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- [links](#)
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 edition [184](#) | [all issues](#)

"WITH 'THRASH ANTHEMS II' THEY GIVE THE SCENE ANOTHER
MONUMENT OF BRUTAL RIPS AND IMMORTAL SONGS...
PURE THRASH METAL!"





Beyond Forgiveness

During my everlasting search for new female fronted metal talent, a while ago I was pleasantly surprised by the American band Beyond Forgiveness, who had released a great debut by means of the EP 'The Ferryman's Shore'. The fact is that these kind of talented bands deserve an introduction to a wider audience and that's the reason why female singer Talia Hoit was contacted who during a Skype call informed me about her singing career so far and the past, present and future of Beyond Forgiveness.

By: [Sjak](#) | Archive under [prog / sympho metal](#)

Hi Talia, when did you start singing and when did you discover that you had a certain talent for it?

I always loved singing, even from when I was little. At a young age I played the piano, so everybody wanted me to play the piano instead of singing so it wasn't until a few years ago that I decided I liked to sing enough to really go for it. I would say that I never thought I had a great talent for it, but I just loved to do it and it has only been in a band situation that I discovered that people in fact like to hear me. I'm really enjoying playing with the band now and getting my songs out there.

How did you end up in the metal genre and what are some of the bands and/or singers that influenced you in the beginning of your career?

I wasn't really involved with metal until I started playing keyboards for a band before Beyond Forgiveness. They were really into that music and as a band we were moving into a heavier sound so I naturally started to listen more to bands in the metal genre. I discovered that I liked the style but it was really Richard (Marcus, guitar player in Beyond Forgiveness) who got me interested in bands like Tristania, Within Temptation and a lot of the other female fronted bands.

Beyond Forgiveness was already formed in 2008, although you yourself weren't part of the band back then. Still, can you tell us how the band was formed back then and what the intention was in the early days?

I was friends with them at the time that they formed the band and I was really good friends with their female singer Lynn Brown. They were going into the direction of the symphonic female fronted sound, but their former singer was more jazz and blues influenced and when she moved away the band broke up. When they reformed a little while later they were really looking to get more into the style similar of Epica or Xandria with the operatic singing and such. When the keyboard player left, we started to think more about how we should compose the orchestra part, which I think is the basis of symphonic metal.

After a short hiatus when Lynn left the band Greg and Rich decided to revive the band and drummer Michael Bulach was re-recruited. Why did they decide to revive the band in the first place, why did Michael decide to rejoin and how did you get involved?

Richard and Greg just really wanted to try to get things going again and so they had found a keyboard player, but they still had another drummer and singer that they tried writing songs with. They worked with them for a few months and it just didn't work out. They started to look for another singer and I answered an advertisement they placed on the internet, not knowing it was for this band that I've been friends with for a long time already. I had been looking for some opportunities to sing and it was kind of funny that I answered the ad for this particular band. When I joined we realized that we needed another drummer and so we asked Michael to come back which he agreed to. The band really started to take shape again the week after I joined when Michael came back, so we were able to start writing new songs and really start making progress again as a band.

Drummer Michael Bulach is no longer in the band and was replaced by Sean Rogers. What made Michael leave the band and how did you get Sean in?

It was really just the schedule. Michael had his job taking a lot of his time and he didn't have a lot of free time to practice or to do shows, so we were quite limited because of that. We had a difficult conversation with him about it, but he agreed that he wasn't able to do what we as a band wanted to do and felt quite bad about it. So we all agreed that it would be better if he would leave and we would get a new drummer. We found Sean right away and he has really brought a different sound to the band. In the end all worked out for the best.

Beyond Forgiveness is now a steady four-piece band. What's the special chemistry that makes these four members the ultimate line-up?

That's hard to say, but we all have the same goals and we enjoy the same types of music. Next to that we're also good friends, our personalities fit well together so we don't have a lot of drama in the band.

There is no bass player in Beyond Forgiveness right now. Are you still looking for a fifth band member or are you planning on doing the live-shows with a hired

bass player?

Well, actually we don't use a bass player at all for live shows. I think we would be open for having a bass player, but we haven't found one yet that really fits well. We've auditioned several and we had a bass player for a few months, but the chemistry just wasn't there with him. When we try to include another person, it creates somewhat of an imbalance in the band in the chemistry, so we're really very careful in picking additional band members. In the studio Greg actually records all the bass parts and we will use tapes for now in a live situation.

You started the writing process for the first EP somewhere in 2014, so you probably didn't reuse any of the already existing material. What's going to happen with that, will it ever see the light of day?

We did reuse some of the old material, but we re-wrote it. 'Your Haunting Eyes' was the first song that we wrote when I joined and it was a remake of one of their old songs. We changed it completely so it's a whole different song, but it was based on an existing tune. So there are a few songs that are a bit of a revamp of some of their older stuff, but because they didn't have a lot to begin with the majority of our songs are brand new.

How is the song writing process look like? Who's responsible for the music and the lyrics?

Anyone within the band that has an idea for a new song more or less starts of the process and we continue from there. I think that the ones that have really taken of and have turned into complete songs have started with us sitting around in a room working on those individual ideas and collectively turning it into complete songs. That has worked the best for us for the songs that will be on the upcoming album. The music always comes first, which takes several iterations of refining to get to the final product. When that's established, both Rich and I start writing lyrics to the music. We have concluded that the best lyrics are produced when we each write our own part. On the EP I wrote the lyrics for three of the songs, while Rich wrote the lyrics for 'Young Haunting Eyes'. For the new songs I write all the lyrics that I sing and Rich writes all the lyrics that he sings, because that really has worked out the best.

What are you trying to express in the lyrics? What are typical subjects that you write about?

I write a lot, even for things outside of the band and I write about everything that I'm feeling or experiencing or crazy ideas that I have. It can range from fun topics to really serious subjects. For example 'The Ferryman's Shore' was about this idea that the ferryman comes to get you and you don't want to die, while he's trying to get you on the boat. But 'Dust To Dust' is really deep and is about living life to the fullest, because we'll all die sooner or later so you can better make the most out of your life. The pain of death and losing someone is really tied to the joy of living. One song on the new album is for instance about the idea of alien abductions, so the lyrical content of our songs vary quite a lot.

What are typical ingredients that need to be in a truly great Beyond Forgiveness song before you decide to record it?

Obviously the symphonic sound needs to be there, as well as having a strong melody. I spend a lot of time on the parts that I sing to make certain parts memorable for the people that listen to it. Last but not last everybody in the band needs to be happy with the parts that they need to play. If somebody is not happy with certain parts, we will rewrite it until everyone enjoys it. We want the songs to have a lot of energy and we want the audience to be able to get in to it and to not get bored.

Why did you decide to release an EP first instead of going for a full-length immediately?

We just wanted to get some of our music out there. We had written quite a few songs with our former keyboard player and we started recording and when she left we were kind of in trouble because we couldn't finish our album. So we decided to take a step back and I re-wrote all of the keyboard parts into full orchestral parts and the four tracks that are on the EP were the ones that we could complete without having to totally re-write the rest of the songs. The other songs that we were working on were not going to come together in time, so we thought that it would be better to do an EP and release the songs that we had, so that we could get our music out there and play some shows already. I'm really glad that we did release the EP because that helped us to give us confidence that the direction that we were going is actually something that people like. The response to the EP has been overwhelming, we had never expected that people would enjoy it like they have.

The EP 'A Ferryman's Shore' was released as an independent release in the spring of 2016. Was it a conscious choice to self-finance it or was there no record company interested at that time?

We didn't really market it to record labels. We would be very interested in talking to record labels if they were interested, but in our neighborhood there's not a lot of label activity among the local bands and most people put out their albums as independent releases.

**You released a teaser video for the intro 'A Warrior's Blessing' to introduce the band visually to the audience. What that indeed the intention of this short movie?**

Yeah, we thought that as a new band nobody really knew who we are, so we thought it would be fun just to put out something to introduce each of us and it also got our intro song out there. As we had never done a music video before, we had a lot of fun putting this one together.

You also shot a video for the song 'Dust To Dust'. Why did you choose for this particular song?

I think that the location is what determined it. We started planning and storyboarding for all of the songs, but when we got confirmation that we could film at the bishop's castle location, we decided that the song that was best suited for that location was 'Dust To Dust'. We have also a new video planned for the song 'Sanctuary', which is our first single from the new full-length album, but as it's rather cold out here now and we didn't want to do another video in the snow, we're waiting until it heats up over here.

You chose to produce the EP yourself. Why was that? Didn't you feel the need for an independent ear as you're too close to the material yourself?

I always thought that it would be better to record with somebody who's not in the band, to have somebody engineer it that isn't biased to their own particular part but at that time we were not expecting to release this as a major release. We recorded it more for fun as we didn't have a lot of budget to spend on it. I had some experience recording things for other people as I have a small recording studio at home and Greg really wanted to learn how to record, so we wanted to do it ourselves just to save the money and have fun with it. So we did all the recording stuff ourselves but when we got to the mixing stage we realized we needed somebody else to listen to it and to

produce a good mix. So we started to look for a studio here locally and we even had one studio do the actual mix for us, but we weren't very satisfied with it. I don't know exactly how we got in touch with Jarek Musil, who's in the Czech Republic, but we did send him our tracks to test what he could do with it. We were so amazed with what he did send back, that we let him do our whole EP and he will also be doing our full-length album.

Greg was responsible for the beautiful artwork of the EP. What is his background as an artist?

It's a big hobby of him, he is not a professional graphic designer, but he certainly could be. He just enjoys doing it and one of the things he really wanted to do in this band was to be able to use his skills to do the artwork. We're very happy to let him do it as all of these things cost a lot of money when you contract them out. The more that we can do ourselves, the better it is. And he did a terrific job with the cover for our EP.

You're in the preparation process of recording and releasing your first full-length album 'The Great Wall', which is planned for a spring 2017 release. What can we expect from that style-wise as it's going to feature only brand new material?

We were writing the new material through the summer and the fall of 2016 and we started the recording process around October I think. We're hoping to have it out this spring and we're working really hard to finishing that up. The material is going to be a bit heavier than what's featured on the EP and with Sean's drumming it's a little less technical and more heavy hitting type of stuff. The symphonic parts are a little different and they fits a little better in the overall song structures. We hope that people will like it even more than the EP.

How many songs will the new album contain?

Right now we have it at ten tracks, of which one is an instrumental and more of an interlude, so I would say nine songs total.

The album will be name 'The Great Wall'. Is there a specific meaning behind the album title?

It's named after one of the songs that we wrote and it's our favorite one of the new album at this moment.

As a first single 'Sanctuary' was brought to market. Why this particular song?

'Sanctuary' was a really interesting song. It came about one day when we were in the rehearsal room just sitting around and Richard came up with the idea to write a songs about a sanctuary, a refuge from whatever is going on in the world. I wrote the lyrics in one sitting that night, but there was no music for it yet. So I played a bit on the piano at home and when we came back in the rehearsal room I let the guys hear what I had been working on and they immediately loved it. We worked on that musical idea pretty intensely to fill out all the instrumental parts and to really shape that song. It's a powerful idea and a memorable song and everybody wanted to get that one out faster than everything else, so that's why it became the first single.

What is the game plan that you have with this new album? What is the ambition level that you have?

We just hope to get it out to as many people as possible. As a result we hope to tour in the US and we already have a few shows booked in Europe in March. The response to what we're doing has been more than what our initial ambitions were. We don't have goals that are huge, we really just want as many people as possible to hear our music.

The market where Beyond Forgiveness is in is nowadays flooded with new outfits trying to make a difference. Why should people go for your band instead of the numerous others that are around? What are your unique selling points?

That's a hard question to answer. I love a lot of the female fronted band and personally I would encourage people to listen to all of them. What we've heard from our fans is that the chemistry and energy level that we have on stage is different to most of the other bands. Our sound is really big and symphonic and people tend to really like the range that I sing in. I have a three octave range and try to use that complete spectrum, which makes us probably a little different. Hopefully people will listen to Beyond Forgiveness and remember it.

Will 'The Great Wall' again be an independent release or have you been able to score a record deal this time? If so, with which label?

Right now we're planning it as an independent release. As with the EP we would be very happy to talk to labels that show a certain interest, but it's quite difficult for bands where we're from to release it on a label. We're not really shopping it around, so our expectation is that we'll release it independently.

The recording of 'The Great Wall' will of course be one of the priorities of the band in 2017, but what else can we expect from Beyond Forgiveness in the coming six to twelve months?

We have our shows coming up in Europe in March and April and after then we will probably record our music video for the new album. We're also already writing songs which will not going to be featured on the upcoming record and we will continue that process in the fall to be able to hopefully record a second full-length album in 2018. Highest priority in 2017 will however be touring and setting up shows to promote 'The Great Wall'.

What's the ambition level that you and the other band member have with Beyond Forgiveness. To what level do you think that you can get the band and what are some of the dreams that you want to accomplish with Beyond Forgiveness?

It really depends on the fans. We're producing music that people love and that they hopefully want more of. I think we have the potential to grow beyond anything that any of us have ever imagined. More than having the ambition to make it big, we just want to give more to our fans as long as people love what we do.

Okay Talia, I would like to thank you for your willingness to answer my questions. Is there anything that we didn't cover that you want to express to our readers?

I think we covered quite a lot already, but I would like to express a big thanks to everybody that have heard us and that like our music. And thank you for reaching out to us and writing about us!

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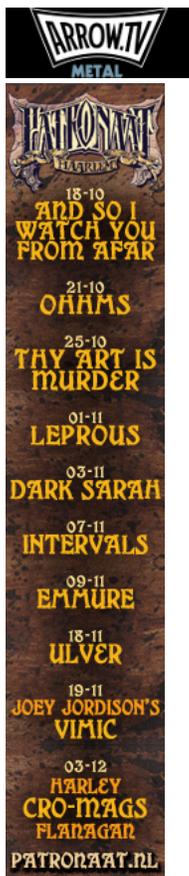
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Dust to Dust



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