

NI ROCKS Interview with BRIAN TATLER of DIAMOND HEAD

Written by NI ROCKS

Thursday, 21 April 2016 02:54 - Last Updated Thursday, 30 June 2016 22:06

NWOBHM legends Diamond Head released a new self titled album on 22nd April. I spoke to founding member, guitarist Brian Tatler, via Skype on 18th April and we chatted about the new album, the recent record deal, upcoming tours, a new DVD and more. This interview was included on the Friday NI Rocks Show that was broadcast on 22nd April.

That Show is available now on our MixCloud page - <https://www.mixcloud.com/NI Rocks/interview-with-brian-tatler-of-diamond-head-on-the-friday-ni-rocks-show-22nd-april/>



(The photo of Brian is from the 70,000 Tons of Metal Cruise in Feb 2016 – Photo credit unknown.)

Diamond Head are Brian Tatler on lead guitar, Rasmus Born Andersen on vocals, Eddie Mooham on bass, Karl Wilcox on Drums and Andy

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“Abbz” Abberley on rhythm guitar.

The band play Voodoo in Belfast on 23rd September on a tour that also includes gigs in Dublin and Limerick. They also play quite a few festivals this summer including HRH Ibiza, Sweden Rock and Bloodstock.

NI ROCKS – Hi Brian, thanks for taking some time to chat to us at Rock Radio NI.

BRIAN – No problem, thanks for inviting me.

NI ROCKS - I wanted to talk first of all about the new album which is released this Friday, 22nd April. The album is simply entitled “Diamond Head”. Any particular reason for that?

BRIAN – Yeah, we tried to come up with a title. I had a big sheet of paper with the names. People would make suggestions. I got lots of suggestions, but a lot of them weren't right – stupid or pretentious. In the end our bass player, Eddie, suggested Diamond Head and I thought about and thought actually that wouldn't be too bad, it'd be a good name. I said to everyone that if no-one could think of a better name we're going to call it “Diamond Head”. That's how it went from there – nobody could beat it.

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NI ROCKS – This of course is the first album working with your new singer Rasmus Born Anderson. How was it working with him for the first time?

BRIAN – It's been great. He has a lot of fresh ideas and I think coming in fresh he has helped us figure out what's good about Diamond Head and what was good in the past. He went through every song we ever recorded and listened to them almost like a producer. He said we should do "Diamond Head" in the room and it was his idea to write the songs in the rehearsal room rather than over the net, because we'd done that kind of thing and I really didn't want to do it again.

I didn't have a lot of confidence in my material because I make home demos. But I gave them to Rasmus and he was very positive about them and he picked out ones that he liked. Occasionally he would say 'this sounds very Diamond Head' and maybe I had lost sight of that a little bit; but I understood what he meant and we tried writing together. I thought give it a go, with no great expectation and no pressure on ourselves. It went well and just progressed and progressed. We'd tape every rehearsal and Rasmus would take everything away and work on sections and lyrics. It came together really well in the end. We're all really pleased with it.

NI ROCKS – Had you been writing a lot of material since the previous album or had you stopped writing until you were ready to do this?

BRIAN – I don't work like that. I just come up with ideas. I pick up the guitar every day. I practice and I also teach guitar from home. So I'm playing for a reason or I'm rehearsing and I just find riffs sometimes. I'll think that's a nice riff, I'll take that. I build up these tapes and I review them and pick out all the bits that I like. I've been doing that since probably 2007 – compiling good stuff. I have this friend, Dave Nichols, who is the sound engineer for Slipknot and lives in Wednesbury which is a few miles away from me. I'd go round to his house and he has Pro Tools and we spent a couple of years just putting stuff down. We maybe did about 30 songs at his house; maybe not that many, maybe about 20. I kept hold of the versions and put them on a CD, In the end I gave Ras about 45 pieces of music and he went away and picked stuff he liked.

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NI ROCKS – The last studio album was as you said in 2007 with “What’s In Your Head”. The band has been busy since then touring. Was there a conscious decision not to get into the studio until now?

BRIAN – I’ve explained this before to people. Our singer Nick emigrated to Brisbane in 2008 and it became really difficult to write together or come up with songs. Nick would come over and tour, then he would go home to his wife and kids and his job. We didn’t have time to sit around and work on new material. I couldn’t see how it was going to work. Our drummer lives in America, that’s bad enough; but the singer living in Brisbane and me not wanting to do another album over the internet. How’s that going to work? We had to get a guy who lived in England. Once that happened it was more likely that we could get together and write together. I’ve been building up my portfolio of riffs for a few years but didn’t know what to do with them, until Rasmus came along. He has a fantastic voice and range. It’s just a matter of putting some good will into it and see what happens.

NI ROCKS – It was announced last month that you’d signed with Dissonance Productions for the release of the new album and that they’d also be re-releasing the two albums you recorded with Nick Tart - “All Will Be Revealed” from 2005 and “What’s In Your Head” from 2007. How difficult was it to get a label that you were happy with?

BRIAN – We had intended on doing this album ourselves. Everything was paid for by the band – the recording, mixing and mastering. We were going to do it ourselves – sell it online and mail order. We started doing that and the orders came in. Then Dissonance came along and they’re part of Plastic Head who were know are a fantastic distributor. They said that they would like to take on the new album and once we had agreed a deal it moved very quickly. They’d had a listen and decided they wanted to get on board. It probably took less than a month from the initial meeting to signing a contract. They’re a really good company and have put so much effort in so far with promotion and press. They’ve gone at it

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really powerfully.

NI ROCKS – We're going to play a track from the new album now. Do you want to pick one and tell us a little bit about it?

BRIAN – I'll pick track one, which is "Bones". I think this is my favourite track at the moment. I had a verse and bridge part for this that I'd had for a while. I took it to rehearsal and we played it for a bit. Then Eddie started playing a different riff and I said "what's that, what you playing there Eddie?" and thought this will work. So I jumped on it and started playing it as well. It sounded fantastic in rehearsal and we started getting really excited about it. I thought that could be the chorus and we worked that into the song and did a version. If it sounds great in rehearsal you're onto something – it's going to sound good on the album and sound good live.

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