

Interview

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Incubus - 07/16/2015

 Interviewed by [Chrisanne Grise](#)


After releasing the EP *Trust Fall (Side A)* this May, Incubus drummer Jose Pasillas spoke with us about the band's summer tour and their plan for releasing lots of new music.

You guys must be busy gearing up for your tour with The Deftones. How are you feeling?

We're very excited. We're good friends with The Deftones and it's been about 12 years since we've played with them, if not longer. So it'll be good to be back with them. And the opening bands, Death From Above 1979 and The Bots, are both great. Summer runs are always fun too because you get to play outdoors and even though it's hot, it's nice out.

I feel like Incubus is well-suited for outdoor venues. It just feels right.

Yeah, me too! We have some of those summer songs that are kinda mellow and you can just chill on the lawn on a nice evening.

All of the songs on your new EP feel very distinct from one another, and the whole thing is especially different from your last album, *If Not Now, When?* How did that come together?

It just happened naturally. *If Not Now, When?* is a downtempo record in general, so I think it was just the next step to make more uptempo stuff. Although one of the songs, "Makeout Party," is pretty downtempo, but it's a nice juxtaposition. When we write music, all of it is pretty distinct from one song to the next. Even from one record to the next, really. That's just always part of what we do.

We were just really excited to be in the studio. It had been a long time. It was really fun making that record and we still have another record to put out. That was just an EP, so we'll put out a full-length next, probably. There's a bunch of stuff we've been working on and it's pretty different from the EP even. So we're excited to finish that up after this tour.

Is there still going to be a Side B EP then?

That's what we're trying to figure out. We were thinking about doing a Side B, and then maybe Side C. But we've been talking now about how maybe we should just put out a full record. This is an experiment for us. We're writing, recording, rehearsing, and touring all back to back. We're exploring our options and we don't have anything set in stone, so that may be an option for us to put out a whole record. But we'll see what happens when we get back. We've kinda put everything on the back burner for now and are just focused on this upcoming tour. But there's definitely a lot of new music coming out!

Did releasing an EP take some of the pressure off for you?

Yeah, it was a different experience for us. We normally allot a certain amount of time to make a full record and usually that music doesn't come out for months. This time we decided to make some music and put it out right away. We'll tour behind it, and then come back and write some more music. We're experimenting with little installments like that.

The good thing is, there's no set way anymore. Putting out a full-length record may or may not be obsolete. It's sort-of back to singles like it was in the 1950s, you know? There's no formula of the right or wrong way of doing it. The best part about having longevity is that we can take time and do things differently. We're just kinda winging it.


Yeah, it seems like a lot of artists are getting more creative with how they release music, whether it's one song

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a time, or through streaming, or something like that.

You kind-of have to now. The industry is just so turned upside down and everything's changing so dramatically. You've got to push that envelope and try to be more creative.

I particularly like "Trust Fall" on your new EP, because it just sounds like you guys are having a lot of fun while you experiment.

That one to me is the quintessential Incubus song where it's kind-of aggressive and very articulate. It felt very much like us. I love playing that song. It is very energetic and very fresh and very alive for us. It's definitely a perfect song to start that EP.

You mentioned how each of your albums has its own distinct sound and style. How does that come about?

All the records that we've done in the past are areas that we know we've been to. Of course, while we're writing music, we always want to push the envelope and challenge each other and do something different from what we've done in the past. A lot of people have a formula and stick to it, and that can work sometimes too. But for us, we want to entertain ourselves and each other by exploring and doing different things and not really keeping ourselves in any sort of box or boundaries. We've been privileged to be able to do that for a long time, for most of our career.

That's one of the things I love about Incubus: there's a different album for every mood I'm in. Do you have a personal favorite Incubus album?

Each record is definitely a snapshot of where we were at the time, and every record has very special moments for me. *S.C.I.E.N.C.E.* was our first major label record. *Make Yourself* was the next step where we had a better studio and spent more time and really crafted and honed our sound together. For *Morning View*, we got this beautiful house and did something totally different by writing and recording in a house. *A Crow Left of the Murder* was a new member and just something so fresh. Each one has characteristics that are so unique and so special that you can't put one over the other. But I can say that playing newer material is more fun. [*laughs*] *One*, because it's fresh. And then I like to think we're getting better at what we do as musicians. The songs are a little more challenging.

Do you get tired of playing the big hits, like "Drive"?

It can seem like you're on cruise control at times. For myself, being a major part of the rhythm section, every song is a challenge for me. I try to play each song the best that I can every single night. And it's different every single night just because of my emotional state. I try to address each song as it comes up individually. Because if I think, "Dude, I've got 25 songs to play," I can overwhelm myself. So I do try to be present for each song. I'm not always successful at it. But for a lot of those songs that we've been playing for so many years, we change them up a little bit too. "Drive" we can play about three or four different ways. So that helps makes it fresh for us too.

You guys have been a band for more than 20 years now. What do you wish you had known when you first started?

I don't know if there's anything I wish I would have known. It's all a learning process. Being in the music industry, you just have to live and learn. For me, I feel fortunate that we've been able to do it for this long, and that we've been able to maintain that spark of wanting to keep going. I think we're all very lucky to be able to do something we love for a living. And so I'm just grateful to have the experience, really.

Do you think your approach to music has changed over time?

Our approach is similar, but our outlook is a little different. Our process is still pretty much the same: we go into a room and Mike [Einziger, guitarist] usually has a couple of rhythm sections that he's written, or Brandon [Boyd, lead singer] has a couple of melodies that he likes. And we throw it into the pot and make music like that. That approach hasn't changed very much, but I think our attitudes and outlooks on life have. We've been doing it for a long time, and we all have families and homes and lives outside of the band.

I know you need to get going, but was there anything you wanted to mention before we wrap up?

Stay away from high fructose corn syrup and eat a lot of veggies!



Chrisanne Grise

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