that I have learned is that in this job, I must be patient. In fact, being hasty could be a dangerous enemy for any journalist, as we cannot see and judge correctly. Depending on each case and situation, a journalist could face many difficulties in the way of reaching the facts and then the truth, so they should take their time; contact the relevant people or visit anywhere that may be required. The journalist must always double check, or even triple check the news. It is possible to hear or get some news from a trusted person, but that is not enough, as my experience tells me that those trustworthy people can be wrong too. So it is always worth being patient and searching for more information, in order for the truth to be read.



Having passion is an inseparable part of a good metal journalist, I call this living and feeling the real steel. Indeed, it is human nature that helps us to do our job better and with motivation. In other words, motivation gives humans a good reason to work; there is no doubt that we could not move forward without purpose. I cannot find any more powerful motivation than being passionate, when the feelings show you which path to take. Some people believe that we cannot change destiny, but I say we can see the future of any people by seeing how passionate they are. It is such a powerful thing which enables us to move on, even in the hardest or darkest moments of life.

Eagles are well known for their high flying and sharp seeing eyes. The dogs are always awake, even when they seem to be asleep, they are always ready. A good journalist should be a mixture of both eagle and dog; the eyes of a reporter should always be open wide and sharp and ready for anything. This will help them in their job to find and report the true stories. Today, there are several ways to be aware of new stories in the metal music industry; for example Facebook, Twitter and official websites. Only sharp and alert eyes can keep their brains up to date.

There are always some difficulties, there are always some written or unwritten rules which limit the journalists in their role. A professional journalist is a creative one, and I feel honestly this creates a border which separates the good ones from the best ones. Indeed, nothing can stop a creative person from reaching their goals, as they believe there is always another way.

Being impartial is an important oath for journalists. As I said previously, a good journalist will say nothing but the truth, so it is obvious that to bring true stories to the public, the reporters must not choose any side. However, this can be difficult, as journalists are human and have feelings too, but they should set aside favouritism and personal thoughts when they enter the world of reporting. I would also like to mention again that they should not judge easily about events, occurrences or people.

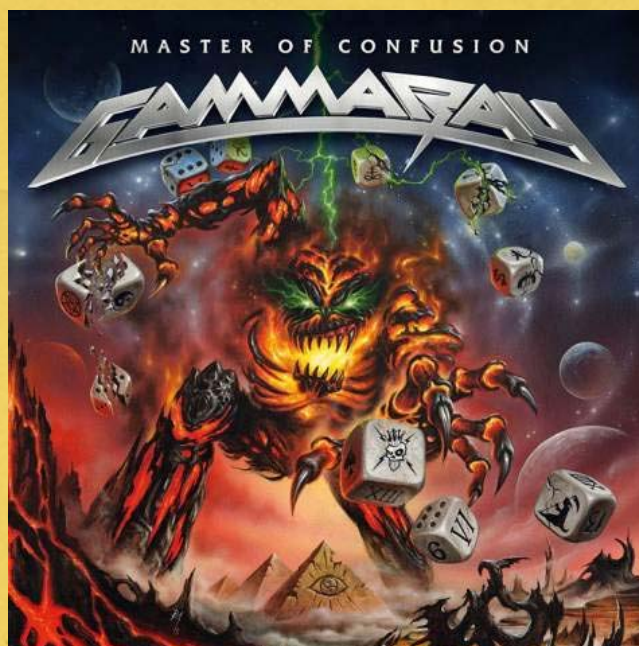
Unfortunately, I have seen some people who call themselves journalists but they made this simple mistake. For example, I want to highlight the story of what happened to LAMB OF GOD's Randy Blythe on stage in the Czech Republic. It was top news for a few months and I heard and read many statements from different people. But it was a shame when I heard from a journalist who was judging easily without even being at the event, or doing any reliable research. It was and still is a sad story, even now when Randy has been acquitted, as we lost a metalhead during that show. A guy who was there to enjoy some metal moments with his friends, RIP. I have no idea if there were any journalists there that night, but if there were, unfortunately I have to say that they did not do their job well. Because they are the ones who could have been a useful and helpful salvation for the fans, to know what exactly happened during that horrible night.

To summarise, a true metal journalist is an unstoppable creative person who has the eyes of an eagle, an alert brain like a dog and a person who always remains impartial, with a huge amount of passion for Metal which is true. Long live Metal, the best noise in the whole of the universe!

GAMMA RAY 'S MASTER OF CONFUSION (2013)

By Mohsen Fayyazi

Do you think you really know the meaning of powerful heavy metal? When the hammer pounds a real steel anvil, when the heart beats faster and adrenalin pumps through the veins, when the speedometer of a super sports car goes out of control? If so, you should know the remarkable metal music of Kai Hansen's GAMMA RAY. A band which seems to be unstoppable in producing outstanding power metal. Since Kai parted ways from the legendary HELLOWEEN and formed a rayzed band, it became a legend. Kai continued in the exact same way of writing pure melodic power metal, just like before with HELLOWEEN in the 80's era, with such masterpieces as "Keepers Of The Seven Keys" Part I and II. I hope you understand that I am talking about true heavy metal.



Rayz are going to release a new EP, "Master Of Confusion", which I can call a unique one. 10 tracks and 60 minutes in length made this EP unusual, or in other words the longest EP I have ever seen. "Master Of Confusion" is set to be released on March 15th, 2013 via EarMUSIC. "Empire Of The Undead" is really a stormy intro, which starts with a fast guitar riff with exactly GAMMA RAY 's power metal formula. I can tell you that the main riff of this track reminds me a little of HELLOWEEN's "Ride the Sky." The band also used a fast and short guitar riff on a chromatic scale as a bridge, which reminds me of the beginning of MANOWAR's masterpiece "Kings Of Metal." The second track is the title track. It's a pure power metal song with heavy power chords, fast riffs and a great guitar solo which will beam the gamma rays into your head. The big fans of GAMMA RAY (I don't mean Linkin Park or Limp Bizkit's fans at all) will love Kai's singing style in both new songs, as much as they did before, with the tracks like "Salvations Calling," "Heavy Metal Universe," or "Ride the Sky." He sang in both high and deep notes, exactly as we know him, I must confess that sometimes I prefer Kai's distorted voice even more than Michael Kiske, as it gives a heavier feeling.



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The third track is "Death Or Glory." It is a great choice to cover and honestly our Rayz did it very well. I must confess again that I couldn't believe my ears at the first time listening. If you love NWOBHM like me and if you like the 80's band HOLOCAUST, then you will love Kai Hansen's version of this wonderful track as well. I should mention here that also previously, GAMMA RAY covered another song by HOLOCAUST - "Heavy Metal Mania" on their 1996 live album "Alive '95" as well. This EP includes another cover song, which is "Lost Angels" by SWEET. You will find this track a little power metal-ish rock 'n' roll and the band used keyboards more than usual. After "Lost Angels" there are six live tracks which were recorded in Bochum.

I am sure my friend Dennis who is not a big fan of GAMMA RAY, would agree with me that the band are very good at performing live. In fact, sometimes if you couldn't hear the sound of the crowd, you wouldn't believe it's a live song. All the live tracks on this EP sound excellent, guitars, bass, drums and of course vocals, were played and recorded with very good quality. You can feel the same energy and power when you are listening to the live versions of "Wings Of Destiny" and "Gamma Ray," just as you did with the studio ones before. You can have a peaceful moment by listening to the power ballad track "Farewell" from the "Land Of The Free" album. This track could even make your hair stand on end when Kai sings with power *"You will see the light again, we'll all be free someday..."* Can you tell me which word is more precious than freedom?! The seventh track is "Time To Break Free," which featured Michael Kiske on vocals. I'm not a big fan of him but there is no doubt that any melodic power metal song could be made even better with him as the singer. The last track is "Insurrection," which is an epic option as the final song.

The artwork of this EP is another masterpiece, just like the others before. Five moons in a cloudy sky, a volcano on the left side, ten magical dices with some symbols such as a skull, 666, wizard, 13, yin yang, pentagram ... and a flaming monster in the middle of the picture, with three pyramids in the background. They are all painting another fantasy view which may help you to get a good taste of GAMMA RAY 's "Master Of Confusion."

"Master Of Confusion," which includes two brand new songs from the legendary GAMMA RAY, may be the longest EP that you have seen and it is again more true power metal from them. I recommend buying a hard copy of this EP to all the big fans of the band. Also I believe metalheads who are going to go to the Hellish Rock Tour – Part 2 will have awesome moments with GAMMA RAY 's "Master of Confusion," along with HELLOWEEN 's latest album, "Straight Out Of Hell."





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