

PERSONA NON GRATA

The definition of "Persona non Grata" is an "unwelcome person" which is something metal can be said to be in the greek media, music non grata could perhaps be the thing. According to keyboard player John Ioannidis the metal music is blacklisted in those medias which makes the band feel a little persona non grata.

- The paradox is that there are people here who love that type of music and they stuff stadiums when a big name comes for a live gig. These people are also persona non grata to the media as well, explains John.



BY DANIEL KÄLLMALM
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Lets go back to the beginning, 2003 the band was formed in Athens, Greece. 2009 they released their debut album "shade in the light" via Sensory Records USA. As they are a live band they did work hard on both compositions and performance, and between the live gigs they wrote their second album called "Quantum Leap" which is out now via Massacre Records.

Bands are often inspired by a lot, progressive metal bands often find "deeper" sources of inspirations, often in different places than the regular metal bands. Being a progressive metal band one might believe that *Persona Non Grata* has such a way of inspirations, John explains how it really is:

- That's a difficult question. I would say unconsciously everything and nothing at the same time. Life in every aspect, from our daily routine to relations with other people, our family, our friends or a TV program. Who knows?

They are marketed as a progressive metal band but according to John they are not really a progressive metal band, they are trying to combine melody with progressive technique and he says he would rather describe them as progressive rock with metal elements.

- We want to write good songs and not to show off our musical skills.

But not everyone seems to agree entirely with that assessment, many medias (excluding our own) calls them too little progressive.

- We have been criticized from

a part of the media for not being "too progressive" That's ok, we just see music with a different way.

Quantum leap

In quantum physics we are talking about a very small scale, on a particle level so a quantum leap should not be that big considering that. Despite this the differences between the two *Persona Non Grata* albums are quite big and many. They have a new voice and a new bassist which makes the new album completely different from the first one.

The sound is more modern as they with help of avoiding the mistakes from the debut, managed to make the sound more up to date, but that is not all there is to it.

- From the compositor's view I would say that this formation of the band helped us a lot. As a

live band it was easier for us to rehearse and improvise on some ideas in order to come up with new songs.

And as I already stated the title comes from quantum mechanics which is something that comes from the world of physics, John provided us with a little definition of it here:

- There is a common mistake as many people think that a quantum leap is a particularly large leap. This is incorrect or better, not completely correct! In quantum physics (where the expression came from) a quantum leap is usually a very tiny leap indeed, often smaller than the diameter of the nucleus of an atom. But the major characteristic that makes a leap "quantum" is that this leap from A to B point is made without passing through any of the points between A and B. The journey of our band from A to B is represen-

ted in this album.

According to John, the band spend too much time in the studio working on "Quantum Leap". Fortunately for John and his mates, the album is now finished and they are according to him happy that they now can play the album live. And according to John the best thing with the album is something a little unexpected.

- The best thing... well I don't know. I think the fact that it's finished, he explains with a touch of laughter.

John says that the hardest thing with the "Quantum Leap" album was that they were trying to overtake their debut album, because when you are a new band people do have an easier time to overlook certain clemencies but then for a second album they do expect something more, something with less flaws and better than

the debut.

- We tried to make something bigger, something different but on the same root with "Shade in the Light".

Reception & more

With every album in case you want to be noticed and sell albums comes promotion, and from that comes reception from media and also later from fans and John say that Massacre Records handle the promotion with great success. They have already received reviews from all over the world but he concludes that it is too early say wether the album has been a success or not.

- I am waiting to see people's feedback, people who buy the cd or hear it on Youtube, radio etc.

But if the band are waiting for reactions from people, they are themselves really happy with the album. According to John it is a

great release although he does admit that he might be somewhat biased.

- I am trying to be as objective as I can but I can't. Anyway, I am happy that a big effort finally ended with a good contract in a legendary label. That's objective.

Speaking of promotion, touring is one way of promoting an album and that is something that seems to become less and less common for less popular bands. But as everyone seems to be saying, Persona Non Grata is hoping to be out there playing in front of crowds all over the world.

- Our booking agent "Redlion" is working on that. This year is very critical for us and we will try to perform as often as we can.

John does not want to say himself if Persona Non Grata is a good live band or not, he says he will inform me of their upcoming gigs so that I can form an own opinion, fair enough but for that I assume they will have to visit us here in Sweden.

Speaking of touring and all that might be in the future, John expects the band to be gigging in

the future to promote the new album and also to get out of the studio but that is the near future, the further future is a bit more uncertain.

- I really can't say. I hope we will gain people's respect and establish ourselves in music indu-

stry. I hope you guys give us a try, listen to our music and hopefully like it. If so, we are expecting you in our next gig. Stay tuned.

And with that we say thank you to Persona Non Grata and John, their latest album "Quantum Leap" is out now on Madsacre Records. Also make sure to check out the band's website for more information on touring and other news.

<http://is.gd/AFsg0I> - our review
<http://www.personanongrata.info>
<http://is.gd/XmaUkG> - myspace
<http://is.gd/sBRrUB> - youtube

Persona Non Grata are:
Aris Pirris- Vocals
Akis Gavalas- Drums
Chris Vogiatzis- Bass
Chris Gatsos- Guitars
John Ioannidis- Keyboards

Discography:
Shade In The Light (2009)
Quantum Leap (2011)

