

For as much as its inflexible form resembles a blank canvas, the existence of a monolith suggests a deeper meaning. Such obelisks appear throughout mythology, literature, and film, implying a curious level of ambiguity and inviting discourse...

IMONOLITH marks the convergence point of five career musicians whose experience and acumen align seamlessly, almost as if by destiny. These five pieces fit into place within a hypnotic hybrid of hard rock melodies and metallic proficiency. The quintet—Ryan “RVP” Van Poederoyen [drums], Brian ‘Beav’ Waddell [guitar], Jon Howard [vocals], Kai Huppunen [guitar], and Scott Whalen [bass]—introduce this signature sound on their 2020 independent full-length debut, *State of Being*.

“We’ve all had professional careers and played in different groups for a long time,” says Ryan. “We’re drawing on all of that experience to do something new. When you think of a monolith, you think of a grand and solid structure. It resembles what we want the band to be, while making it an intriguing experience.”

“I feel very fortunate to be in a band with such talented musicians and great guys,” adds Scott. “Being able to join a band of this caliber is very humbling. Everything has worked out rad so far. It’s really meant to be.”

Ryan and Brian logged nearly ten years recording and touring in Devin Townsend Project. As early as 2015, they started writing together and tracking demos for a possible collaboration. In late 2018, they sought out a singer. Heeding the call, Threat Signal and Arkaea co-founder Jon Howard submitted a demo within a day and left Ryan and Brian, “*Floored and blown away.*” Welcoming the vocalist in the fold, the musicians rounded out the lineup with guitarist Kai, previously of Methods of Mayhem and Noise Therapy, and ex-Econoline Crush bassist Scott. Imonolith recorded their debut album *State of Being* between March and July 2019. Produced, mixed and engineered by Ryan’s brother Jay Van Poederoyen [Nickelback, Chris Cornell, Daughtry], the guys collectively “*decided to go old school with the recording.*”

“This album went back to the basics with the drums being recorded to two-inch tape and no samples,” reveals Kai. “All of the vocals were raw takes with no auto-tuning. All of the bass and guitars were recorded through amps. What you hear on the album is what we heard when we recorded. It felt great to record like that as a band.”

“We come from different backgrounds and styles,” Brian adds. “However, the focus is to just write the best songs possible built on riffs, first and foremost.”

Right out of the gate, IMONOLITH made waves with the debut single “Hollow,” racking up 216K Spotify streams in 2019 and receiving looks from *Loudwire*, *Brave Words*, *The PRP*, and more within a few months’ time. Maintaining this momentum, the 2020 follow-up single “Instinct” hinges on guttural guitar riffs before slamming into a jackhammer refrain uplifted by Jon’s clean vocals.

“It’s a battle of self,” explains the singer. “You’re trying to figure out who you are. You’re following a path, but you’re not sure of it. That’s what the song is about.”

Meanwhile, “Dig” drives forward with a chugging groove as it builds towards a bludgeoning and bold hook. Ryan explains, “It’s about burning bridges. Some people dig their own graves as a result. The music and the lyrics match in terms of heaviness. Somebody may screw you over and burn a bridge with you, but it doesn’t mean you can’t just move on. The meaning flips. Learn from the experience and move on.”

Elsewhere, Swedish vocalist, Johannes Eckerström guests on the caustic and catchy “Becoming the Enemy,” while legendary Meshuggah mainman Jens Kidman makes a rare vocal cameo on “The Reign,” which eviscerates everything in its path.

“It really is an honour to record a song with Jens,” Jon goes on. “We’re singing together on a track, and I couldn’t be happier.”

In the end, IMONOLITH encodes a provocative transmission inside of the music.

“There’s an underlying message,” Ryan leaves off. “On one end of the spectrum, you can take away a personal meaning to live your life the way you want—or you can just crank the music and enjoy it.”

Jon agrees, “Everyone will receive this differently, but I hope there’s something positive that may help you in your life or situation.”