

**ACID DEATH - Alexakis Kostas (drummer) – Interview [TNT Radio](#) – José A. Marroqui**

**Hello and welcome back to TNT Radio. The last time we spoke was just after the release of “Hall Of Mirrors” in 2015. Before we get into the details of “Evolution,” where does Acid Death stand at the moment, both musically and personally?**

Hello and thanks for having us! Right now we are in the process of getting ourselves ready for upcoming live events. We do have a good album in our hands and we want to share it with our audience.

**After 36 years in the business, Acid Death has released eight albums, which might seem like a small number for such an influential band within the Greek technical and progressive death metal scene. Do you think that the lack of a consistent release schedule has limited you in any way, or has it actually reinforced the quality and unique character of each work?**

It is 36 years that includes a 10 year hiatus from around 2000 to 2011. So in reality its 26. That being said, we were never of the concept of just constantly releasing material. If you get caught in that, the quality of your material will start degrading. We like to take time to think our ideas through, write music and lyrics that we all like and trust in the process that always worked for us. We don't see it as limiting. We see it as liberating. It keeps the quality of what we want to put out there at the level that we desire.

**“Evolution” is your eighth album, a concept album about human evolution through the ages. How did the idea of tackling such an ambitious and philosophical concept come about, and from what perspective do you approach it?**

The idea came as we were discussing what we would like to talk about in our next album. We thought of doing a concept (as they say) album was not really what we were looking for so we chose the “Thematic” approach instead. You don't have songs that follow a single story; you have songs that have different stories to tell but all revolve around a very specific theme. We took different facets of the human history regarding technology, relations, religion, etc and looked how every single one of these evolved over the thousands of years of human history.

**You recorded in several different studios, including the legendary Sierra Studios, where the drums were recorded and where artists like Vangelis and Iced Earth have worked. What was the experience of recording there like, and what difference did that historic setting make?**

Well, let me tell you.. there is no thing like it. This place is the cradle of Greek music recording for decades now and it was something that we always wanted to do. The experience was otherworldly. To record in the same place were all these legends stood and wrote music that we listen to still to this day. Everyone was very professional and we got what we were looking for: an AMAZING sound that was doing justice to the amazing kit we recorded. We had to practice A LOT to be ready to go there, of course.

**The first single, “The Gateway To Knowledge,” opens the door to the concept of evolution and features some amazing guests. It’s also one of the most aggressive tracks on the album. Why did you choose that song as your introduction, and what was it like choosing Kelly R. Shaefer and James Murphy?**

Most of our fans really like the aggressive aspect of our songs. So having Kelly and James in that track kinda fit the bill of what our audience wanted to hear from us. So, you could say that it was a nice “ice-breaker”! These two guys were great work with! They are both living legends of the death metal scene and we were very pleased to hear that they liked our material and wanted to take part in it. A great honor, to be sure.

**The short instrumental pieces like “Singularity,” “Genesis,” “Humanity,” and “Babel” seem to mark key moments within the album. Do they function as passages that connect the different stages of human evolution, or do they have their own symbolic meaning within the story?**

You pretty much got it. ☺ They mark key moments within the album where something groundbreaking in humanity took place. They prologue the track that follows by giving you an idea of what happened and what it is come. And remember, it’s not a story. It is not the story of Evolution, it is the passage of humanity through the lens of Evolution.

**I like how the album opens with “Coded Dominion,” with that rhythm that sometimes sounds almost hypnotic. It’s also a track that suggests hidden control or genetic manipulation. Does it reflect on the power of technology in human evolution?**

It doesn’t really has anything to do with genetic manipulation or anything of the sort. Coded Dominion has to do with AI and how it evolved and is not a part of our life. The conversation that you hear in the beginning is real. It IS 2 AIs talking and one wants to find out if the other is a human or not. So it is really the power that technology over the years has over humanity. It is a paradox that what we have created and control ends up controlling us in a way.

**Another song I liked is “Flesh Dancing In The Fire,” which showcases the musical essence of Acid Death, with those heavy/thrash guitars, rhythm changes, and textures. Your albums have always reflected a balance between technique, aggression, and experimentation. How has your vision of “progressive” evolved over time?**

Hm, good question. The thing is that we never actually consciously talk about how much “progressive” we want to be or not. It is the way that we do things that eventually makes our music sounds as it does. We don’t strive to put difficult or very technical parts in our songs. It’s our DNA. It is how **WE** evolved. We have a certain character like most bands do and we follow that as a guiding light. Our composition as a band has not changed a lot over the years so the so the song making process has not change a whole lot. However, we all love complicated music (though not exclusively) so that is evident on our tracks. The goal is for the music to feel good to play and then feel good to listen. If the song requires a good amount of rhythm changes, so be it. On the other hand, if it needs to be straight 4/4 piece, then, so be it as well. It is were the music takes you that makes this as magical as it is. If you try to dictate and “force” a good idea into a kind of mold, then it will not be a good track.

**In the second half of the album—starting with “Shadows Of Our Despair”—there’s a shift towards the melodic and progressive, with textures and arrangements that even border on jazz, like that supposed saxophone in “(Walking) The Path To Certainty.” How did this search for new sonic colors within a technical death metal context come about?**

Again, as I said previously, you follow the music. We have used in our previous albums a lot of different instruments in order to convey a certain atmosphere or feeling. Those instruments don’t belong in death metal, let me tell you that! However, their use at a certain point in a track or the change of how a song plays or even a change in genre, will tell the story we want to tell. If you listen to our previous albums, we always had a knack of doing these sort of things and our audience is here for it.

**On a creative level, what was the biggest challenge in Evolution: developing the concept and narrative structure or balancing the progressive side with the aggression of death metal?**

I think our biggest challenge is composing the material. You can come up with a concept idea pretty easily for just about anything. How you go about it expressing that in the medium of your choosing, THAT is the big challenge. What is the story you want to tell? How will you say it? Will it be through music alone or you need lyrics? Does it need a video maybe? Will the aggression of your music will match the lyrics or the other way around? It is a balancing act among everything. Which is why, to go back to your 2<sup>nd</sup> question, it takes a while to get it just right where we want to.

**How would you describe the sound of Evolution to someone familiar with your past work but who hasn't yet heard this new album?**

I would describe it as a next step towards our own musical evolution. It is the band that you always knew, but they took a step further.

**John Nakos's artwork is excellent, with its blend of science fiction, mythology, and biology. What were you trying to visually reflect with this cover? To what extent does the artwork also define the album's message?**

It reflects the album's message at a large degree. We have been working with John for a lot of years now and we love his work. We had a lot of discussion, backs and forths, etc until we got the theme just right. Everything revolves around humanity that is ever blindly fights and steps forward into the unknown. By doing such, it evolves. Take a look of the cover now that you know this. You will see it.

**"Evolution" seems like a reflection on the human condition. Is it also a metaphor for your own evolution as a band?**

Well yeah, obviously. We wouldn't be self-respecting band if we didn't strive to be even a little better every time we put out music! The theme revolves around us humans. We have established that through your previous questions. But, yea, we want to move forward and take the next step. We want to tell the next stories or story or talk about things but in a new way. Finding that “new way”, inevitably, evolves you and that is a good thing. Evolving makes you feel and see things under a new light. The evolving experience makes you a different human from what you were before. You can then go back and revisit past experiences –and in our example, our own music- and see what was and how you see and feel about it today. What would you do differently now that you are a different person? Change is not always easy, but a evolving to another part of yourself, rarely is.

**How do you see the role of "extreme" progressive metal in the current context, where genres are increasingly blending?**

It is evolution in itself, isn't it? I like a lot of new bands that do great things (for example Sleep Token and Igorrr) that blend the extreme sound with other soundscapes and genres.

Everything has its audience.

"Progressive", at the time it popped out as a term, meant really "technical" or "difficult". But it was meant to be more than that. It was intended to describe the music/band, that even though it belonged at a certain genre, it explored other paths of musicality. A good example of that is the band Cynic. Everyone was coming from a death/extreme background but they were doing something radically different at the time for the music that they "belonged" to.

So, as said, everything has its audience. But in the end we will see what sticks through the passage of time and what will not.

**If you could send a message to the ACID DEATH of 1990, what would you say?**

*Keep at it guys! You got the right idea!*

**And looking ahead... what motivates you to continue creating extreme and complex music in 2025?**

That itch? You know, that itch that you cannot scratch unless you talk about it?

I think that goes with all artists. It's how we work. Either that being music, painting, writing, etc. The artistic need to express what you want to say through your preferred medium and share it with everyone that is willing to listen to you. We had it in us since forever and I don't think that will stop anytime soon.

**"Evolution" is released on November 21st by 7hard. What are your plans after the release? What does 2026 hold for Acid Death?**

Our plans is sharing it with the world! We have done a lot of hard work to get this album where it needs to be and we want to share it with everyone. So, gigging/touring is one major thing that we will focus on.

**What are your expectations for the album's reception, especially from fans who have followed you since the '90s?**

I believe that the fans that know us will appreciate it. It is a nod to our past and a clear indication where we are moving to. I would like to believe that people will love it! But I would like to hear true opinions of these people and how this album connected with them. I dunno what to expect but that makes it exciting!

**Do you have a final message for those reading this interview?**

Thank you to everyone for taking the time to read my philosophical ramblings and I sincerely hope that you take a listen to our new material. We made this for all of you. Be blessed, healthy and safe. Take care and we will see you down the road.

**Thank you so much for your time.**

Thank you aswell!

<https://www.aciddeath.net/>

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

<https://www.youtube.com/aciddeathgr>

<https://www.instagram.com/aciddeathgr/>