

Black Phoenix Rising Metal Forum



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BPR BAND INTERVIEWS

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BPR, Band interview with BEYOND FORGIVENESS

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femmepower
Contributor

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femmepower@BPR, For the next of our BPR interviews, I had the pleasure of asking questions by email to **BEYOND FORGIVENESS** a 4 piece female fronted Gothic/symphonic metal band from **Fountain, Colorado, USA**, the band talked about their beginnings, their debut EP, their new single, their debut concerts and lots more...'

BEYOND FORGIVENESS, are

TALIA HOIT, VOCALS, COMPOSITIONS.

RICHARD MARCUS, GUITARS, BACKING VOCALS.

Could you tell us a little bit on how the band was formed, and how you all met?

GREG: - I met Rich at a show, and we started a death metal band. We played together for 6 years.

RICH: - I left that band for personal reasons and about 6 months later, Greg had called me and told me that HELLS EDEN had broken up. We always had a desire to play in a female fronted band, and I actually was in a female fronted project with singer Lynn Brown, and invited Greg to play bass. It was called 'ANIFORNUM'. After about 4 months, the second guitarist left, and Greg was offered that slot.

GREG: - At that time, we also changed the name of the band to **BEYOND FORGIVENESS**, and started recording. We had a new bass player, who didn't care for the project that very much, so the band changed style to a more Folk/Black metal sound, and Lynn played keys instead of singing, while Rich took over the lead vocals.

RICH: - Over the next few years the band changed members and had some ups and downs. The ultimate demise was when Lynn moved away, and we thought the band was done.

GREG: - But a couple of years later we really wanted to re-form it, so we recruited a keyboard player and tried out a few other people for the other parts. When Talia auditioned for vocals, she tricked us by sending us an anonymous recording. She had been the recording engineer for BEYOND FORGIVENESS'S previous recording. We loved the audition tape, and when she told us who she was.

RICH: - We jumped at the opportunity!



GREG: - We were disappointed at first because we thought she only wanted to do studio or guest musician work. But then she said "no, I want to be the front woman of this project". We stuck out our hand and said "welcome to the project".

TALIA: - We started writing and begun recording our EP when our keyboard player quit. We were stuck because we wanted the symphonic sound which is really hard to get without symphonics. The guys were worried about asking me to write the parts because I really didn't want to play and sing. I just wanted to sing. But at the time, I was exploring composing full scores in finale software, and thought it was a good chance to practice, so I spent a couple of months writing out the orchestras for our EP, and found it was really fun and we got more of the sound we were looking for.

RICH: - The EP was released in February 2016, and we filmed our first music video in March, which was released in June. Right before it was released, we parted ways amicably with our drummer, Mike, due to schedule conflicts, and then soon after, while attending a NIGHTWISH concert, ran into Sean Rogers who had previously jammed with us for a short time in our old Folk/Black metal project. Greg persuaded Sean to join BEYOND FORGIVENESS as our new drummer, and that completed our current line up.

How best would you describe your music style?

GREG: - Female fronted symphonic metal, with beauty and the beast vocals. We like to call it "BEAUTALITY".



Earlier in 2016 you released your debut EP "THE FERRYMAN'S SHORE" could you tell us about your experience and the recording of the EP?

TALIA: - Greg bought some recording software and wanted to try recording ourselves. So when we had 4 or 5 songs, we started laying out the tracks. We started with guitar scratch tracks and began recording keyboards first, because Mike wanted those first to be able to reference when recording his drums. The keyboard player quit before we could get much farther, and we had a few months delay because the re-writing of the orchestrations was going to change the songs a little. But once we got the new orchestrations in, we were able to spend the next few months of practices recording the EP.

GREG: - We tried mixing ourselves, and even posted rough mixes online, but wasn't really happy with the result. So we contacted a couple of people locally, and couldn't find the right price or the right sound for our style.

RICH: - One day, Janek Musil found us online and contacted us and offered us a deal to try out mixing one song at a reduced price. What came back was our first single "YOUR HAUNTING EYES".

TALIA: - We were completely blown away at how he pulled out the drama of our music into the mix, and decided this was the guy for our mix. We were really happy with the quality of the EP, and thrilled at how well the public received it.

How was the EP received by the media and fans?

GREG: - Really f---ing good! we were totally surprised since it was our first release.

RICH: - And completely different than we expected given what we had done in the past.

GREG: - We were really surprised and humbled at the positive reception we got.





Who designed the artwork for the cover, it seems now that you have a certain image and design that stands out and is particular to the band?

SEAN: - Greg is our graphic designer.

GREG: - I've always enjoyed doing graphic design and getting more into photography over the past few years, and getting the opportunity to combine those into putting our album cover together has just made it even better.

RICH: - One day I was online, and found a forum where someone from France had posted the most beautiful covers in metal over the last 40 years. 10 album covers into the list was our album cover for 'THE FERRYMAN'S SHORE'.

GREG: - Rich called me up and made me think something bad had happened, he told me to go check out this site, and my reaction was "HOLY SHIT! that's f---ing awesome!" So for future art, I kind of liked the Ferryman as a mascot of sorts, so I've been bringing the Ferryman into some of the newer graphics. So for example, on Sanctuary's cover, the Ferryman is sort of leading the soul to sanctuary.

TALIA: - Some of the other things, are elements like the knotted border, and our symbol, that Greg designed, and we try to incorporate that into each of our graphics too.

GREG: For each album, I want a different border, and change it up a little.

You recently released a single "SANCTUARY" which is a taster from a forthcoming album in 2017, can you give us a little insight into what to expect from your 1st full length album, and how is the recording going?

SEAN: - It's definitely a lot heavier.

RICH: - We decided to put two ballads on there, one of which is 'SANCTUARY', and I would definitely say it's a lot more driving than the EP. With the addition of Sean, the music is more driving and not as progressive as the EP.

TALIA: - We kind of figured out our sound in the EP, and then had a lot more cohesiveness to writing the new

GREG: - We really hope it's received as well as the LP, if not better. The recording is going slowly, but surely. It's getting done.

RICH: - We're about ready to begin recording vocals, and the majority of instruments are done.

TALIA: - We're really shooting for an early 2017 release.



You sound like you are going for a more darker and Gothic approach with the single, will this be the route your going with the forthcoming album and style of music?

SEAN: - That song is just a taste. A few songs are darker, but not all of them will be quite the same.

TALIA: - Also, that one is one of our ballads, and is a little more mellow. A lot of the other songs are heavier and more up-tempo.

RICH: - We're also incorporating some acoustic guitars into the newer stuff.

TALIA: - Basically, we're trying to get some interesting varieties into the sound. We really have a lot of fun playing the album songs live, and they have so much energy and emotion.

GREG: - You're not going to get bored with this album.

RICH: - We hope that each time people listen to the songs they will hear something they didn't notice before.

Where do you draw your inspirations from and ideas from when writing your songs, do you have a particular subject matter that you like covering?

RICH: - 9 out of 10 songs, unless it's an older song, Talia comes in with an idea and concept for the lyric subjects.

TALIA: - When I first joined, Rich had started re-writing lyrics to the older material, so I used those. 'YOUR HAUNTING EYES' was written by Rich. But I have my own style of writing words, and fitting them to melodies, so for the songs we are writing together, they tend to come together more quickly if I write my own words. Rich writes his own and Greg's vocal parts, so really it's a collaboration.

GREG: - If you wanted me to write my own vocal parts, we would never get a song done, lol.

TALIA: - There's not really any one subject, we write about whatever in life.

GREG: - Whatever the feeling of the song is.

RICH: - It tends to be darker subjects.

TALIA: - It ranges from alien abductions to the deep philosophical questions of life and death. We don't promote any particular religious or political views, but draw inspiration from a variety of sources.

Do you have a particular favourite song that you like the most from your current repertoire?

SEAN: - I think for the most part, we can all say that the GREAT WALL and MOMENT OF TRUTH are the most fun to play.

GREG: - And END OF TIME.

SEAN: - Oh, yeah, this is going to be hard to pick just one.

TALIA: - A couple of our fan favourites so far are YOUR HAUNTING EYES and SANCTUARY, so those are really fun to play.

GREG: - My top three, I would have to say, are THE GREAT WALL, MOMENT OF TRUTH, and END OF TIME.

RICH: - My top three are END OF TIME, THE GREAT WALL and I WILL FIGHT TO THE END (ironically, when it was an older song, it was my least favourite until we re-wrote it).

TALIA: - A lot of these titles are new songs from our upcoming album.

[youtube]/AirTbRPDMc[/youtube][youtube]/a4h15a6NzCQ[/youtube]

Regarding past history of the band members, have any of you played in other bands/projects?

GREG: - In addition to the bands that were mentioned previously. I played in another metal band called VICE MALICE for about a year.

RICH: - I started out in a band called VINDICTION, which was considered, I guess, groove/thrash. Our only full length album was called "Hang You Out To Dry", and it will have been out 20 years next year. After that I went to DUN MOLOCH, and it was death/groove. I was the vocalist and bass player in that, and then joined Greg in

SEAN: - My first band was TRIBES OF ASHER, which started off as a Celtic-like influence melodic death metal band. The project I had after that was called PLAGUES OF OPPRESSION, just straight up death metal band. Then I was with Greg and Rich's projects for a time as well.

TALIA: - I did classical music for a long time, and then got into a female fronted band called ANADIES, but was their keyboard player only and not the vocalist, although I did write a number of songs, I was with them for 5 years, and we toured regionally and released an album called "Formamentum", and an EP called "Catalyst". They went on to release another album after I left the band to pursue a solo project. In my solo project, I wrote and released two albums, "Fates too Small" in 2007, and "A Little Longer" in 2012. I still currently work on my solo music and perform with classical groups on the side.

Tell us a bit about your debut concert that you did during 2016, how did they go and what was the response and feedback you received back?

RICH: - Coming from the middle of the United States, we didn't really know what to expect - our sound is not very common here, but we had a lot of anticipation from our family and friends about our first show.

GREG: - We actually had a pretty good turn out for the show, especially for a weekday.

SEAN: - The response was really good, we got a lot of great feedback from the audience after the show, and over the next few days online.

RICH: - We heard that some people were talking about the show to their friends even a couple of weeks later.

TALIA: - The show was super fun, and the audience response was really great. I think it was a really successful show. We heard that we had a lot of energy and chemistry on stage, which is what we are going for.

Who are your favourite bands /artists that influence you the most personally?

RICH: - Definitely EPICA, XANDRIA, older TRISTANIA. I love the mix of the beauty and the beast vocal style, and also the groovy heaviness of it. Newer favourites include SINNERS MOON and ANTHOLOGY.

GREG: - For me it would be of course NIGHTWISH, EPICA, XANDRIA, BLIND GUARDIAN, ICED EARTH, AMON AMARTH. Those are the main ones that influence the way I play.

SEAN: - Overall biggest influences of bands would be AMON AMARTH, and ELUVEITIE. Stylistically speaking, it would be XANDRIA, LEAVES EYES, and EPICA. As a drummer, it's AMON AMARTH.

TALIA: - I was really influenced most by my classical music studies, with BACH, BEETHOVEN and RACHMANINOFF as my top top favourites. I listen to a wide variety of music in all genres, and would be have to say there are female singers from all genres that have impacted my singing. A few of my favourites right now are WITHIN TEMPTATION, TARJA, SARAH MCLACHLAN and CHRISTINA PERRY.



What countries would you like to tour and play in when the chances arise?

GREG: - Every single one!

SEAN: - We're really lucky to be able to play in a few of our favourite countries this spring. Switzerland and Belgium, and hopefully some other places too while we're out there in Europe. We will be playing with our friends SYNMETALLIUM as well as EVENMORE and SACHEM in Lausanne on April 1st, and with **DAWN OF DESTINY** and CATHUBODUA in Lens, Belgium on April 7th. We are trying to set up a few others as well. I'd love to go to Scandinavia at some point.

been there.

TALIA: - We've had a really good response through social media from the Philippines and I'd love to go there and meet our fans in person!

RICH: - I'd like to return to Russia, especially Saint Petersburg and Moscow. I spent some time there, and it's one of the most beautiful places ever! Oh my God, you should see the architecture there, it's f---ing amazing.

If you had the option of playing at one of the major worldwide festivals, which one would you choose and why?

SEAN , RICH, GREG: In unison **WACKEN!**

GREG: - Because it's one of the largest metal festivals in the world. It's always been one of my dreams to go to the festival, let alone play at it!

RICH: - **THE METAL FEMALE VOICES FESTIVAL**, because of all the great female fronted bands that play there. Also the **QUINPHONIC FESTIVAL** in the UK.

TALIA: - We would be absolutely thrilled to play any festival, because festival audiences are just awesome fun people, and the opportunity to hang out with the other bands would be really great! Personally , if I had to pick just one, I think it would be great to play on the cruise ship for 70,000 tons of metal!

SEAN: - 70.000 tons of metal would be a really big one for me, and the GRASSPOP Metal Meeting in Belgium. That one has a really good line up of bands from female fronted to black metal and death metal.

RICH: - We're happy to announce that we'll participating in the first annual **6 HOURS OF SYMPHONIA FESTIVAL** in Switzerland in April.

What was the very first album you bought with your own money?

SEAN: - My very first CD I ever got was KISS - "GREATEST HITS".

GREG: - I think it was a MANOWAR album.

RICH: - Maybe we change this question up and say what was the first album that turned us on to the female fronted style. Mine was TRISTANIA - "BEYOND THE VEIL".

SEAN: - Mine was ORPHANAGE - "INSIDE".

GREG: - NIGHTWISH - "OCEAN BORN".

TALIA: - My first experience with female fronted bands was EVANESCENCE - "FALLEN", then I got hooked on LACUNA COIL and WITHIN TEMPTATION, until Rich introduced me to TRISTANIA, and Greg introduced me to NIGHTWISH. I can't pick just one! Oh and LEAVES EYES too!

SEAN: - There were actually two I bought recently, one is "JUMALTEN AKIA" by MOONSORROW, and the other is "WHERE SHADOWS REIGN" by DARK FUNERAL.

GREG: - "THE HOLOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLE" by EPICA, and "ARMAGEDDON" by EQUILIBRIUM.

RICH: - DIABULUS IN MUSICA - "DIRGE FOR THE ARCHONS" and SIRENIA - "DIM DAYS OF DOLOR".





As fans what has been the best concert you have ever attended?

GREG: - For me I can say PROG POWER 3 and 4, because I got to see a lot of bands I really look up to.

SEAN: - Best bands, I think live, maybe I'm biased, have always been AMON AMARTH. BEHEMOTH is always amazing live. I think FLESHGOD APOCALYPSE is one of the best newer bands live, they are amazing live!

RICH: - Absolutely, they are bad ass live!

SEAN: - Great stage presence, everything!

RICH: - I'm definitely seeing them again when they come back. Best concert I've ever seen live - YANNI- holy F--K, the musicianship of his band and his violin, all his musicians were wicked, awesome.

TALIA: - Actually, the best show I ever saw live, my dad dragged me along to a southern gospel show (which is one of my least favourite styles), the Bill Gaither Trio - I actually was really impressed by the show itself, even though the music wasn't my favourite. It was actually one of the most entertaining best showmanship experience I've seen.

Away from music/recording etc, how do you relax and spend your time, do you have any hobbies/pastimes etc?

TALIA: - I really love the outdoors - we live in a mountain state, and so there's always so much to do with hiking and camping, and boating. I am a little bit of a foodie, too, and I love trying new restaurants.

GREG: - For me, it's working on computers, graphics, photography, learning new techniques in photoshop and for photography. Doing random crafts like trying to learn how to build things like a forge, just a lot of random shit. Also video games like Fallout 4 and Skyrim.

SEAN: - Definitely computers. I'm a huge fan of mythology and history so I spend a lot of time reading up on that, mostly Norse and Celtic history and mythology.

SEAN: - Oh yeah, hockey!

RICH: - And playing with my dogs.

TALIA: - I love animals too! I have a few dogs and a parrot.

So what is on the Horizon for the band in 2017?

TALIA: - We have so much coming up, It's crazy. We are planning to release the full length album, and then we have some exciting shows coming up in the spring including a few in Europe, so the travel will be a big highlight of our year.

RICH: - Also, we are planning another music video this spring for "SANCTUARY".

SEAN: - And we've already started on writing some songs for the next album.

RICH: - And hopefully meeting lots of new fans and friends!

GREG: - And continuing to do what we love!

RICH: - We're really looking forward to meeting the bands we'll be playing with in Europe, some of whom are mentioned above.

Finally do you have a few words for the readers and members of the BPR Forum?

This forum is awesome! Huge thanks to Graham (femmepower) for doing our interview and reviewing our music. A huge thanks to all of you reading this sentence right now. Thanks so much for supporting this style of music and for just being awesome. We have so much coming up, and are super excited to share our music with you. Please stay tuned to our social media and our websites for upcoming news. We hope you like the new album! Also, we would love to hear from you - please message us and stay in touch!

I would like to thank, on behalf of the BPR Forum, BEYOND FORGIVENESS for taking the time to answer our questions and giving us the great answers and insight into the band and their music, we wish them all the very best for the future, and I am sure this will not be the last time, that they will be featured on our forum. And we are really looking forward to the debut album in 2017.

femmepower@BlackPhoenixRising



For more info on **BEYOND FORGIVENESS** check out the following sites/links.

<https://www.facebook.com/beyondforgivenessmetal/>

<http://beyondforgiveness.net/>

[beyond-forgiveness-usa-gothic-symphonic-metal-t2307.html](#)

MUSIC REVIEWS.

[beyond-forgiveness-the-ferryman-s-shore-ep-2016-t2473.html](#)

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