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Ed Munson, Matthew Corry, Brad Wosko and Callum Tuffen (left to right) of FELLOWSHIP have "healed" large parts of the power metal scene with their music. Things have been a little quieter around them lately, but a third album is in the works.

Photo: Metal Dragon Media

Recurring Joy and Emerging Madness – Visiting FELLOWSHIP on Tour

What's next on the British feel-good front? We spoke to vocalist Matthew Corry about vibes, timelines and his current solo project.

With their music, which can hardly be described as anything other than "uplifting", and their band personality, which is best summed up as "wholesome", FELLOWSHIP have taken the power metal scene by storm. Still considered a hidden gem during the pandemic, they're now playing headline slots at major genre festivals. Their sound is extremely melodic, infectious and guaranteed to get stuck in your head. Their lyrics, seemingly set in a fantasy universe at first glance, deal with issues that concern us all (as becomes fairly obvious on closer inspection): self-doubt, self-discovery and coping with personal crises. At the final show of this year's short autumn tour, we had the opportunity for a brief session with the spokesman of power metal's very own therapists.

Hi Matt, very happy that you guys came over to Germany and the Netherlands for three gigs. How has your mini tour been going so far?

Really, really good. Lots of fun. We've played Brainstorm Festival before, and coming back to Brainstorm after a few years and having everyone sort of remember us and lots of people from last time being there again, that was really cool. Blast of Eternity was a first experience for us. We've never been there before, but it was great. Also, SIGNUM REGIS, they've been really lovely to be with. We've shared dressing rooms with them, so you tend to get to know people pretty well.

That idea of power metal as therapy was there from the beginning.

Great. I'm sure I'm speaking not only for myself but also for many other fans when I say that you guys are the ultimate power metal therapists. I mean, there are plenty of bands in this genre, that make us feel good, but I think there's no other band that consistently creates this dense atmosphere of positivity. Was creating that kind of effect your intention from the very first beginning, or did it just happen naturally through your lyrics and Cal's songwriting?

I think a combination of the two. When I joined FELLOWSHIP, I came in totally fresh to power metal. And because of this, I sort of. I think I just came at the genre with very fresh ears. You know, there was no band I was trying to emulate. There was no lyrical component that I thought, you know, we had to hit, like, goblins or dragons or anything like that.

And the thing that the music spoke to me about was that this music is more uplifting than anything else. It has so much energy. It's melodically so clean and joyous that that was what I wanted to reflect in the lyrics. And the first song we ever wrote was "Glint", it kinda set the tone. So that sort of sense of selfworth, that idea of, like, power metal as therapy, was there from the beginning. And after we wrote "Glint", it became a more deliberate thing.

You probably saw the next question coming, but I have to address the elephant in the room. When can we expect a third Fellowship album?

Haha, yeah, you know, it's difficult to put a timeline on it. The last year has been pretty tumultuous for us individually, just in terms of life stuff. Like, a lot of stuff has happened. We have got some material in the works for album three. I can't tell you much about it, but hopefully we're looking at 2028, provided all goes well, it won't be 2027.

Do you want to finish the second novel first? *(Each FELLOWSHIP album is intended to have a companion book that tells a cohesive story based on its songs. The first volume, "The Saberlight Chronicles", is already available as a free download.)*

Definitely. It's been a real albatross around my neck in the sense of it is 90% done, and I just haven't found the time to finish it. And, you know, when you have a project that's almost done and then you leave it for a while because you've got other stuff going, then I feel like I'm gonna have to reread the entire book to finish it. And that's just a lot of time. I'm still trying, I'm still aiming to get it done, and it just keeps almost getting there and I don't quite finish it. But I will get it done before the third album.

We've done our little exploration and we're happy to return to original form.

The first album was very happy musically, and more about self affirmation, self discovery, lyrically. The second one was a bit darker, as you say, especially lyrically, and at the same time it had more Japanese influences, musically. Can you share any ideas for the third album? What will be new about it?

In a lot of ways, we're actually looking to go back to the roots. We've been looking more at these slightly mediaeval inspired ideas. There is some sort of GALNERYUS style, because Cal loves them so much. But we also have a sequel song to "Saints", which is called "Courage" and we've been working on some really bombastic stuff. Lyrically, it's gonna edge more towards elements of courage and self belief. We explored the dark side of FELLOWSHIP on album two. And I think we've done our little exploration and we're happy to sort of return to original form, to go back to the bright side. But maybe we'll alternate. Let's see.



Matthew Corry's musical theatre-influenced vocals are a perfect fit for FELLOWSHIP's approach to power metal. Photo: Anne

"I'm not afraid to get stuff wrong. There'll be stuff on this album that flops.

Just a few days ago there was this surprising announcement incoming that you and Francisco Pérez joined forces for this progpower project called POSTHEROIC. And it seems like you've had this idea long before you even joined Fellowship! I'm very excited to see what you guys come up with. Tell me, how proggy will it become? More like DREAM THEATER proggy or more like KAMELOT proggy?

If you've ever heard of a band called MORON POLICE, they are my favourite band. And one of the things that makes them who they are, is that they are not afraid of silliness. FELLOWSHIP is not afraid of silliness either. But FELLOWSHIP silliness

always has to serve the melodic idea of the song. It's designed to follow and elicit very specific emotional responses.

POSTHEROIC is a bit more off the wall, a bit weirder. It's still power metal, but for example there is a pop punk inspired song with a saxophone solo and a lounge jazz section. We have a folk inspired song that features blast beat calypso music at the end, like steel drums but doing blast beats. The last track on the album is round eight and a half minutes long epic song that has a "Bohemian Rhapsody" style a cappella section featuring the guy from Moron Police. Those are just three examples of how it's stuff that would not belong on a FELLOWSHIP record.

I'm not afraid to get stuff wrong. Like there'll be stuff on this album that flops, but I'm totally okay with that. I'm somebody who wants to just push the boundary, push the boat musically in every direction all the time. This is my outlet for that so that I can put the really cohesive stuff in FELLOWSHIP.

Sounds very promising. Will there be a single coming out before the album?

Yeah, there will be something coming out around January, February – depends on when we slot into the release date. The mixing is in its final stages at the moment. So, yeah, I will start working on a video and a single pretty soon.

> *Getting into power metal felt like it happened very serendipitously.*

Talking about all these different influences in POSTHEROIC: If you had not met Sam on this "tinder for musicians" platform, what would have been your path? Do you think you might be singing a pop punk or in a folk metal band today?

Haha, I don't think so. I probably would have found my way to power metal eventually. It's one of those things that at the time it felt like it happened very serendipitously, very sort of naturally. But since then it's become really clear that my voice and what I've specialised in from a vocal perspective is really designed for power metal. Also, I've always been huge into fantasy growing up. I read everything like sci fi and fantasy. So I think I would have found my way here eventually, one way or the other.

To wrap this up I have a little this or that game for you. Let's start!

Coffee or tea?

Tea.

Opera or musical?

Musical. Opera is actually really bad for your voice and everyone who thinks otherwise doesn't know anything about the anatomy of singing.

Speed track or ballad?

Speed track. I like a ballad occasionally, but speed.

Indoor or outdoor?

Indoor. I'm a real homeboy.

Major or minor key?

Major key. I can't be in FELLOWSHIP and say minor key. That wouldn't be right.

Quest Fest or Epic Fest?

Oh, you can't do that. Quest Fest has such a warm community vibe. Seeing what Epic Fest has become over the last few years is incredible. Søren has done such an amazing job. So Epic Fest probably wins, but my favourite festival in the world is Mad with Power. So the real answer is Mad with Power.

Small club show or big stage?

If it's packed: small club show.

"Lord of the Rings" or "Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass?"

Oh, it has to be "Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass". Best book of all time. But those are very hard to compare.

MAJESTICA or MORON POLICE?

MORON POLICE. I love Tommy, but not close.

Fish or chips?

Hm, chips.

Cats or cats?

Cats!

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