**FLOTSAM AND JETSAM SMELLS BLOOD IN THE WATER**

By Tim Henderson

Heralded as “the most under-rated metal band on the planet,” Arizona thrash legends FLOTSAM AND JETSAM are set for world domination once again with their 14th studio album, “Blood In The Water,” set to be released on June 4th via AFM Records. In 2019, when the band released “The End Of Chaos,” fans questioned whether or not their idols had released their swan song. Quite the contrary…this beast that is FLOTZILLA still has plenty of life still left in him!

Guitarist MICHAEL GILBERT explains, “We weren’t really sure what we had in the tank, as we put so much work, sweat, and blood into the Chaos album. As it turns out, we had plenty left to say. With everything that’s happened in the world, the friends we lost this last year, and not being able to perform or tour… you hear all of that in our music. It’s angry, it’s aggressive, and our emotions pour out all over this album.”

When asked about why the band’s sound has evolved throughout the last albums to a much heavier output, Gilbert motions: “I don’t want anyone feeling that we are getting fucking old. As long as we continue doing this, we’re gonna bring it. Our sound changed through the years influenced by many factors, but what you are listening to now is who we are and will continue to be.”

It’s been 35 years since FLOTSAM AND JETSAM, formed in Phoenix, Arizona released their landmark debut, “Doomsday For The Deceiver,” the only album to ever receive a 6K rating from the influential British magazine Kerrang! Bassist Jason Newsted would jump ship to Metallica while the band released the unstoppable “No Place for Disgrace” in 1988. Cuatro (1992), Drift (1995), High (1997), and My God (2001) all still rank extremely high in heavy metal circles. But it was the first part of this unofficial trilogy in 2016’s self-titled FLOTSAM AND JETSAM that a certain rejuvenation and reset was clearly felt.

Fast-forward five years to a planet that was forced to its knees. While spending most of the past year in a holding pattern like the rest of the world, FLOTSAM AND JETSAM made the best of a struggling situation and just let those creative juices and angst flow. What emerged was twelve brand new blistering tracks under the moniker “Blood In The Water.” Are you ready to brace for the impact?

“We really had a hell of a time figuring out which songs to actually include in this album, because we don’t feel we had any fillers,” describes STEVE CONLEY about the twelve new songs clocking in at nearly 55 minutes of thrashing glory.

“Blood In The Water” pulls no punches, as the lead-off title track sets the tone for mood-swinging mayhem and drummer Ken Mary sets the frantic pace. It’s clear from the start that these guys aren’t messing around as the song comes screaming out of the speakers with a frenzied rhythm section and guitars blazing on ten. Then the passionate vocal delivery of A.K. takes the stage delivering; “They want your soul, seduce you with their lies, selling death, the end of the sublime . . . sinking down into the blackout below, there’s blood in the water!”

The album continues to dominate from there, with “Burn The Sky,” the first single from the album, searing it’s way into your brain. And just prior to street date, fans literally need to “Brace For Impact,” as that will be the third blood-soaked taste before the worldwide unveiling. The song is patented FLOTSAM AND JETSAM, a rip-roaring galloping stallion that refuses to be tamed. “Bracing for the impact, bracing for the pain…” A.K. screams with passion and grit.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM rip out your metal heart with the emotionally intense “Cry For The Dead,” a mesmerizing epic and one of the greatest triumphs in the band’s history. The chorus “I can’t live without the ones I love/need” rings particularly striking given the current lockdown measures the entire world has been facing.

Meanwhile, “The Walls” appears to purposely take a page out of the Jake E. Lee handbook of riffery, with possibly the most commercial and radio-friendly FLOTSAM track in ages.

“I’m a huge Jake E. Lee fan,” STEVE CONLEY gushes. “I’m also an Iron Maiden fan too, so I really like that power metal thing. Everyone thinks that FLOTSAM is a thrash band, but no thrash band has a singer like A.K. Most singers that can really sing won’t be in a thrash band because of the music. I know A.K.’s abilities, and it makes me think we need some songs that have melodic choruses. So I try to slide a couple of commercial songs into the mix just to see what happens.”

No filler, all killer, “Blood In The Water” is once again mixed and mastered by Jacob Hansen (U.D.O., Volbeat, Amaranthe, Powerwolf) and sees FLOTSAM AND JETSAM exploding with creativity, moving forward but nodding to their past.

And the FLOTSAM lineup has never been stronger. A.K. keeps bringing the magic every album and tour, and oddly seems to be getting better and better as time goes on. He’s backed by the incredibly talented, exceptionally brilliant guitar duo of co-founder Michael Gilbert and Steve Conley, the powerful, precise and lightning fast engine of drummer Ken Mary, (whose Hall of Fame resume includes over five million albums sold with artists such as Alice Cooper, House Of Lords, and Accept), and the “fresh blood” and extraordinary technical skills and prowess of bassist Bill Bodily.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM have seen many of their peers that started at the same time, including Metallica, Megadeth, Slayer and Venom, have their day in the sun. Over their long career, FLOTSAM AND JETSAM has seemed somewhat plagued by label snafu’s, changes in trends, or other unfortunate events. They hope those days are now behind them.

“We’ve seen our fan base increasing, and we’ve seen the response to the last two albums getting louder and louder,” A.K. says with excitement. “We have some of the most committed and crazy fans in the world. We charted higher on our last album than at any point in our career. Maybe our career path will run similar to Motorhead’s? They were always considered iconic, but didn’t really break through in a big way until later in their career. We feel our time is now … we’re like that dog that’s been kicked. We’re ready to break the door down and take what’s ours!”

Regarding the dark and menacing album cover, A.K. says that “FLOTZILLA should’ve been on every record cover, but that was way too Iron Maiden-ish for us! FLOTZILLA is an entity that you can’t reason with and you can’t stop. You can’t really do anything but watch him go. This time, he’s lurking in the water waiting for something else to destroy.”

So beware… there’s blood in the water… and FLOTZILLA can smell it!

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM is: Eric "AK" Knutson (Vocals), Steve Conley (Guitar), Michael Gilbert (Guitar), Bill Bodily (Bass), Ken K Mary (Drums)