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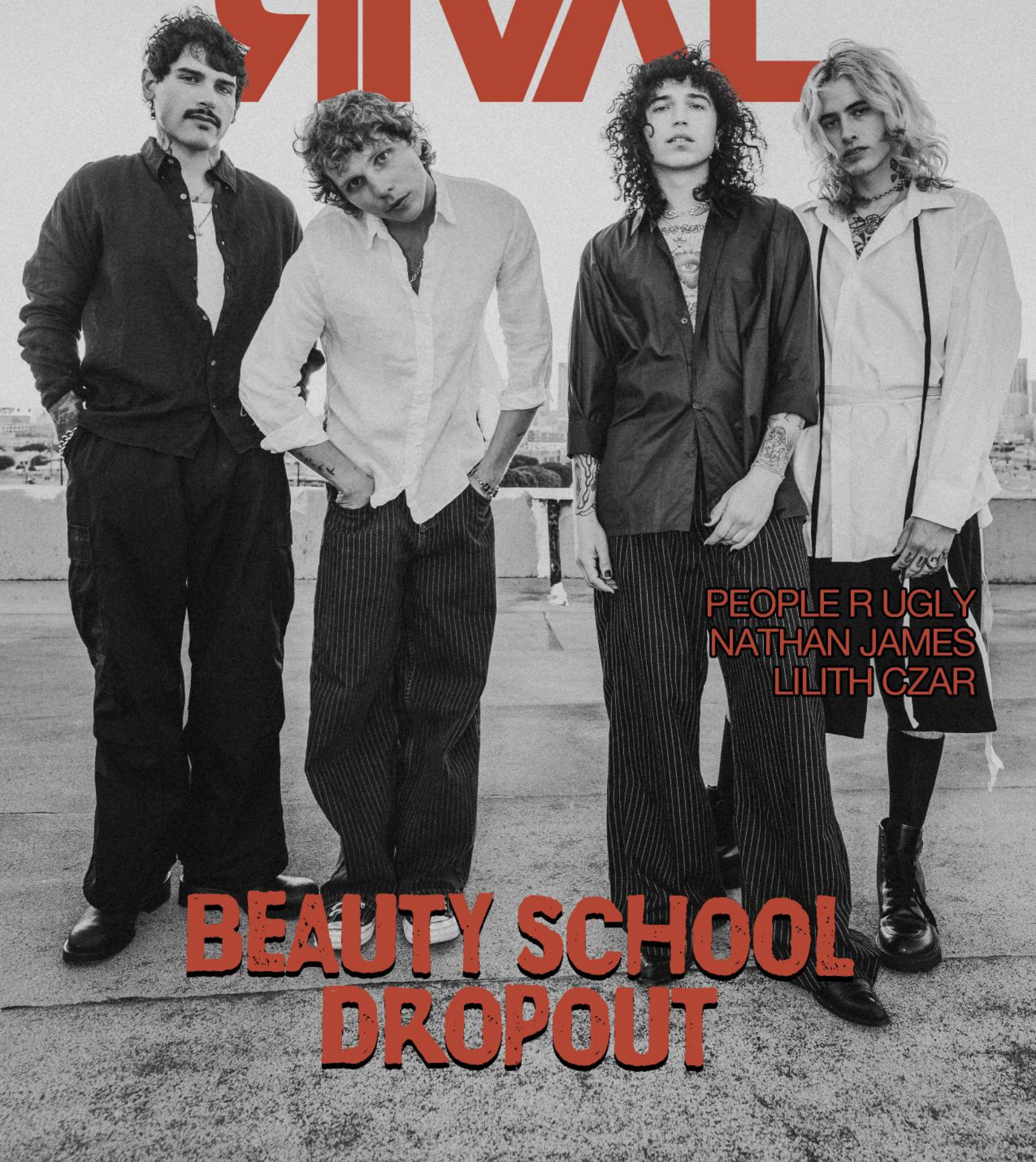
RIVAL



PEOPLE R UGLY
NATHAN JAMES
LILITH CZAR

BEAUTY SCHOOL DROPOUT

RIVAL

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Nathan James
Interview and Photos: Heather Koepp

Lilith Czar
Photographer: Josh Shultz
Interview: Heather Koepp

Beauty School Dropout
Interview and Photos: Heather Koepp
Men's Grooming: Monroe James, *Lead* - Jocelyn Sfetcu, *Assistant*

People R Ugly
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Shinedown
Review and Photos: Heather Koepp

The Offspring
Review and Photos: Wolf Requiestas

Pantera
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DE'WAYNE
Review and Photos: Heather Koepp



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Quasar
Panasonic
JVC



Nathan James doesn't hold back his opinions. He never has. In a city that often values superficiality, he has spent the last few years building a career by exposing the inauthenticity around him. His debut album, *Hollywood Mortician*, released on July 11 via CrowdKill Records, is more than just a collection of songs; it is a statement of purpose. It represents someone who has fought to carve out their existence in an industry obsessed with image and has determined that authenticity is more valuable than acceptance.

"I'm proud of it," he reflects on the record a few months later. *"The physical vinyl copies sold really well, and it feels like a true representation of me. But I learned a lot from releasing my first album. For the next one, I want it to feel like a complete painting, more cohesive rather than a collection of scattered ideas."*

That word—cohesive—captures Nathan's current mindset. For an artist known for his disruption and independence, *Hollywood Mortician* marks a pivotal moment where everything has become clearer. It's not a debut aimed at mainstream appeal; instead, it offers a powerful message of defiance, self-reliance, and introspection from someone who has faced the pressures of the industry and resolved to remain authentic.

If there's a thesis behind *Hollywood Mortician*, it's written in the bones of "Lost Angeles," one of the album's lead singles. The video is dark, cinematic, and deliberately stripped of glamour, taking aim at the hollowness beneath Hollywood's glimmering surface.

"That song is about people I know in this industry," Nathan explains. *"I've seen artists betray others, people who lack integrity. The only flexibility they have is the ability to bend to fit in and get ahead. 'Lost Angeles' serves as an indirect call-out to all of that — there are no morals, no loyalty, just a desire to do whatever it takes to achieve their goals."*

This sentiment runs throughout the entire album, offering a raw commentary on the entertainment industry's obsession with façades. *"Many of the songs come from a defensive place,"* he says. *"I'm standing up for myself and my morals. When I released 'Tickets to Your Downfall' — the MGK call-out — I knew it would damage some relationships. But I also knew it would forge new ones. That's the price of having integrity. You do what's right, even if it means sacrificing opportunities."*

For Nathan, this kind of defiance is not just rebellion for show; it's a matter of survival. His songs are not polished protest anthems; they are reflections of his lived experiences as a creator navigating an industry that rewards conformity and punishes those who refuse to comply.

When CrowdKill Records launched this year, Nathan was chosen as its flagship artist. For many, this might have signaled a shift toward the comfort of label backing. However, for Nathan, it was just another extension of his DIY philosophy.

"What's cool about CrowdKill is that it's small," he explains. *"But artists shouldn't ever think that a label deal is the magic formula. You create your own work. Signing doesn't make it easier; it makes the workload heavier. The grind shifts."*

He views his role at the label not as a figurehead, but as a tone-setter. *"I want CrowdKill to represent real artists,"* he states confidently. *"There are too many cookie-cutter musicians out there pretending to be something they're not. I want the label to be about authentic, dedicated musicians who genuinely care about what they do."*



This conviction comes from years of being underestimated. *"I'm definitely the underdog,"* he admits. *"Most artists have full teams managing everything, but I'm overseeing almost everything myself. Sure, I have people who help, but the heavy lifting? That's on me. I wish I could clone myself sometimes. It's a lot, but that's what keeps me sharp."*

He pauses for a moment and then adds, *"I've never sold out to fit in. It may take longer this way, but when you finally get there, it's real."*

Nathan is not just an artist; he is also a director, photographer, and storyteller. His creative control influences every visual associated with his name. The upcoming cover of Drowning Pool's "Bodies," a collaboration with the North Carolina metal band FILTH, provided him with an opportunity to merge all these identities into one project.

"My management also manages FILTH, so they put this collaboration together," he explains. *"All the band members were amazing. We shot the video in North Carolina; I directed it and performed in it. This was my first time directing someone else's music video, rather than my own, and it was quite an experience. There's more pressure involved because you don't want to mess up someone else's vision, but it's also a lot of fun. It pushes you to think bigger."*

Directing has become second nature to him. *"Every song I create feels like a mini movie,"* he says. *"I want the visuals to reflect that. It's not about being flashy; it's about creating something that feels right. Even the walking videos on social media, where I perform the lyrics, resonate more deeply than anything else. I believe it's because people can truly feel it. It's authentic."*

For all its chaos and confrontation, *Hollywood Mortician* isn't just about anger; it represents intention. Each track has its own unique pulse, but one stands out above the rest.

"Crown of Thorns" anchors the whole project," Nathan explains. *"That's why it's the opener. It's heavy. It hits home. It embodies everything I've experienced during my eight years living in L.A.: the highs, the struggles, the grind. That song sets the tone for the entire record."*

Some songs, like "Nails" and "100 Proof," took longer to reach their final form. *"Those two were years in the making,"* he says. *"I wrote 'Nails' almost two years ago with Orgy, but coordinating everyone's schedules was challenging. Then there's '100 Proof' — that one was finished in 2023 and almost got dropped three different times. I eventually said, 'If I don't include it on this album, it's never coming out."*

This blend of patience and precision gives *Hollywood Mortician* a lived-in feel. It doesn't chase trends; instead, it documents them from the perspective of someone who has learned to navigate the music industry without losing himself in the process.

If you've seen Nathan perform live, you know that his energy transcends the lineup. Whether sharing the

stage with bands like In This Moment, Kim Dracula, or gearing up for the upcoming America's Rejects Tour alongside Attila, Butcher Babies, and DED, his approach remains consistent.

"I don't change my set for anyone," he says. *"Those bands wouldn't bring me out if they didn't already feel a connection. I perform what feels most authentic to me, what resonates the hardest with my fans. That's my only rule."*

Still, evolution is part of his essence. Between tours, Nathan is heavily involved in new projects—including the release of "Bodies" with FILTH that dropped on October 22, a new single set for November, and in December, fans can look forward to a cover of 50 Cent's "Many Men." Additionally, he is creating with Johnny Hawkins from Nothing More and Prayers, the gothic icon behind the Cholo Goth movement. Nathan will have a few select performances in Mexico before the end of the year. This includes a show on December 3rd at the Fuckoffroom and a performance with As I Lay Dying on December 5th at the Foro Velódromo in Mexico City.
"There's a lot of exciting things in the works," he says with a smile. *"I just want to keep pushing and continue doing what feels real."*

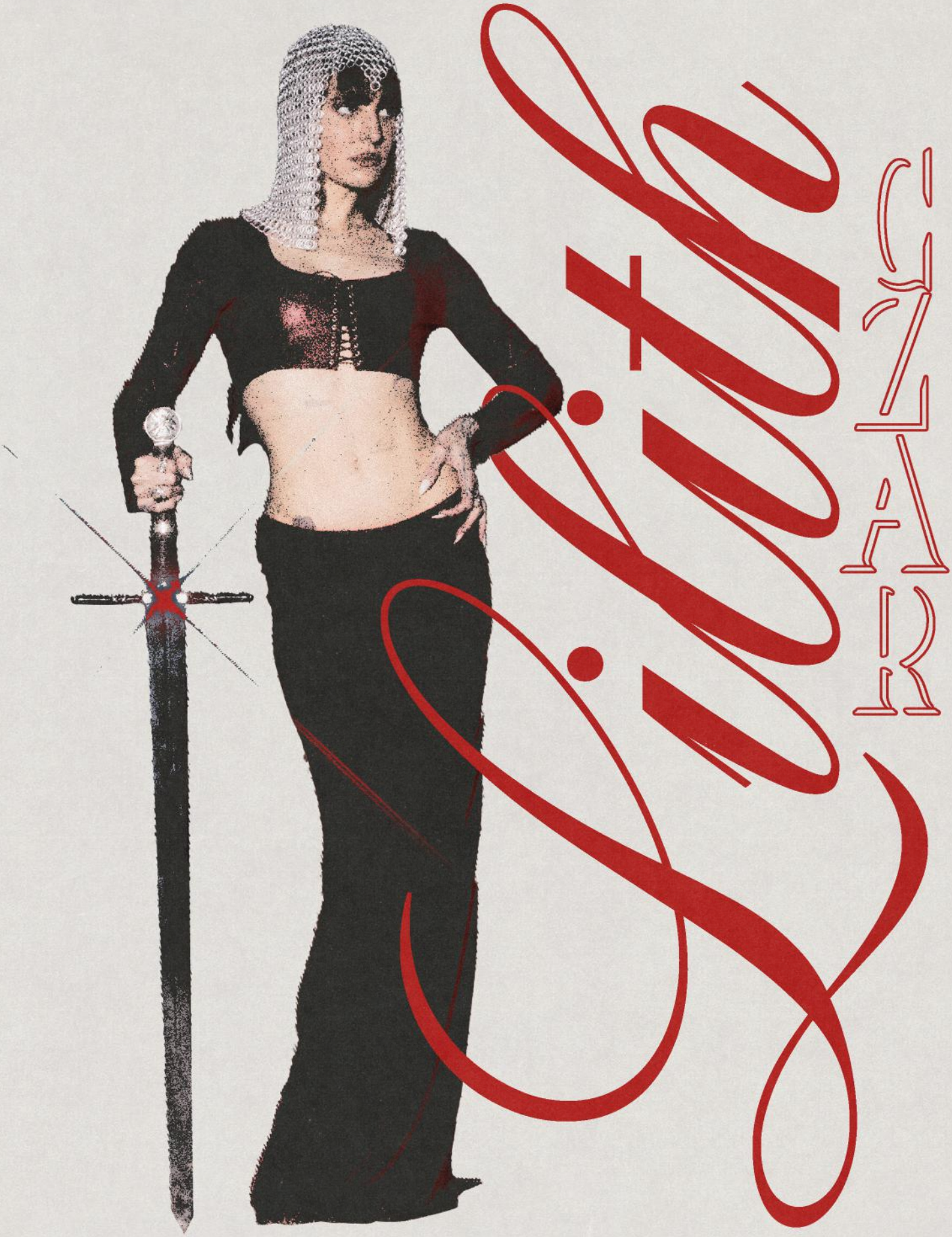
When asked what he hopes *Hollywood Mortician* will represent in years to come, Nathan doesn't hesitate. *"I hope it shows that I was someone who didn't care what others thought,"* he says. *"I stayed true to myself, took risks, trusted my instincts, and went for it. I didn't play it safe or follow the rules. I did what felt right."*

He leans back, appearing reflective. *"If there's one message I want people to take away, it's that you can succeed without compromising your values. The underdogs still matter. Those who create on their own terms and keep music alive."*

In the end, *Hollywood Mortician* isn't about death at all. It's about rebirth — the moment an artist stops chasing acceptance and begins creating for themselves. For Nathan James, that's not rebellion; it's survival.



Interview and Photos: Heather Koepp


Sidiths
CZLAAR

A VOICE SHARPENED BY FIRE

When **Lilith Czar** reemerged earlier this year with "POPSICLE," her first single as an independent artist, the move felt like a deliberate rupture. Rather than chasing the algorithm with a high-tempo anthem, she chose a mid-tempo, haunting track that cuts deep with its vocal delivery and lyrical bite. *"It's not your typical comeback banger,"* she says. *"But I wanted something that punches you right in the face from the first second. Something you can't ignore."* For Czar, this new era is about more than sound. It's about reclaiming the narrative.

"POPSICLE" sets the tone for a body of work that finally explains why she became Lilith Czar in the first place. Her 2021 album *Created From Filth and Dust* announced her as a powerful warrior figure, but left unanswered the question of how she arrived there. Now, she's pulling back the veil. *"That record was about storming in and saying, 'I'm here to fuck shit up,'"* she recalls. *"But it never really explained how I got there or why I had to take on this persona. That's what I'm writing about now."*

Portrait of a Monster Bride

Visually, "POPSICLE" finds inspiration in literature and classic horror. The music video draws from Edgar Allan Poe's The Oval Portrait and borrows imagery from Bride of Frankenstein. *"The Bride was literally built to submit, to serve man's needs,"* Czar explains. *"That story runs parallel to Lilith herself—created equal but cast out when she wouldn't conform. I've felt that way in the music industry more times than I can count. Like I was made just to please, not to create."* Layering that history with Poe's tale of obsession gave her a sharp metaphor. *"In The Oval Portrait, the painter is so focused on the details that he doesn't notice his subject is dying. That's how it feels when you're forced into someone else's vision of beauty—hair, clothes, nails—until the actual artist inside is suffocating."* Horror, she says, has always been her second love after music. *"If all I did was watch horror movies forever, I'd be happy. So pulling that into my art makes perfect sense."*

Breaking the Popsicle

Her decision to kill off Juliet Simms and embrace the Lilith Czar persona was cemented during one particularly absurd label meeting. After presenting empowering songs like "King" and "Anarchy," she was told the real career-making move would be an album cover of her in an American flag bikini, straddling a giant popsicle. *"I laughed at first. I thought it was a joke,"* she remembers. *"Then I realized he was dead serious. That was the moment I decided—this ends now. I'm going harder, darker, I'm dying my hair black, and I'm becoming Lilith Czar."*

The irony? The very song they dismissed as "boring" later hit number one on the rock recurrent charts. *"You've got to trust yourself,"* she says firmly. *"If there's one piece of advice I'd give to any woman entering this industry, it's to listen to that inner voice. Because everyone will try to tell you what's best for you."*

Woman Who Roar

That defiance has placed her shoulder to shoulder with some of rock's fiercest women. Touring with Evanescence, Halestorm, and The Pretty Reckless offered a front-row education. "*Those women are at the top of their game,*" she says with awe. *"Amy Lee singing live is like a religious experience. Lizzy Hale's stamina is unreal. And Taylor Momsen—her voice is just iconic. Watching them every night, I felt like I was back in school, notebook in hand, taking notes."*



It also deepened her sense of solidarity. *"We need more tours like that,"* she adds. *"Bring back Lilith Fair—no pun intended. Because the impact of seeing women command a stage like that? It's huge."*

Czar is candid about how far the industry has come—and how much remains the same. *"There's more control now. Artists can make more personal choices. But the tropes are still there. Women are still judged constantly,"* she says. Her goal is to leave behind more than just spectacle. *"I love owning sexuality, but when I do it, I want there to be meaning. I want there to be a message. Music should shift something in you, even make you smarter. That's the kind of art I chase."*

Creative Without Permission

Independence has given Czar a new rhythm. *"You're not on anyone else's clock anymore,"* she says. *"That's liberating. There's no invisible presence breathing down your neck."* Her creative circle now is small and sharp: her husband Andy Black, a few close friends, and longtime collaborators like Scott Stevens and Eric Ron. She recently teamed with producer KodeBlooded and songwriter Curtis Peoples on her upcoming single "Edge of Madness," a track born from navigating judgment and pressure. Its video—shot guerrilla-style over Labor Day in a cemetery, underpasses, and even an airport hangar—might be her most visceral yet. *"We rewrote the concept in 16 hours and just ran with it. Honestly, it was the most fun I've ever had on a shoot. You can feel that energy in the footage."*



Photographer: Joshua Shultz
Interview: Heather Koepp

Answering the Call

Czar frames her journey through the lens of myth. *"We all have a story arc—the rise, the fall, the call to adventure,"* she says. For her, that call is about refusing to be defined by obstacles. *"You can either wilt under it, or you can say, 'Fuck that, I'm going to make something happen.' That's the call to adventure. Be the cause, not the effect."*

Her upcoming music promises to stretch across rock, metal, pop, even rap and emo. *"I'm not playing by anyone's rules anymore,"* she insists. *"It's necessary for my sanity."*

And if her independence feels like standing on the edge of chaos, that's exactly the point. *"The next song is literally called 'Edge of Madness,'"* she says with a grin. *"You either break, or you become the monster that stands on top of it. That's where I'm at."*


"I'm not p
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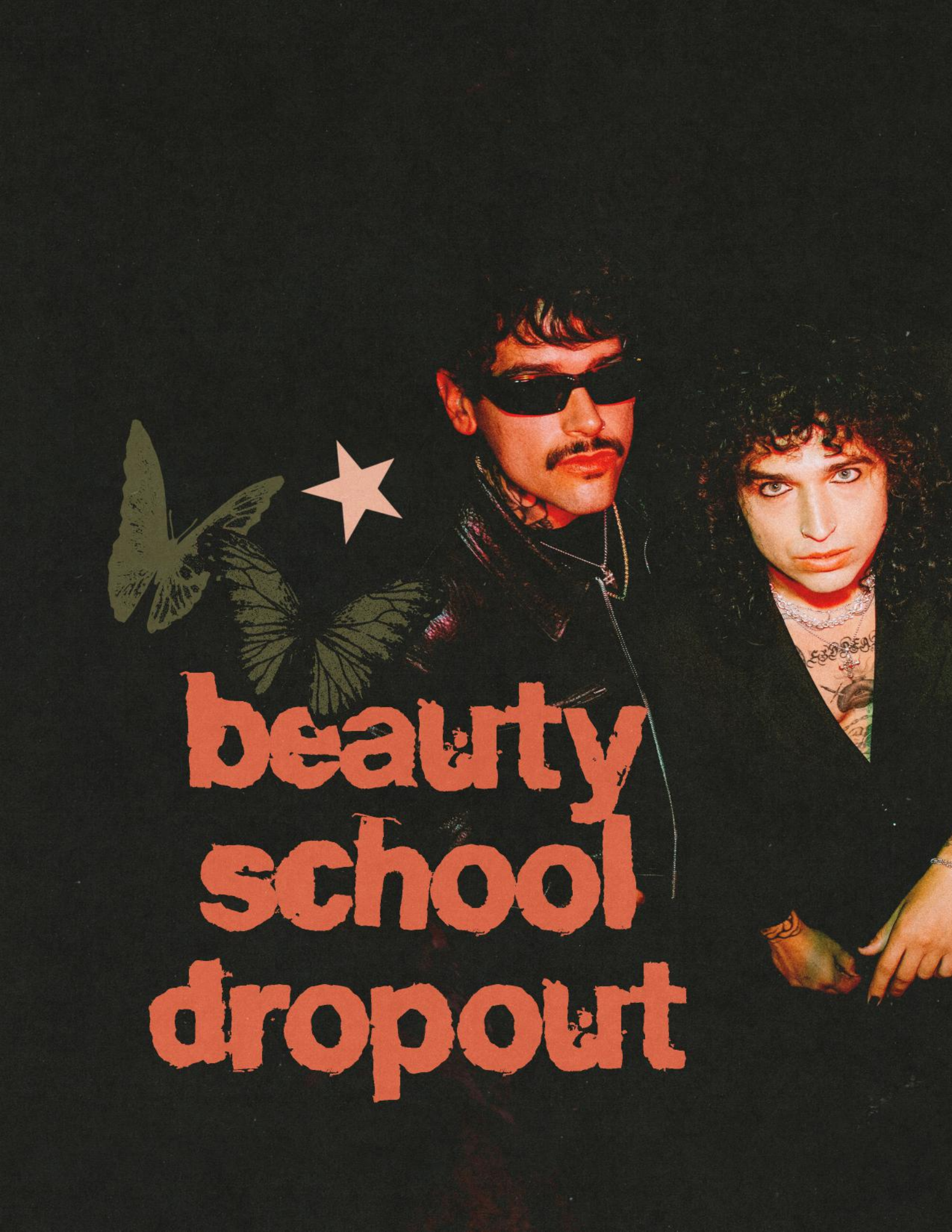
Lilith Czar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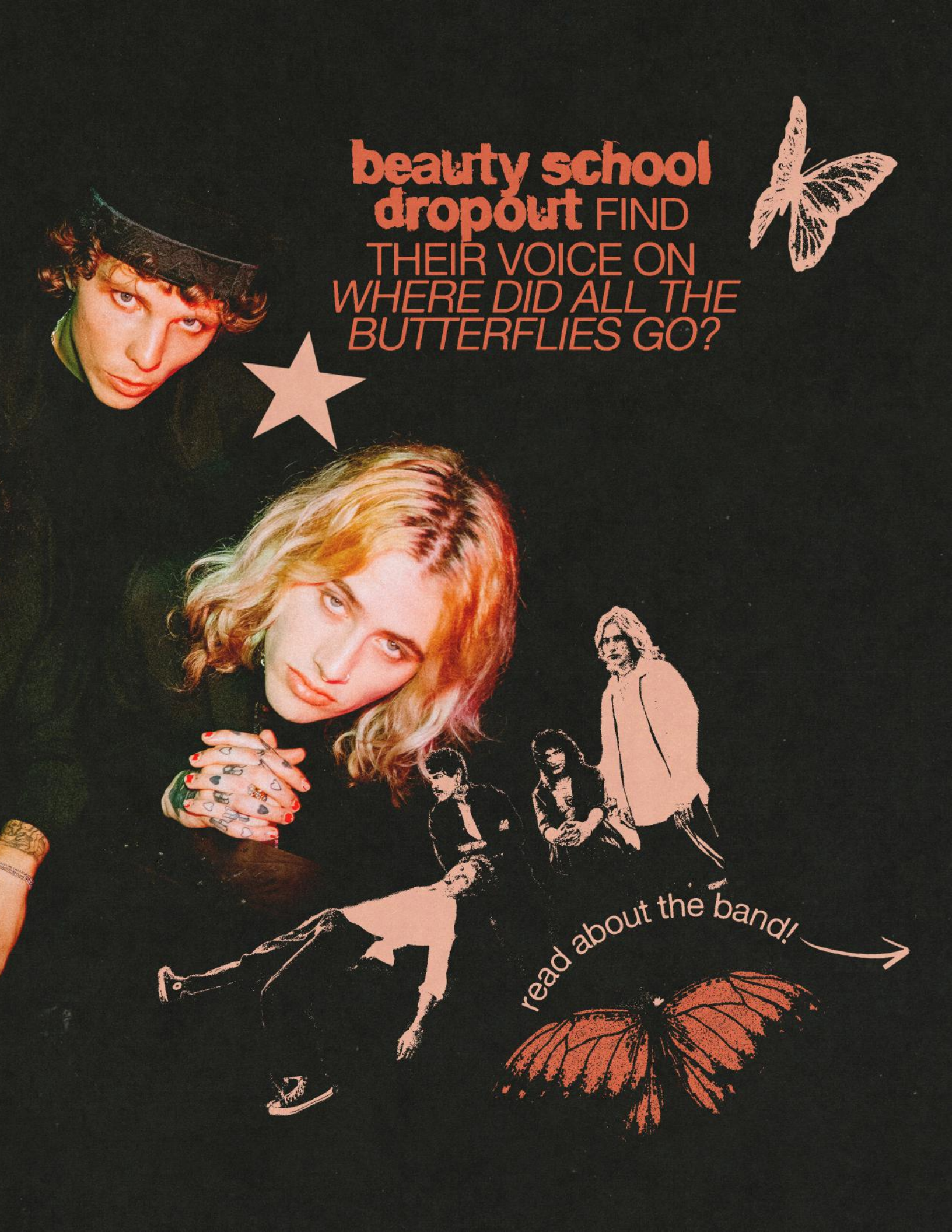

beauty school dropout FIND THEIR VOICE ON WHERE DID ALL THE BUTTERFLIES GO?
read about the band!

When a band releases their debut album, the question is always the same: is this a statement of who they are, or just the beginning of something bigger? For Los Angeles alt-rock group **Beauty School Dropout**, their album *Where Did All the Butterflies Go?* is more than an arrival. It is a significant checkpoint on a journey already marked by sold-out shows, festival appearances, and collaborations with some of the biggest names in rock.

Released September 5, the 14-track album captures both a restless search for meaning and a renewed sense of excitement. Frontman Colie Hutzler and his bandmates Brent Burnett, Bardo Novotny, and Colton Flurry infused their reflections on obsession, change, and love into a record that feels both deeply personal and built for stadiums. *"I think the headspace we're in now is quite different from where we were during the album's writing process,"* Brent admits. *"However, Colie's reflections on relationships and the obsessions that can sometimes fade into indifference really resonate throughout the record. You can hear that in every song."*

The album title itself reflects that searching spirit. *"Where did the lust and love for that go? Where did it disappear to?"* Colie asks. For him, it connects to the bigger picture of BSD's current chapter. The band teased the record with four striking singles: "Sex Appeal," "On Your Lips," "Fever," and "Two of Us." Each track carries its own unique weight, but together they create a pathway to the heart of the album. *"They're definitely puzzle pieces,"* Bardo explains. *"We've been toying with the phrase 'sister songs,' and there's one for each of the singles on the album, along with some extra surprises we're excited for people to hear."*

Those singles also delivered BSD some surreal moments of recognition. Hearing "On Your Lips" on KROQ and SiriusXM's Alt Nation was one of them. *"It's always humbling,"* says Bardo. *"We're in a constant state of chasing the next thing because that's the nature of being an artist. But it's cool to step back and realize, like, damn, this is 12-year-old me's dream."*

Every great record has a song that ties it together, and for BSD, that song is "Adeline." *"It's territory we haven't explored before, both lyrically and sonically,"* Brent explains. *"We've been calling it our 'Wonderwall' or our 'Iris' because it feels so central to everything."* Colie adds simply, *"It's so gentle. My favorite song."*



Although BSD has already toured extensively and collaborated with music legends, they view *Where Did All the Butterflies Go?* as the beginning of a new chapter. Colie describes it as the most complete statement the band has made so far. *"We finally found our sound,"* he says. *"This is the most proud we've all been of anything we've released. It feels cohesive, and it gives us the chance to share deeper cuts with our fans. We wanted someone to be able to say, 'Song 13 is my favorite,' even if it never becomes a hit."*

For Colie, that kind of connection is as important as the singles. An album filled with hidden gems proves that BSD is not just chasing commercial success; they are building a body of work that fans can grow with.

That growth has been shaped by mentorship. The band has worked with Mark Hoppus, Alex Gaskarth, Royal & the Serpent, MOD SUN, and Jason Aalon Butler. *"Every one of our collaborators has been more of an insightful guide than someone trying to impose their vision,"* Brent explains. *"They've each accomplished so much on their own, so with us it feels more like mentorship. The best part has been hearing their firsthand experiences — the war stories, the ups and downs — that show us how to create something lasting."* Even with that support, Brent admits the harshest critics are themselves. *"I think we put more pressure on ourselves than anyone else could, but that fuels the chaos."*

That chaos has carried them to some of the most iconic festivals in the world. They have hit stages at Lollapalooza, Download Festival, and most recently joined the historic 30th anniversary of Warped Tour in Long Beach. *"It felt like we were exactly where we needed to be,"* Colie reflects. *"After being involved with it for so long and seeing it from an adolescent perspective, now as adults contributing to its return thanks to Kevin Lyman, it felt comforting and natural. It's great. For a long time, it seemed like we were one of the few rock bands in LA, but now there are so many more. The rock scene has come back to life, and that's really cool. There's a sense of comfort in that."*

After Warped Tour, BSD launched into a packed tour schedule, hitting the stage with Blink-182 on the Missionary Impossible Tour, followed by a six-show headlining tour in Europe. *"Honestly, everything about Europe excites us,"* Bardo says. *"The crowds are so engaged with the kind of music we create. They really appreciate the visual experience of a rock show. Playing these songs live for the first time in London—a city so culturally significant in rock—was an honor."*







Colie shares a similar sentiment, stating that Europe has always felt more than just another tour stop. *"It's always felt like a second home to me,"* he explains. *"The crowds are incredibly passionate, and there's this sense that they want you to succeed. Playing in London for the album release just confirmed that for us."*

The band was recently on tour with letlive., a group known for its electrifying performances. For Colie, the connection is deeply personal. *"Jason has always been like our big brother,"* he shares. *"He's taken care of us for so long and has been a true advocate for authenticity. He shows us that being real and being yourself is the most powerful thing you can do as an artist."*

As they look toward the new year, BSD will be joining MGK on the spring leg of "The Lost Americana Tour."

Touring continuously comes with its challenges, and the band is open about the toll it can take on them. *"It's a lot of shifting headspaces,"* Bardo admits. *"You play for a crowd of 200 people one night, then 2,000 the next, and then 8,000 after that. Every day feels like a new mission: don't fall off the stage, fix what breaks, and survive the chaos. Something always breaks on tour. It's a constant process of trial and error."*

Life on the road may be unpredictable, but the band sees it as the ultimate test of their debut. Each show sharpens the songs in ways the studio never could, revealing which choruses resonate, which verses strike deepest, and how fans truly connect. *"Touring gives the record a second life,"* Colie explains. *"It's one thing to record these songs in a studio, but when you feel people singing them back to you, that's when you know they belong to more than just us."*

As Beauty School Dropout moves from London clubs to Blink-182's arena crowds, *Where Did All the Butterflies Go?* stands as both a milestone and a launchpad. The album proves they are not only capable of writing anthems built for big stages but also of crafting songs that feel timeless in their intimacy. For a band that has already learned from mentors, survived the chaos of constant touring, and embraced the weight of legacy, the message is simple and urgent. Or as Colie puts it: *"Enjoy every moment. Appreciate it. That's your legacy."*



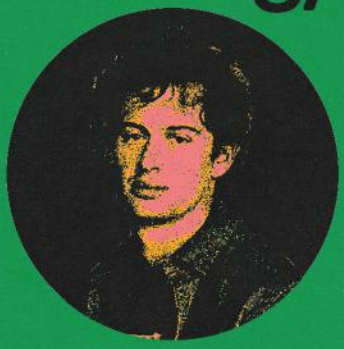
Interview and Photos: Heather Koepp
Men's Grooming: Monroe James, *Lead* - Jocelyn Sfetcu, *Assistant*




Greetings From
PEOPLE
R UGLY

FROM GARAGE JAMS TO FESTIVAL ANTHEMS










THIS IS A
PRIVATE SIGN

The garage was never a glamorous place. It was cramped, hot, and hardly the kind of environment meant to launch a career. Yet for the band **PEOPLE R UGLY**, that setting became the birthplace of their unique sound. Now, four years later, the Los Angeles four-piece—vocalist Zak Dossi, drummer Tristan Kevitch, bassist and vocalist Bill Biers, and lead guitarist Julian DelGrosso—is preparing to release their debut album, aptly titled *GARAGE*. What began as late-night experiments has evolved into festival anthems, viral breakthroughs, and some of the most unpredictable tracks to emerge from their scene.

"'WAKE UP" doesn't sound like anything we've ever made before," Zak says about their single. *"We used vocoder effects and experimented with production in a way that surprised even us. When we listened back, we thought, 'How did we even write this?'"*

This mix of disbelief and excitement has defined their journey. In just a few years, the group has transformed from a name brainstormed in five days into a band preparing to release an album that refuses to take a backseat. *"Every song was made in my garage,"* Zak explains. You can feel that in the music—just four friends figuring it out.

Their catalog reflects a restless energy. The breakout track "BETTER" features a heavy 808 beat and a sample from the hip-hop duo YoungBloodZ, giving the song a punch of Southern swagger. In contrast, "THINKIN BOUT YOU" leans into R&B influences, transforming heartbreak into something celebratory. *"The writing was almost mindless,"* Tristan recalls. *"It was about the energy and the danceable nature of it."*

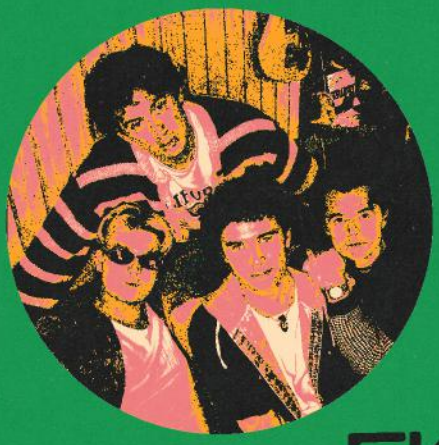
That willingness to take risks has paid off. When "THINKIN ABOUT YOU" debuted at Lollapalooza, the crowd responded immediately. *"By the second chorus, people who had never heard it before were already singing along,"* Zak says. *"That's when we realized we could step into a pop lane, and people would still ride with us."*



"EVERY SONG WAS MADE IN MY GARAGE.



YOU CAN FEEL THAT IN THE MUSIC — JUST FOUR FRIENDS FIGURING IT OUT."





The band's momentum is also the result of relentless hard work. Tristan remembers the early days: *"Before we even had a band, I was cold-calling venues to book shows. It's that go-getter attitude. Being a good musician is just one percent of this. You can't wait for someone to do it for you. You just go."*

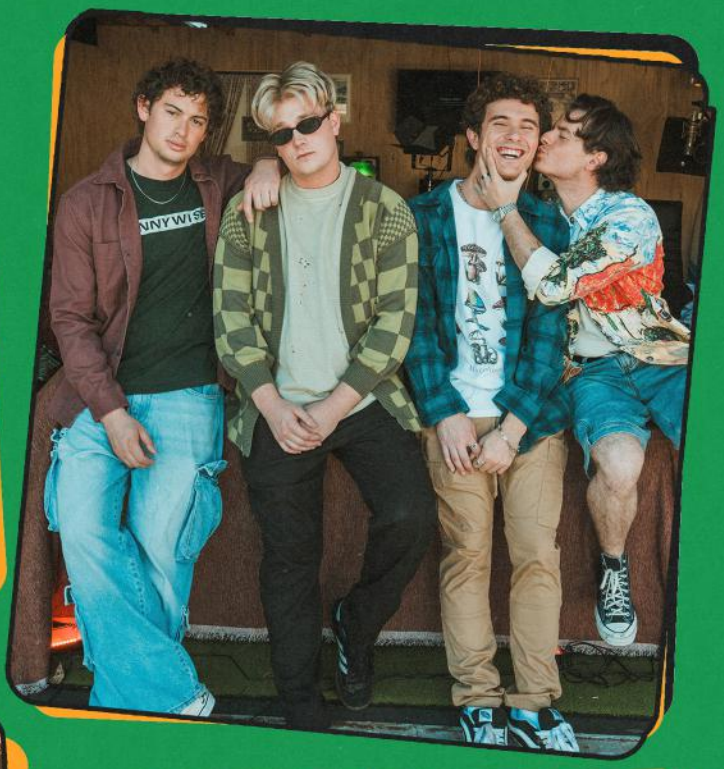
That mentality carried over to social media, where growth was initially slow. *"For two years, nothing we posted got any attention,"* Zak admits. *"Then it just clicked. Even now, if something feels like a forced promotion, we won't post it. Fans can tell when you're not being genuine."*

Instead, they embraced authenticity. "The reason 'BETTER' took off was that we demonstrated how we created it," Tristan explains. *"It didn't feel like marketing; it felt like inviting people in."* Festivals have become the band's proving ground. Tristan adds, *"Honestly, it's easier to perform in front of a few thousand people than to headline a show with just 300."*

At Lollapalooza, that energy culminated in one of their biggest highlights when Tom Higgenson of the Plain White T's joined them on stage for "Hey There Delilah."

"'Hey There Delilah' was the first song I ever learned on guitar," says Zak. *"We ended up playing it completely by chance. One of the main stage headliners had just finished, so the crowd was already flooding in. At that moment, Tom Higgenson happened to be walking by. Suddenly, he was on stage with us, singing the song. I looked over at Bill and thought, 'This is the craziest moment of my life.' Watching the crowd swell while we played that song with Tom was unforgettable."*

Even when their set extended beyond the allotted time and the sound was cut, the audience refused to let them leave. *"The crowd just went wild,"* Zak laughs. *"The sound guy finally said, 'Forget it, go for it.' They let us play an encore. That was iconic."*





This unpredictability now characterizes their live shows. *"We always play the big songs that people know, but after that, we switch things up,"* Tristan explains. *"At Warped, we played a deep cut called 'Deep End,' and people loved it. At Lollapalooza, we dropped a rap-inspired track, and it went off. It keeps us excited, and it keeps fans guessing."* Sometimes, the surprises are even bigger—like opening a set with Travis Scott's "FE!N." *"Nobody expects it,"* Zak says. *"The joke either lands or it doesn't—either way, we're having fun."*

For the fans, the connection is already strong. Half of their current setlist consists of unreleased songs, yet the audience sings along as if the tracks were already classics. *"People are singing before the songs even drop,"* Tristan says. *"That's the coolest part—when the music isn't out yet, and they're yelling the lyrics back."*

The effort behind the scenes has been relentless. *"People don't see the 15 or 20 songs we didn't use,"* Zak says. *"We've been writing, editing, mixing, shooting videos, and producing everything ourselves. It's been nonstop."* This independent spirit defines the group. As Tristan puts it, *"No one's going to do it for you. You just have to make it happen."*

Even the band's name embodies that same attitude. *"We came up with it in just five days,"* Tristan explains. *"At first, it was just meant to grab attention. Now it conveys an 'I don't care' attitude. It's memorable—you see it on a marquee and think, 'I want to see that band.'"*

For a band that once hustled its way into gigs before even forming, that drive hasn't faded. Tristan states simply, *"We want people to walk away feeling like they had the most fun possible. If we can do that, then we're doing it right."* From the garage to the main stage, People R Ugly are proving that fun might just be the loudest legacy of all.

Interview and Photos: Heather Koepp
Men's Grooming: Monroe James, *Lead* - Jocelyn Sfetcu, *Assistant*

THE OFFSPRING, JIMMY EAT WORLD, AND NEW FOUND GLORY

KIA FORUM AUGUST 29TH, 2025

SoCal punk legends **The Offspring** brought their Supercharged Worldwide Tour to the Kia Forum on August 29, delivering a night full of nostalgia and energy. **Jimmy Eat World** and pop-punk favorites **New Found Glory** joined them.

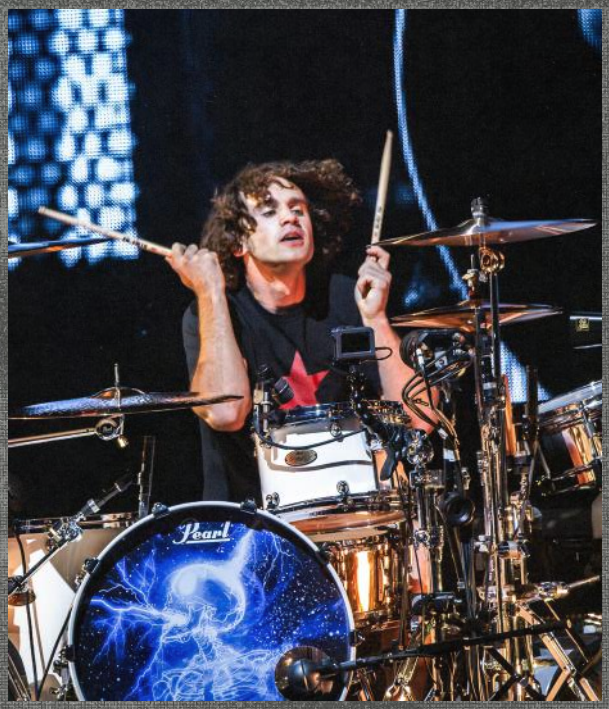
New Found Glory opened with hits like "Understatement" and "My Friends Over You," igniting the crowd's excitement. Next, Jimmy Eat World took the stage, delivering anthems like "The Middle" and "Sweetness," with the audience singing along passionately.

As The Offspring prepared to perform, a blimp and their hype gorilla mascot energized the crowd. When the lights cut out and „Thunderstruck" played, excitement peaked before the band launched into „Come Out and Play." They balanced new songs like "Make It All Right" with classics such as "Gotta Get Away" and "Why Don't You Get a Job?"

A highlight of the night was the surprise appearance of Guy Cohen, the original „Pretty Fly Guy," joining them for "Pretty Fly (for a White Guy)." The show concluded with powerhouse tracks like "The Kids Aren't Alright" and "Self Esteem," reminding everyone why The Offspring are a cornerstone of SoCal punk. It was a celebration of punk and pop-punk that resonated across generations and beyond.

Review and Photos: Wolf Requiestas

LIVE







MUSIC

LIVE

PANTERA, AMON AMARTH, AND PARROT KING

KIA FORUM AUGUST 29TH, 2025

Phil Anselmo and Rex Brown hit the road again with Swedish band **Amon Amarth** and **Australian** group **King Parrot** for a sold-out show.

A black curtain with the red Pantera logo covered the stage. Behind it, “Suicide Note Pt. I” played alongside a tribute video for Dimebag Darrell and Vinnie Paul, creating a touching moment. When the curtain dropped, “Suicide Note Pt. II” erupted, energizing the crowd.

Anselmo performed barefoot, while his powerful vocals captured attention. Rex Brown’s bass shook the walls, and Zakk Wylde from Ozzy Osbourne added intense riffs on guitar. Charlie Benante from Anthrax played drums on a kit decorated with Dime and Vinnie images. This tribute felt heartfelt.

Pantera, formed in 1981 and disbanded in 2003, was reformed in 2022 by Vinnie Paul (Anselmo‘s brother) and Phil Anselmo. Their return was significant, and Anselmo openly thanked the audience after each song, which came across as genuinely heartfelt.

The setlist included classics like “Hellbound,” “5 Minutes Alone,” “Mouth for War,” and “Cowboys From Hell.” For the encore, “A New Level” transitioned into “Walk,” featuring King Parrot and Rita Haney, making it a truly special moment. They concluded with “Fucking Hostile,” ending with a sing-along that left the crowd happy.

This tour was not just loud; it marked a moment in history, and the Kia Forum was lucky to host it.

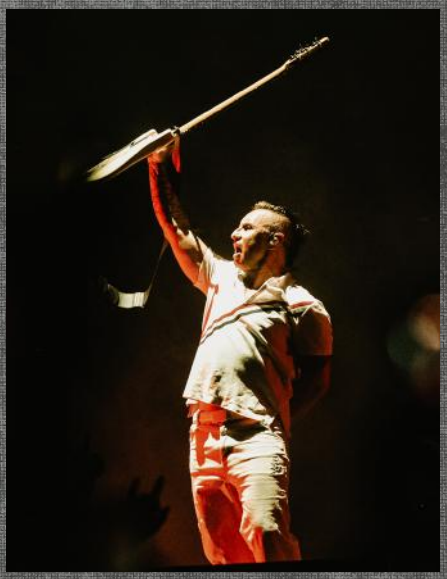
Review and Photos: Wolf Requiestas







MUSIC







SHINEDOWN

KIA FORUM AUGUST 3RD, 2025

On August 3, Shinedown performed at the Kia Forum in Los Angeles as part of their 'Dance, Kid, Dance Tour', with Bush and Morgan Wade opening the show. This concert was their first time headlining at this historic venue.

Bush energized the crowd with popular songs like "Machinehead" and "Everything Zen," as well as new tracks from their album I Beat Loneliness. Gavin Rossdale moved through the audience during "Flowers on a Grave," then returned to perform "Glycerine" and "Comedown."

Shinedown started their set with an exciting performance of "Dance, Kid, Dance." Their show featured impressive lights and fire effects that matched the music well. They engaged the audience by moving to a B-stage, making it easier for fans to feel part of the experience. Brent Smith encouraged everyone to greet one another and share in the moment.

Highlights of the night included the emotional "A Symptom of Being Human," a crowd sing-along of "Simple Man," and the closing song "Second Chance." This concert was more than just a performance; it took the audience on a thoughtful journey. The night flowed well, with each act building on the last, making it an unforgettable experience.

Review and Photos: Heather Koepp

DE'WAYNE

Houston-born and now Los Angeles-based musician **DE'WAYNE** is confidently establishing himself at the intersection of rock, funk, soul, and alternative pop. Renowned for his electrifying performances that blend emotional urgency with an undeniable physical presence, he stands out for his ability to bridge diverse musical traditions while delivering a distinctive and personal voice. In July, he released his powerful third studio album, *june*, through Fearless Records, marking a bold new era defined by sonic expansion and introspective storytelling.

This summer, the Vans Warped Tour returned to Long Beach for its thirtieth anniversary, attracting large, multigenerational crowds to the city's shoreline park. The lineup not only celebrated the festival's legacy acts but also showcased innovative artists redefining the contemporary landscape of alternative music. DE'WAYNE's presence in this lineup highlights this exciting shift, positioning him at the forefront of where the festival has been and where contemporary alternative culture is heading.

During his Long Beach performance, DE'WAYNE delivered selections from *june*, including recent singles "Sundays" and the album's title track. The material explores themes of personal reflection, love, identity, and resilience, presented through arrangements that lean into rhythm-driven rock, incorporating elements of funk and melodic pop. His live delivery emphasized clarity in message and emotional directness, supported by a band whose pacing and transitions allowed the songs to expand without losing structure. The set highlighted DE'WAYNE's role as a vocalist and front person who controls the stage through movement, vocal dynamics, and audience communication, rather than spectacle.

The performance showcased significant cultural relevance, particularly in the context of the music industry. Historically, artists of color have faced substantial underrepresentation in the lineups of major rock festivals, which has limited the genre's diversity and richness. This situation highlights the critical importance of events like the Warped Tour, which not only showcases various musical styles but also serves as an essential gathering place for alternative communities that promote inclusivity and diversity.











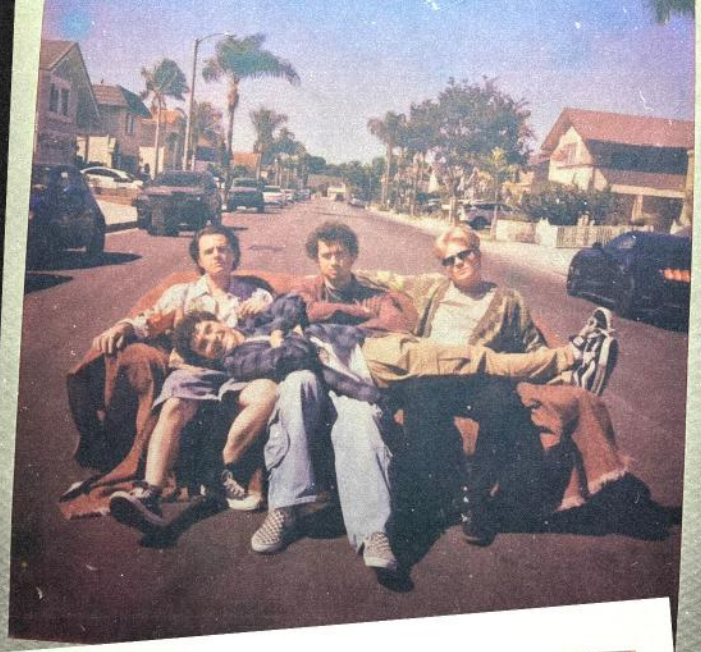
DE'WAYNE's inclusion in the 2025 Warped Tour lineup marks a positive step forward for the rock genre, reflecting an essential movement toward greater representation. The enthusiastic reception in Long Beach underscores a growing audience interest in new rock expressions that draw from diverse musical backgrounds and personal experiences. This shift suggests a promising future for rock music, one that is more vibrant, dynamic, and inclusive than in previous eras. Following the release of his album *june*, the rollout included a sold-out release show at The Viper Room in Los Angeles, followed by a busy summer touring schedule. The momentum continues with pop-up appearances throughout the rest of the year, along with more tour dates in the new year.

DE'WAYNE will perform at The Troubadour in Los Angeles on December 4 as part of the Big Damn Charity Jam, benefiting Musicians on Call and Children's Hospital Los Angeles. He also has a show with The Struts on December 10 in Seattle. Additionally, he released a new single, "Yes I Do," featuring Leon Knight, on November 3.

Looking ahead, DE'WAYNE is scheduled to perform on The Rock Boat from January 29 to February 5, traveling from Miami to St. Maarten and San Juan. He will also join Machine Gun Kelly's "Lost Americana" tour for ten dates in June 2026.

Interview and Photos: Heather Koepp

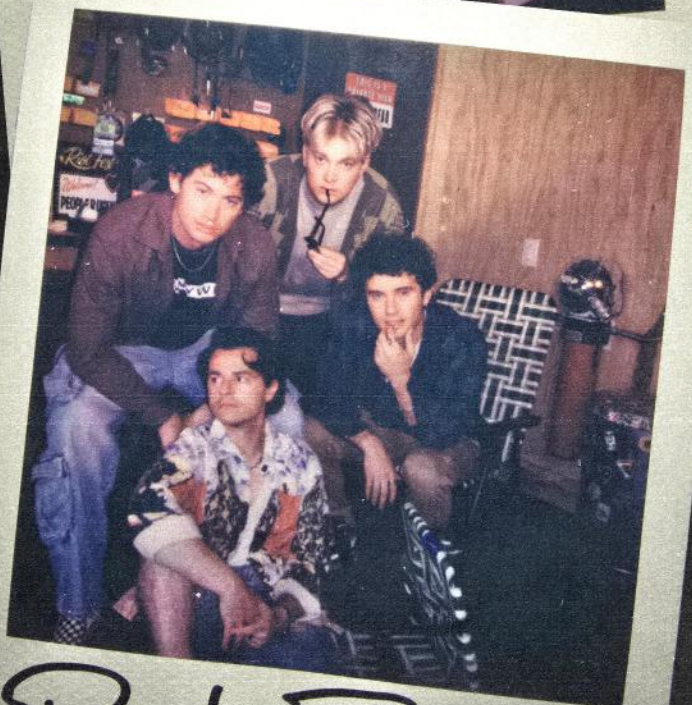












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