

ACROSS THE SHADE interview TNT Radio Rock, by Brujo

Hi guys. It's a pleasure to talk to you and present your second album "Madness" It's been almost six years since your album Hope (2019). How has this waiting time been for you and what led you to this second album?

Hi. I'm Kamil, the guitarist and vocalist of the band. It's been a long time but we had to deal with some obstacles in the way. Basically we wanted to release an album 3 years after our debut. Unfortunately there were some disagreements about our music style so we had to part ways with half of the band. In 2024 me (Kamil) and Bartek decided that now is the time to make an album and that's how Madness was created.

Madness seems to continue the musical line of Hope, but with a more aggressive and faster approach. How was the composition process and what sets this album apart from its predecessor?

We wanted to go with fast tempo tracks that contain as much epic melodic music as we can put into them. That's how for example songs like On The Horizon and Dying Inside were made. We mixed fast riffs and melodies together. Also it is worth mentioning that we had a few songs like Falling Leaf and Wilted created even before our debut album Hope was released. We think that those are a nice connection between the old and the new Across The Shade.

The production was completely carried out by Kamil Sikorski himself, guitar and vocals of the band. How was the experience of having full control of the sound, from recording to mixing and mastering?

It was tough. We recorded all guitars, vocals etc in the first half of 2024, and basically the whole second half was sacrificed for mixing. It was hell of a journey, I think I did something like 50 mixes before I was finally convinced. I had to learn many things about production but I believe it was worth it and it will provide even better results in the future.

The theme of the album revolves around madness and loss of hope. How are these emotions reflected in the lyrics and what message do you hope to convey with these songs?

Yes, our debut album was about hope. Let's say that this time all hope is gone and eventually everything turns into madness. This album is about not giving up and fighting with our monsters. Trying to keep our minds intact. In the end it is a very tough journey.

The relationship between man and nature is a recurring theme in your lyrics. How do these elements fit into Madness and how important are they to the band's identity?

I would say it is about being alone in the frozen mountains, maybe forest and trying to survive when there is no more hope left.

The artwork for Madness was designed by Nikos Stavridakis (VisionBlack), who has worked with bands like Ad Hominem and Wolfheart. How was the process of

conceptualizing the artwork and what elements did you want to capture on the cover?

We just wanted to show some coldness, and madness in one picture. Nikos did a great job converting it to this beautiful artwork. I'm sure we will continue to work with him. Cover art for Hope LP was also his job btw.

Your sound has been compared to bands like Sylosis, Children of Bodom and Dark Tranquillity. What influences have shaped the style of Across The Shade and how have you evolved musically since your EP Winter Is Coming (2017)?

To be honest I don't hear similarities to those bands but maybe there is something right about it since Children Of Bodom is my favourite band :) We always liked bands from Finland and Sweden, so let's say melodic death metal bands from those countries are our biggest influences. Worth mentioning are bands like Insomnium or In Flames. Also I don't think that changed from 2017. Maybe we just experiment more. Kingdom is for example much more rhythmic, and less melodic than other songs from Madness.

Kingdom was the first preview of the album. A song with a strong vocal force and a very oriental atmosphere. Why did you choose this song as your cover letter and what story or concept is behind it?

Bartek, guitarist (formerly bass) sent me the first half of the song and it was so catchy that we decided that this will be our first single. I've made some samples and a guitar solo and basically it was it. Lyrically this song is about dying for the kingdom and the king. A little bit different concept than the rest of the album but I think it is a perfect fit for this song.

In many songs you have incorporated female voices that create different atmospheres and environments, and above all they provide the clean voices of the album. Who is the guest and what do you think she contributed to the final sound of "Madness"?

All female vocals were recorded by my girlfriend Natalia. She has a great voice and I always wanted to hear her on my recordings. It turns out great. Will there be more clean vocals on future albums? Hard to tell right now.

Currently, the band works as a duo. How has this transition been and how does it influence your creative dynamics and live performances?

So in terms of creativity everything is now simpler, better. No unnecessary discussion about the musical direction. Of course we don't play live anymore but we will see what the future brings.

What are your plans after the release of the album? Do you plan to tour or perform live to promote it?

No live performances right now. We focus on promoting it through social media and streaming platforms.

For those who have not yet heard Across The Shade, how would you describe your sound?

Melodic death metal with beautiful melodies, solos and modern riffs

Finally, do you have any message for your fans and for those who will discover Madness for the first time?

First of all thanks to everyone that gave us a chance and listened to our music. For us - small band - every listener is important. We are glad if you like our music.