

ControlMAG: The Sanctuary of Rock



An interview with DREDG

Gavin Hayes
Frontman

Dredg is an awesome band that almost have two decades hard working. However, there are people in South America that still hasn't heard about the band yet...

Sanctuary of Rock: Could you please tell us briefly about the band's beginnings?

Gavin Hayes: We started this band in high school in the mid-'90s and have been creating music ever since. Our records are about evolution and change. No two records are alike and we hope to maintain that for as long as we are a band.

Sanctuary of Rock: "Chuckles and Mr. Squeazy" was released almost 5 months ago and a couple of tours... Can you tell us what has been the reaction of the public to it?

Gavin Hayes: A lot of people hate it, a lot of people love it, and a lot of people have never even heard it. It's pretty much the same as all of our prior releases.

Why did you decide to work with Dan the Automator? What did you think that he could contribute as producer? Or it was something natural that you wanted to experiment?

Gavin Hayes: We wanted to try something different. This record was more of a collaborative effort. We were at the point in our career where I really don't think we could have gone into the studio and just made another 'dredg' record. We had to do something different to stimulate our creativity.

Dan remixed one of songs ("Sangreal") back in 2005, which proved to be the beginning of a friendship as well. He lived just up the street from me in San Francisco and we had discussed working together over that 5-6 year span. The timing was right, and Dan liked the songs

we had written, so we rolled with it. I think his influence is very apparent on the album... especially in the rhythm section and subtle production nuances.

Sanctuary of Rock: How did he ended up contributing on the song writing of some tunes?

Gavin Hayes: He added some advice about song structures but his main influence, as stated before, was derived from his roots in hip hop - the rhythm section. It's a very bass-heavy record. He also did write the music for "The Tent," "Before it Began," and "Sun Goes Down."

Sanctuary of Rock: Is not a secret that you guys are a band who love experimented in each new record and you have used electrical sounds long time ago... It was something natural that you wanted to expand in the new album or just was it basically a natural evolution?

Gavin Hayes: Dino, our drummer, was experimenting a lot with different

keyboard sounds and producing beats on his own. I think this influence accompanied by Dan's was a natural part of this evolution. That being said, we did make a conscious effort to try new things and to knock down some of our creative boundaries.

Sanctuary of Rock: What was the main difference between recording and composing "The Pariah, theParrot, the Delusion" and "Chuckles and Mr. Squeezy"?

Gavin Hayes: Everything. They were completely two different approaches and I think "Chuckles," as with all of our records, was a direct answer to "Pariah." "Pariah" took four years to make..."Chuckles" was written and recorded in less than a year. We spent weeks and weeks in a studio for "Pariah"... "Chuckles" was two days in a studio and the rest was recorded at a Dan's house. "Pariah" was conceptual..."Chuckles" was not. Basically, they're polar opposites. Actually, maybe I'll label them distant cousins who rarely communicate.

Sanctuary of Rock: There is a particularly song on the last record called "The Ornament" that call my attention. The end of the album "Catch Without Arms" has the same melody and the band played live some parts through the years... Why do take up again this idea and work to put on the new album? What was there in this particular song?

Gavin Hayes: We thought it'd be great to turn it into a song after some live improvise proved to be attractive. We played a very stripped down version of the song at a fundraiser in NY with the author Salman Rushdie. That really solidified the direction we wanted to take the song. Also, we liked the idea of touching on an older instrumental. It kind of tied the records together...kind of like a TV series or movie sequel.

Sanctuary of Rock: You have defined the new album's style like "Dark Pop"... The title "Chuckles and Mr. Squeezy" has something involved in? What's meaning?

Gavin Hayes: This album has a more



straight forward approach than some of our past records -pop...'pop' for us. But it still retains a dark undertone lyrically and sonically - dark.

A fan had once labeled us brightly dark and I ways felt that was a great description of the band in general. I guess dark pop is a derivative of that outlook on the band.

Sanctuary of Rock: Where does come the idea of "Kalathat"?

Gavin Hayes: "Kalathat" is based on a true story about a murder suicide that took place about 2-3 years ago.

Sanctuary of Rock: The song writing of "Chuckles and Mr. Squeezy" looks that was a relative fast in comparison of your other albums that took between three and four years of difference.

I read on a couple of interviews that a lot of songs was wrote virtually... Is that true? Can you describe the real writing process of the new album?

Gavin Hayes: A lot of it was written remotely as I was living in Seattle at the time. It wasn't a totally new approach, but that approach did dominate the writing on this record. Most of it involved trading music via email and then gathering in our studio to work on them as a band.

Sanctuary of Rock: If I'm not wrong the cover of the album was created by Drew inspired by masks... Why choosing this mask in particular?

Gavin Hayes: Yes, the masks were designed by Drew and the cover was designed by him and his brother, Beau Roulette. We knew, as a band, that we wanted to incorporate masks and have the whole presentation be something we had never attempted since the record sounded that way as well. We knew we wanted it to be slightly disturbing as well.

Sanctuary of Rock: Any plans for another Chuckles and Mr. Squeezy's video clip?

Gavin Hayes: No more plans at the moment. I think we are looking forward now.

Sanctuary of Rock: I would like to get a retrospective of the next albums from you (main difference, concept, production, etc...):

Leitmotif?

Gavin Hayes: Innocent, a story of one man's journey, loose and expedited production.

El Cielo?

Gavin Hayes: Thorough and thought out, based on a Dali painting and sleep paralysis, lots of production and experimenting with different instruments.

Catch Without Arms?

Gavin Hayes: Assertive, glossy, more rock production, a concept based on the contrast of opinion, our best-selling album.

The Pariah, The Parrot, The Delusion?

Gavin Hayes: Conceptual, pushing the boundaries of belief, encouraging science and forward thinking, dropping old habits and beliefs, a lot of production, we were in the studio longer for this record than any record prior.

Chuckles and Mr. Squeezy?

Gavin Hayes: Casual, collaborative, not a strict concept but mostly based on family and friends, relationships, and the family dynamic, a much different approach and record for us, Dan the Automator production.

Sanctuary of Rock: A lot of bands with many years of musical experience have tendency to change their line-up. Dredg still working

together after several years... What is the key for keeping together?

Gavin Hayes: We've always agreed that if one member leaves then we all do.

Sanctuary of Rock: Through of years, how much has changed the band's creative process ? Usually how does come up a Dredg's song?

Gavin Hayes: Not much has changed really due to the fact that we never had a strict formula. Some songs are written collectively in a room and as a band, some are derived from a bass line, guitar part, vocal melody, etc., and some are written remotely aka all of us on our computers in our rooms.

Sanctuary of Rock: A few years ago you guys made a couple of awesome acoustics songs of "Catch Without Arms"... Have you ever thought to release an acoustic album?

Gavin Hayes: We have definitely thought about it but have no concrete plans to release one anytime soon. We have also

thought of touring in an acoustic manor... or stripped down.

Sanctuary of Rock: "Live at the Fillmore" was released 5 years ago... Have you ever thought on another possible live release, or maybe a DVD?

Gavin Hayes: It's not a main goal of ours as You Tube is pretty much an endless live DVD.

Sanctuary of Rock: After several years touring around the world have the band any plans to come to South America next year?

Gavin Hayes: We would love to...we're just waiting on the invite. Any promoters down there want to bring us?

Sanctuary of Rock: I guess that each member of the band has different musical influences but, what are those bands that all of you love? Any strange band?

Gavin Hayes: Sepultura (the full lineup), Portishead, Shellac, and John Coltrane.

Sanctuary of Rock: Ok, guys, thanks again for answering our questions! Anything else that you want to say to all our readers of elsantuariodelrock.com and fans from Colombia?

Gavin Hayes: Colombia! We hope to see you in the near future. Until then...thanks for listening!

Gavin Hayes

<http://www.dredg.com>
<http://www.myspace.com/dredg>
<http://www.twitter.com/dredg>

• An interview written and conducted by El Reverendo

