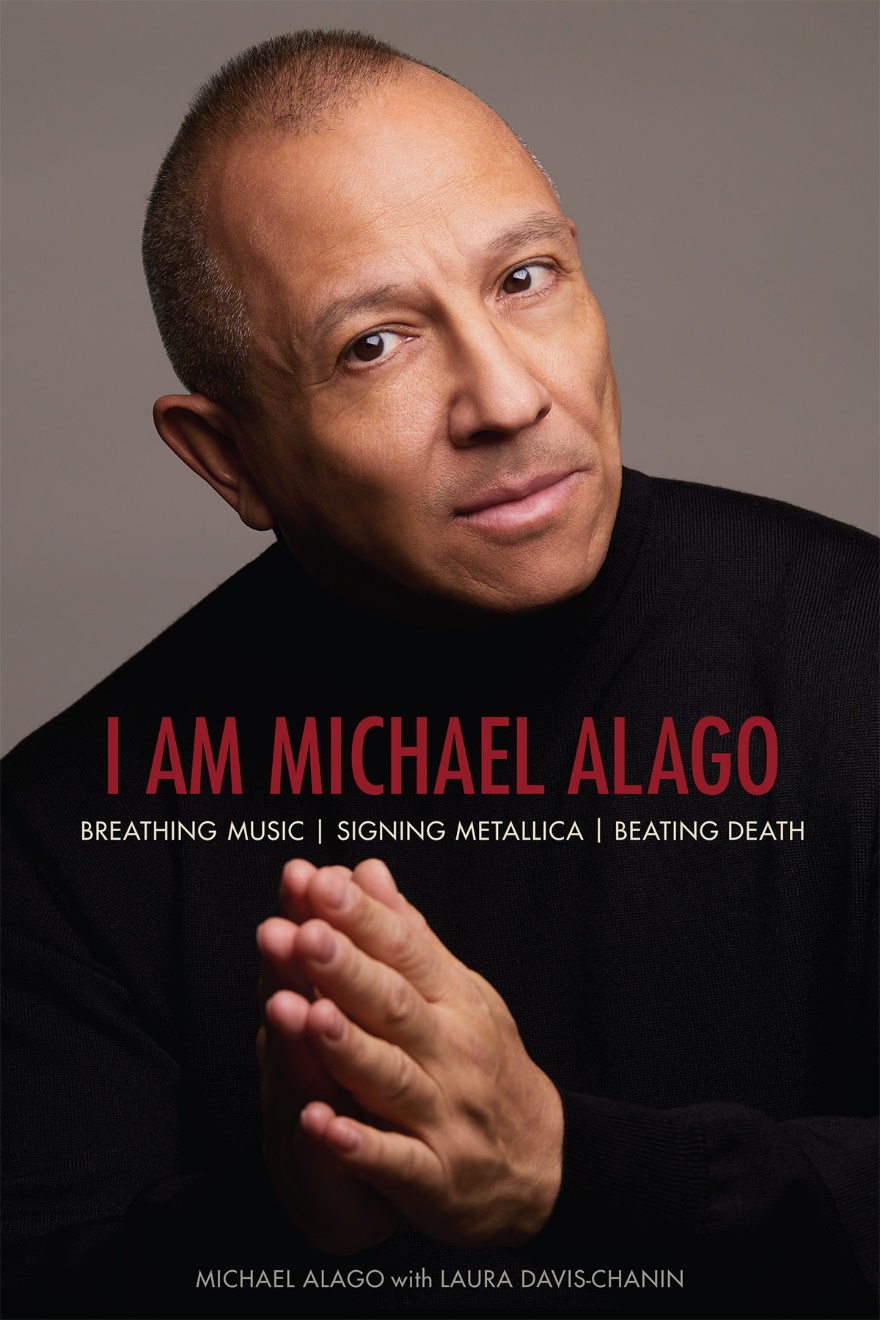
**For Immediate Release**

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**Music Industry Veteran Michael Alago Opens Up About Changing the Landscape of Metal, Battling Addiction and Beating Death in New Autobiography**

**“I am Michael Alago,” by Michael Alago with Laura Davis-Chanin Available March 2 via Backbeat Books**



Music industry veteran **Michael Alago** can be credited with changing the landscape of heavy metal - and rock ‘n’ roll as a whole – yet his name remains relatively unknown.

In his new autobiography, ***I am Michael Alago***, available March 2 via Backbeat Books, **Alago** shares his successes in the music industry, such as signing **Metallica** to their first major label recording contract, while battling 1970s and ‘80s stereotypes, addiction and life-threatening illness.

*“****Michael Alago*** *was my first genuine connection to the real world of music,”* says bassist **Jason Newsted**. *“He is a key player and lynchpin in the early careers of* ***Flotsam and Jetsam****, and* ***Metallica****, and more importantly; a greatly respected lifelong friend, loved and admired by the people that make up these legendary acts. He’s a fan. We’re all fans.”*

**Alago** grew up in Brooklyn, in a large, spirited, and devoted Puerto Rican family. Through his early passion for music, art, theater, and photography, he soon found himself rubbing elbows with many downtown NYC scene makers, from **Stiv Bators** to **Jean Michel Basquiat**, **Cherry Vanilla** and **Wayne County** to **Deborah Harry** and **Robert Mapplethorpe**. As an underage teenager going to Max's Kansas City, CBGB and various art galleries, **Alago** also began running **The Dead Boys**’ fan club.

A few years later, **Alago** became the assistant music director for legendary nightclubs the Ritz and the Red Parrot. *“I met Michael in 1980,”* says **Jerry Brandt** of The Electric Circus/The Ritz. *“He walked into my office at The Ritz and I knew instantly that his kid was going to do great things.”*

At age 24, he began a storied career as an A&R executive at Elektra Records that started with signing **Metallica** in the summer of 1984, changing the entire landscape of rock 'n' roll and heavy metal. **Alago** continued to work in A&R for both Palm Pictures and Geffen Records. He was thrilled to executive-produce albums by **Cyndi Lauper**, **Public Image Ltd**, **White Zombie**, and **Nina Simone**.

*“With his gifted passion and open-minded appreciation for music,* ***Michael Alago*** *changed the world and the lives of millions (myself included) forever,”* says ***Orange is the New Black*** actor and **Alekhine’s Gun** vocalist **Jessica Pimentel**. *“I am constantly inspired by him and thank him for sharing his rich life with us: the good, the bad, the ugly, the sacred and the magical.”*

In the late 1980s, **Alago** was diagnosed with HIV, which manifested into full-blown AIDS 10 years later, a diagnosis that equaled death at that time. But with the advancement of medical science and the foresight of a brilliant doctor, he survived and continued his music career. In 2005, he left music to pursue his other love: photography. **Alago** went on to publish three bestselling books: *Rough Gods*, *Brutal Truth* and *Beautiful Imperfections* with German-based publisher Bruno Gmünder.

**Alago** has also since overcome his longtime addiction to drugs and alcohol. In his clean and sober life, he has reconnected with his family, continues to be a working photographer as well as record producer, and only through the grace of his 12-Step program is he able to live this big, beautiful life. *Who the Fuck Is That Guy? The Fabulous Journey of Michael Alago*, a 2017 documentary directed by **Drew Stone** and produced by **Michael Alex** on **Alago**’s wildly successful career in music, was released in theaters and on Netflix, where it is now in its third year. The film is also now available on Amazon Prime Video.

*“A true Hollywood tale of how a gay Puerto Rican man in a heavy metal world can become a conqueror!”* says **Gary Holt**, guitarist for **Exodus** and **Slayer**. *“From running wild in the streets of NYC as younger men to still being close to this day, Michael is a legend in the world of hard rock. The heavy metal landscape would look much different if it weren’t for him. We owe him a debt of gratitude for his foresight in music and I am thankful for his contributions and even more so, his friendship.”*

**Michael Alago** is the quintessential New Yorker with an “only in New York” career. Passionate about music, art, and literature, legendary music executive and published photographer, **Alago** is known for his extraordinary work with **Metallica**, **White Zombie**, **John Lydon**, **Cyndi Lauper** and **Nina Simone**.   
  
*“I’ve known Michael forever, and he is fabulous,”* says music business veteran **Danny Fields**. *“So this book is fabulous! Would I ever lie?”*

***I am Michael Alago*** was co-written with Laura Davis-Chanin. I am Michael Alago is available in paperback for pre-order from [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/Am-Michael-Alago-Breathing-Metallica/dp/1617137251/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=9781617137259&qid=1581114531&sr=8-1), [Barnes & Noble](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/i-am-michael-alago-michael-alago/1131046355;jsessionid=5F55E2EB0B19C04ABD602886E04EC4D4.prodny_store01-atgap14?ean=9781617137259#/), [Books-A-Million](https://www.booksamillion.com/p/9781617137259), [IndieBound](https://www.indiebound.org/book/9781617137259) and [Rowman & Littlefield](https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781617137259).

A release party for ***I Am Michael Alago*** will be held Friday, March 6 at The Map Room at The Bowery Electric. **Alago** will read and sign copies of the book from 7–10 p.m. Register here for **Alago**’s only New York City appearance:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/michael-alago-book-release-party-tickets-91835818405?aff=odwdwdspacecraft>.

**About Backbeat Books:**

Since 1991, Backbeat Books have been favorites among passionate music fans and musicians. Known for their depth, spirit, and authority, Backbeat offers a diverse range of books - from biographies and memoirs, critical examinations and histories, to authoritative volumes on musical instruments and instruction - covering all areas of rock 'n' roll, jazz, and beyond.



**Photo: Carol Friedman**