

**"...this new one is an album for people who really want to rock out..."
says Sonny Sandoval**

FM RAGE WHOM GODS DESTROY
SONIC UNIVERSE FOLTERKAMMER
NONEXISTER THESE WICKED RIVERS
SUSAN SANTOS FINAL COIL REVENANT
KAOS KREW DEADAUDIOSAINTS

BALANCE OF POWER FIRST NEW ALBUM IN TWO DECADES!
FEUERSCHWANZ FINALLY AN ALBUM IN ENGLISH!

the album since when he came along. "From an inspirational standpoint though, I love bands like Iron Maiden and Angus and the seven guitars, the heavy, the mystique, it all," he adds.

In his spare time, Javish loves reading. "I'm a big LOTR fan plus books by Eiji Yoshikawa. That stuff really gets the imagination going!" He's also really into anime, and exploring other cultures, their food and learning from their history. It makes for a lifetime of memories and broadens your understanding of yourself and the world around you," he points out.

As for the band's Visions of Morpheus' debut album, "In the early stages a lot of it was just figuring out what the band should sound like. You have to try a lot of things, combinations of instrumentation, styles and sounds, and just see what works. You. Although I had written songs before, a lot of that stuff is a bit simplistic now when I listen to it so I really just studied what makes a good song in more depth and since the recording process is always evolving I had to do things better, get where you want faster as you learn and grow," explains Jeff.



It took a few years from the start of the idea that he wanted to do something again. "I hadn't done a whole lot since 2010 on a serious level. I recall I had just bought a seven-string guitar and had to figure

that out. The biggest question for me though was the vocals. Probably like most people I have a love/hate relationship with my voice and I even looked at bringing someone else in but I'm now happy with it. I was actually not just a lot of experimentation and getting used to how I sounded and writing to those strengths. As you gain more understanding of how the process works you start hearing other possibilities. My mind is constantly cycling through different ideas, sounds and rhythms and I can do a lot of writing just in my head, refining ideas, exploring new variations. I drive my band mates insane because I'm always making changes to the songs. The first version of say, 'Fire and Flame' was like, 'I don't know what the final version' he tells me. "Hell even when we started mixing, I was still redoing songs, tweaking keyboard parts, just trying to make things sound even bigger. The band had to relearn a bunch of the songs after the album was done and it was like, 'Well, these sections that were added or changed but there were a lot of other little changes here and there. Even as things were going into mastering, I would still hear ideas or changes I wanted to make but I also think a lot of that was because I was just wanting to hear these songs, they were getting a bit old I had to make them a bit spicier. But there were also some parts I wrote and took out or stuff I thought would be better suited on the next album. I like to write at night and then in the morning I'll review what I wrote and if I still think it sounds good. I usually know when I have a solid idea because I can play it over and over in a

loop and really feel the
vibe."



He wanted some songs to be longer and more progressive but he also can't wrap his head around a twenty-five-minute song. "I mean how do you do that? Some can do it and some can't. I'm not really just have those as separate songs." Jeff gaug now reached the point where he knows what he wanted to go after and have a better understanding of what works and what doesn't.

The recording process for me was a mess and is always in flux. Sometimes you get a certain mood for a song and have to really think about what the best way is to achieve that," he explains to me.

The rhythms are the most interesting starting point but just as he will often hear the ideas in his head. "Then it's a rush to get the idea down in some form so you don't forget it. I typically use my phone to capture ideas initially, just humming them and it's not always necessarily ridiculous to anyone else. I hope no one ever hears them because it's so silly out of context. I'll sometimes get a whole bunch of ideas in one go and often it's not when I'm really in the creative mode. I can't be driving, in the shower, etc. Complex ideas are the most difficult to figure out this way because you can't easily layer parts you hear in your head when it's with a phone trying to make drum sounds or keyboard sounds."

Throughout the process there is always a series of

decisions that he has to keep making such as ask himself if all of his creation flows. "Am I repeating that part too much? Do we need a change in the sonic palette? Sometimes you really love an idea but it's just not working so you have to be able to move on, no matter how cool you thought it was.

I do have a tendency to try to do too many things in a song - too many layers and it can take away from it - just too much going on. So there is also a skill in knowing what to add and what not to."

As mentioned, *Lost Within* is Visions of Morpheus' debut album. "The next one will have a cohesive thread woven throughout it. I still haven't decided if it will be a full-on concept album or whether it will be more of a series of tracks about a common theme or subject," he enthuses Jeff. He has started the writing process and there were certain songs that he has written earlier that are a better fit for this album.



"It will be on a bigger scale, subject-wise and more atmospheric. I still have to keep our core sound but also want to take a few more risks and be more progressive in the approach and musicality. I am also going to change my songwriting approach and get more contributions from the other guys whereas before I would make fully fleshed out recordings as close to what I was going for as possible. The biggest area of latitude I gave was in the drums

since that's an area I am least skilled at writing. I can get the core ideas in place but the nuances and creating interesting parts from a drummer's standpoint I don't really know. Earlier on it was just easier to present the ideas since we were still going through member changes and such."



The band have had a few different guitarists come and go over a two-year period. "It takes a lot of work to help get them up to speed and further rehearsals and such. Javish is our third guitar player now and we changed drummers but Gunner has been the bass player from the start," he smiles.

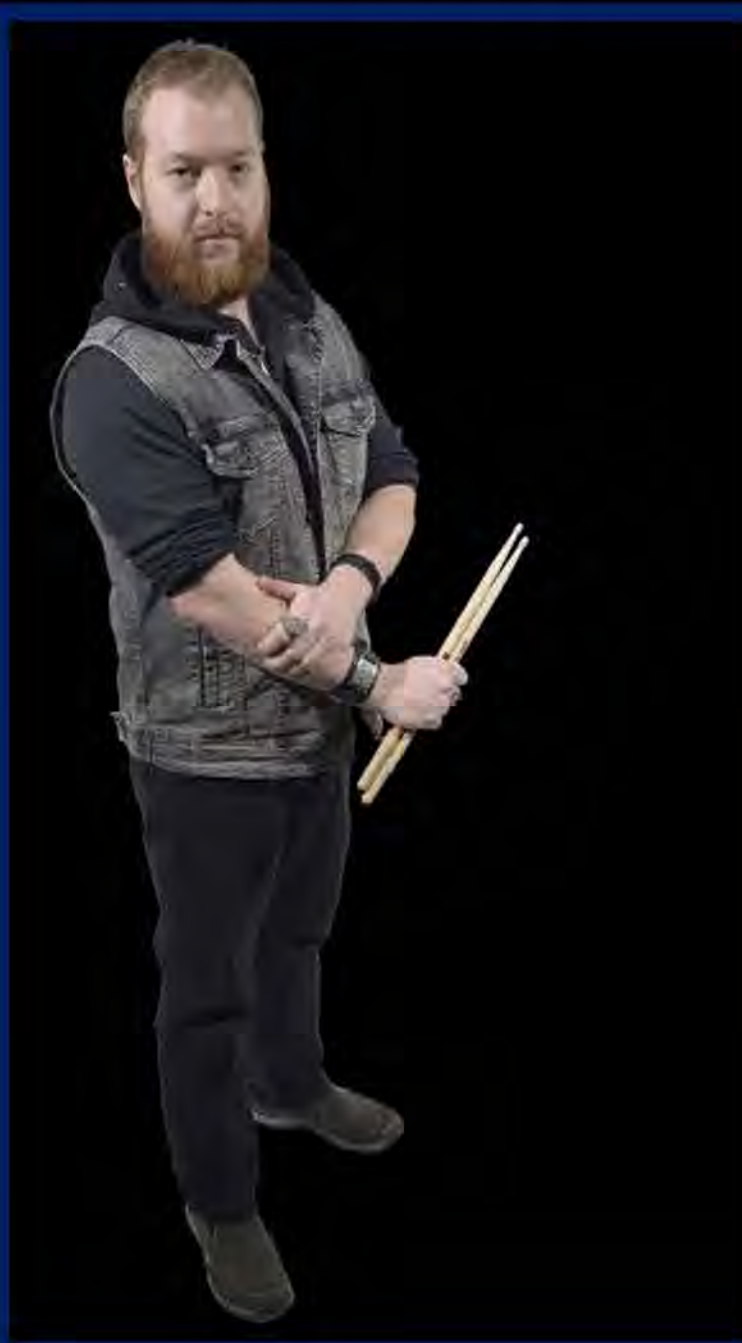
The drums were tracked at Ultrasonico Studios in Whitby near Toronto. The studio owner Juan Coronado was almost in the band as he is a very gifted guitar player. The rest of the album was just recorded at Jeff's home studio here in Oshawa which is a very basic set up but gets the job done. He built a vocal booth in a closet (who needs storage anyways) but first tried to make one out of metal pipes and moving blankets but it didn't really come together. "I just hung the

moving blankets in the closet and got some acoustic bass traps and dampening panels and it seemed to work great. As for guitar and bass tracking, we recorded clean into the PC then re-amped afterwards. We used the Neural DSP Archetype "Nolly" plugin and also the Petrucci Archetype on leads for that big, doubled sound. I've been using Cubase Pro for years and Rich Gray of Annihilator (Gray Matter Audio) did the mixing and mastering. He did such an amazing job on achieving the big sound I was going for. I think I drove him kinda nuts on the mixing but he was incredibly accommodating.



I would say things like make this guitar solo sound like it's underwater (in the song Eye of the Storm) and he would come back and already have it ninety-five percent dialled in," he explains to me. His favourite song on the album is 'Medusa' since it

has all the different sections and moods to it. "I love the aggression but also the quieter parts and the heroic theme at the end. That song actually features Juan Coronado on the solo towards the end where Medusa is fighting Perseus. It's a short solo but I think it really captures the intensity. Then the singer from one of the cover bands I'm in did some atmospheric vocals during the middle section. It's subtle but sounds great. This song also went through the most rewrites as I was trying to get the right music to match the story. I was looking for a way to bring in a bit of a Symphonic X vibe on. I'm very happy with how it turned out and love the organ and symphonic elements in there... sounds so epic," he marvels.



"It actually took about five months to do all the recording due to day jobs, studio schedules, members, us trying to find another guitar player and the fact that I was doing all the guitars, vocals and keyboard parts...I burned out a few times lol. I love it

but it was quite a bit of work." On the live front, the band are just getting back into the swing of things now. "We didn't do any shows after December 2022 since we were focused on the album. I hired a new guitar player and just getting our merch ready, redesigning our website, planning videos, etc. Of course we would like to really expand our reach and influence. Starting out you really have to hustle to get through the noise of all the other bands that are saturating the market. But every time you play a show, you get to cross-pollinate the audiences from the other bands on the bill and they all help you grow. I am also looking at some collaborations in the future as well. I don't think we'll get into a big tour anytime soon, anything since we all have careers and such but maybe a small-scale tour in the future and play with some awesome bands. In March we are doing a show with Opus8 so I'm really looking forward to that. Ultimately we want to do a live album, a live show we can bring a unique experience to the audience." The band's first official video came out in Jan 2023 for the single 'Catharsis.' "It was just shot in a warehouse in Toronto. We had about seventeen cameras. We did 180-degree angles/shots to work with and it was done in 4k. It was my first professional shoot so there was a learning curve in the editing, grading and effects. We did some additional shooting that same day for Power of Women so that was a learning out of it as well. We also have one we still have to shoot that is delayed due to weather and schedules for Watch the World Burn.

There will also be some other videos coming but I have yet to decide which ones...but probably Ghost as a lot of people like that song and 'Through Fire and Flame'. I would like to do a video for each song but it all comes down to money and time," concludes Jeff, bringing an end to our conversation.

'Lost Within' is out on all the streaming platforms of course and also CD. Ensure that you check the band out.

Web and Social Media Links:

Links:

- <https://www.visionsofmorpheus.com>
- <https://www.facebook.com/visionsofmorpheus>
- <https://www.instagram.com/visionsofmorpheus/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/@visionsofmorpheus>
- <https://music.apple.com/us/artists/visionsof-morpheus/172679117>
- <https://open.spotify.com/artist/visionsofmorpheus?si=x38sr7jKEXXUWz0nQgR0rGcHAT5Ga>

Links:

- <https://visionsofmorpheus.bandcamp.com/album/lost-within>

my style when I came back to writing again a few years ago. I decided I wanted to do a new album that represented my new life experiences and growth in writing. I just wanted to make the music that I represented my musical tastes and what I liked most about other bands I listen to," he tells me. Jeff loves listening to bands like Symphony X, Pagan's Mind, Kamelot and Dream Theater and of course, "the Golden Age of Heavy Metal." "I love the big anthemic choruses and imagine stadiums singing along to the song - that would be amazing. I really wanted to evoke an image in the listener's mind for each song. I'm a very visual person and so I also wanted to paint a picture or find images that I was writing; you have to immerse yourself in things that are epic and inspiring," he expresses.



"Overall a theme started to develop for the album where each song represented a dream, vision or nightmare. I started looking at songs differently after I came up with the big picture. I have the most experience in the band when it comes to writing but on the next record there will be some more back and forth. A month ago we had a practice where we just jammed, which is something we had never done before so we might do a bit more of that and see what comes out of it." Outside of music Jeff enjoys modern board games (like Arkham Horror,

big epic games that take hours or days to play). "I also do horse riding and I've recently begun full-contact jousting training. I have done some medieval armoured and unarmoured combat training based on some of the old European manuscripts so it's very authentic learning how they did things over five hundred years ago. It's such a blast but I wish I had more time for it!"

After relocating to Canada during his teenage high school years, when he was 15, he met his friend, Gunner Sam Augustin began experimenting with the guitar and drums, drawing inspiration from legendary bands such as Deep Purple, Yes, Rush, ELP, Judas Priest, Iron Maiden, and Metallica. A few years later he began developing his own sound, moving up the bass and soon started a Rush tribute band.

Gunner is a big Rush fan. "I grew up listening to them and formed a tribute band back in the day. I love the technicality in the music and with this album I tried to come up with some parts that were a little more counterbalance to what the other guys were doing."

Gunner is a real foodie and he loves cooking whether it's sous-vide, using his smoker or air fryer. "I also love golfing, playing table tennis and rollerblading. I go golfing often with Tyler."

When it comes to food together and since we can all like to cook, it can be a big food fest. It's always about the food first," he chuckles. It all started for drummer Tyler Brittain when his dad would play classic rock pretty much all day, every day on the radio. "It always sounded like a party and I loved the feeling the songs would give me. So I started listening to a bit of everything and what I enjoyed most was the



"Watching them play and sing inspired me to pick up the guitar later in life. I think it planted the seed early on and sort of rattled around in my head and eventually the time was right to start my musical journey," he enthuses. Unfortunately, his timing in joining the band didn't give him the chance to play on

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