

Interview with Full of Hell for Kvlt Magazine

- Some time ago collaboration albums in the world of metal were a true rarity, but now we can probably say that we live in the golden age of collaborative albums. Your LPs with The Body and Merzbow, Cult of Luna and Julie Christmas or even Jesu and Sun Kil Moon. Earlier musicians were creating supergroups etc. and now just meet for one album and that's all. What do you find appealing in the idea of collaboration albums?

I feel like the idea of collaborating is more appealing than say starting a new band or supergroup is because you can take elements from each band and create something new, while still up-holding ideas and sounds from each band. I feel like a super group is a completely new band with new ideas. I also feel as a listener it's exciting because your favorite band is creating something new and unique, but it's still your favorite band playing.

- How did you write music with The Body? Sometimes it sound like a free, sick improvisation and in other times it sound organised.

All the playing was basically free with a lot of studio magic. We didn't go into the studio with full fledged ideas just bits and pieces we wanted to have throughout the album. We knew we wanted a noise track, we knew we wanted a Godflesh/Swans influenced part, we knew we wanted tribal beats mixed with blast beats, but none of that was written until we got into the studio and organically created each idea while throwing our own touches on top of it.

- Your new album with The Body is completely different from your work with Merzbow in a way that you can almost distinct which band is playing which notes and no one is dominating the overall sound. Was that caused by the fact that with The Body you were writing and recording material together in studio, and while working with Masami you received material from him and were given a free hand to use it any way you like? Or was it caused be something completely different?

I like the fact we did two completely unique collaborations with two totally separate experiences. The Merzbow collab we were given no rules and just free range of his material to do what we wanted with it, where with the Body material, you have a room full of 6-7 people each building off of each other.

- Was working with The Body more challenging than working with Merzbow? Did you face different problems?

I feel like the Merzbow album was more difficult in the fact that we were given so much space to do what we wanted. The Body album was more of a fun experience of friends hanging out creating with each other. Also with the Merzbow album you are working with such a legend, I feel as though that work will be judged more harshly than as with the Body, whom are our peers.

- Whole "One Day You Will Ache Like I Ache" was seriously written and recorded in 5 days? Would you change anything in those songs now after couple months after the release and knowing that you will play it live?

Yes, everything was written and recorded within 5 days. There were a lot more days tweeking in the studio, but yes, 5 days composing. There is nothing I would change knowing we have to play it live, it's just the fact we have to relearn everything again.

- In August and September you are going to play few shows with The Body as a one band – how are you going to do this? Just get on stage and play material from your collaborative album or will you improvise like on the live shows with Merzbow?

There will be a mix of everything. We will play songs from the album, there will be improve parts, there will be covers of each other's songs and hopefully covers unique to the tour.

- Who came up with the idea of covering the song of Leonard Cohen with The Body? It is quite a surprising choice. Can we expect any more covers on your tour with The Body?

Our singer Dylan always wanted to cover that song, so the collab was a perfect time to do it because it was such an open field to do it in. We are hoping on covering some songs on tour, but only if we can learn them in time.

- Are you going to record or live stream any show with The Body?

I'm sure there will be recordings on youtube at some point.

- Cover art of "One Day You Will Ache Like I Ache" is absolutely phenomenal. Can you tell me something more about the process of creating it and a meaning behind it? From what I heard it is based on the story of Tower of Babel.

The cover was done by Bo Orr formally of the band Dead in the Dirt, currently in Arbor Labor Union. We wanted something in the style of Nick Blinko that represents how much the human spirit can be tarnished or damaged before it finally gives up. The cover is of a human trying to cope with the physically reality the his spirit is collapsing. I forget how the Tower of Babel ties in, but I think it's a book that Dylan liked as a child, that has ideas that tie in with the lyrics.

- Initially you released split albums with The Guilt Of... and Psywarfare, who also create quite terrifying music. Then there was the collaboration with Merzbow. Did the idea of making collaboration album grew in you guys for a longer time?

Doing collabs was never really something that we set out to do. The Merzbow one just happened by almost freak chance and we were totally honored to ever be asked to work with him. We will still do collabs because it's a fun, unique experience for us and it pushes us further to be creative.

- I remember that a few years ago I came upon a comment on Youtube under the "From Mars to Sirius" from Gojira, where one of the users wrote that this album is special to him, because it is the first album for a really, really long time that actually scared him. What I want to say is there aren't many bands in metal who can terrify you. Full of Hell and The Body because of its murk, filth and noise that can not only make listener uncomfortable but even scare him are definitely one of them. Just like Stalaghh, who recorded patients from mental asylum and used them on vocal tracks. Why did you decide to head with your music in that direction? To trigger such emotions in the listener?

We love bands that can convey and emotion in people. Some of our earliest influences when starting this band were Grief and Dystopia. I don't think there any other bands that can portray such honest misery as those two bands. We listened to those bands and wanted to create something that made people feel something as they listened to our music. We didn't go out of our way to make something "scary" or depressing, we just wanted the listener to feel something as they listened.

- My next questions comes from our Kvlt expert in grindcore – What does "grindcore" mean to you and does it come along with any philosophy?

Grindcore to me is just the most extreme,fast,noisy, destructive music without becoming strictly harsh noise. Personally to me it does not come with a philosophy and I feel as with a lot newer bands there isn't as much ideology as some of the older bands. That's not saying there aren't modern day grind bands that aren't political or have a social stance, but I feel like a lot of bands sole purpose now is just to be as extreme as possible. I don't claim FOH as a grind band either, I feel as though we are more of a experimental bands with a lot of death metal and grindcore influence along with many other influences we encompass. When I write music I don't necessarily have a philosophy behind it every time either, I use it as an outlet to express how I'm feeling.

- Many listeners would probably point your albums as one of the most extreme. What albums in your opinion are the most extreme or radical in sound?

New bands like Pissgrave and Trtrkmmr are currently writing some of the most disgusting extreme music available. Older groups like Brainbombs and Whitehouse are making not only extreme music in sound but also extreme music in lyrical standpoints. Just talking about absolutely disgusting subject matter. Early Swans material is also some of the most extreme music put to tape. Also of course all of the early Grindcore, Noisecore, and noisegrind releases.

- The thing that I appreciate about your music is that it doesn't sound like you want to be extreme at any cost. Heaviness and brutality in your sounds seem to be more of a complex form of expression and despite the fact that with every new album we could observe you pushing the boundaries of brutality and the name "Full of Hell" itself seem to be more and more adequate, for me another thing is more important. With every album your music is more coherent in narrative. Is it something that you focused on and tried to improve?

I think that is one thing we do try to focus on is being more coherent. I personally don't set out trying to top ourselves in heaviness or being extreme. I think it's something that just happens because of how disgusted we are with what's going on in the world or even in our personal lives or what we see going on in our social groups. Going back to the coherent part I think it's just improving because we are getting older and we are trying to be better musicians.

- Question for Dylan Walker – in one of the interviews you said that from the beginning you had a clear vision on what Full of Hell should sound like and you have parted your ways with most of the previous members. Can you tell me something more about the process of shaping the idea of Full of Hell? Did it change from back then?

- Noise is extremely heavy and also not very accessible music. What do you find appealing in that genre? Even so much that you incorporate elements of noise in your music.

It's appealing to me because it's so open ended and there's so much room for experimentation. We incorporate it into our music because it makes everything so much more dense and fills the gaps of sound.

- For a person who enjoys listening to noise an opportunity to play with Merzbow must have been a dream coming true. Do you remember your first reaction when you got positive response from Masami?

The fact he even wanted to do a project was a dream come true, but to also have his approval about what we had written was totally on another level of honor.

- Question for Dylan Walker- In one of the interviews for The Quietus you said that the track "Throbbing Lung Fibre" is not a metaphor in any way and just a description of a family burned alive. "No message, just meaningless pain". Did you change your approach towards lyrics from that time?

- What are your plans for the future? New album? Another F.O.H. Noise this time Vol. 5?

We are currently sitting on a few songs for an upcoming split. There is also another collaboration in the talks, as well as a new solo LP being written and VOL 5 will coincide with it's release.

- You already made two collaborative records. Do you have any ideas for a new one or maybe musicians/bands that you'd love to work with? For me Prurient or JK Flesh would be an interesting choice.

I would love to eventually work with Bastard Noise on something and working with either Prurient or Justin Broadick would be a dream come true.

- I've heard that Dylan and Spencer are straight edge. Why did you decide to commit yourself to that lifestyle?

For me, Spencer, it's just a personal choice. I used to drink, but not just being around drugs or drunk people just makes me uncomfortable. People can do what they want and I can do what I want, it's just everyone's personal preference.

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I think it's been distilled over the years and become much more focused. The vision is still the same though. Spencer and I had a kind of unifying idea of what we hoped our band could sonically become, and over time that idea remained, even though we have refined it a little bit. Our tool set is also more advanced now. At the time, Dave was 15 years old. He's been touring and playing drums now for many more years and he's become a machine. All of us are benefiting from the experience of touring together for years (Spencer, Dave and I) so we have that advantage. So, I do think our vision remains.

- Question for Dylan Walker In one of the interviews for The Quietus you said that the track "Throbbing Lung Fibre" is not a metaphor in any way and just a description of a family burned alive. "No message, just meaningless pain". Did you change your approach towards lyrics from that time?

I prefer metaphor over any other vehicle to get an idea across. This song was simpler because I wanted the message of the record to be simpler. There isn't a method to human suffering on a whole and I was hoping to convey that in a song.