

BATTLE HELM



RUSTFIELD



RUSTFIELD is another Italian band with a progressive touch that should be checked out.

This might not be the most clever question but seeing as I'm new to you an introduction might be necessary. Who are you?

[Andrea] Hello, I am Andrea Rampa, singer.

[Davide] And I am Davide Ronfetto, guitarist.

[Andrea] We are the two leaders of Rustfield, a newcomer progressive rock/metal band from Torino, Italy. We released our debut album "Kingdom of Rust" on December 6th through the German label Massacre Records. The album is featured by some especial guests such as John Macaluso (Symphony X, ex Y.J. Malmsteen) on drums, Federica De Boni (White Skull) on vocals, Douglas R. Docker (Docker's Guild, ex Biloxi) on keyboards.

[Davide] Our style is very dynamic and it shifts from heavy metal to electronic, from psychedelic to progressive. Our music offers different atmospheres mixed together.

Do you feel that you follow in an old tradition or does it feel like you are creating your own path?

[Andrea] I feel we are creating our own path. If you listen to "Kingdom of Rust" you can recognize influences from the some bands of the tradition but we are not making them an heavy tribute anyway. I think that our music is quite original due to the fact that we mix different atmospheres and sounds together.

[Davide] Fortunately this has been also the opinion of many reviewers the listened to our debut till now.

We are happy to read that they found our music new and fresh even if we play a kind of music that has its roots back in the 70s.

What does it mean to you as band that there have been others before you that have made it?

[Andrea] Well progressive rock was born in the late 60s and progressive metal was born in the late 80s so a huge number of bands played this kind of music in the last 40 years! Sometimes this fact makes you asking yourself “what is my role in all of this? Is there anything that I can say after all that have been already said?”. Fortunately we were able to find the right answers to these questions and I think we composed music that sounds pretty original.

Is there a difference to being signed to a label in your country to being signed to one from abroad?

[Davide] Due to the fact that “Kingdom of Rust” is our first album and we signed a contract for the very first time, I can’t really answer this question. Anyway we come from Italy and our label is in Germany so we usually get in touch by email. Probably, if our label was in Italy we could communicate more by telephone (for language and cost reasons) but I don’t think that there would be big differences. The funny thing is that today you often find yourself sending email to people working at the desk beside yours instead of raising your head and speak, so in the end it doesn’t really matter if your working partners live 700 km far from you! Internet is really making the world smaller and smaller creating just one country that goes beyond the borders!

I guess any band would be stupid not to think that their latest album is their greatest but what is it about you latest record that is so great?

[Andrea] Yeah, “Kingdom of Rust” is great and it is the best album we’ve ever made! 😊 It couldn’t be anything else because it is our first album! 😊 Yes, sometimes I find it very funny when bands say that the every latest album is their best one, and it is even more funny when they say that the latest album is 100% their selves! By the way I know that they really can’t say “hey, our new album is not as good as the previous one but it’s not bad, buy it anyway!”, the market law doesn’t allow such a high degree of honesty! 😊 In our case of course it’s pretty different, “Kingdom of Rust” is a great album for real! 😊 Nah, I’m joking, but of course I think it is great because we worked hard on it for many years. Fortunately it seems not to be just our opinion because most of all the reviews published since now spent very good words about our work! I think that one of the highlights of our debut album are the different atmospheres that it can offer. Moving from heavy metal to electronic or to psychedelic, give to the song a very interesting and not trivial shape. I think this one of the most important features in our music because it reflects exactly who we are.

[Davide] Yes, we love heavy metal but we love different kinds of music as well and when we compose our own songs it is normal to mix these different styles. It just comes out spontaneously... By the way this can also be a negative point for somebody! “Kingdom of Rust” is not the right record for those who love exclusively straight sound albums. Our debut is not a 40 minutes long heavy metal album, it is an almost 70 minutes long progressive rock/metal album that needs a little bit more than two listening sessions to be understood. The reason lies in the different atmospheres that it includes. I actually love 40 minutes long classic heavy metal albums but “Kingdom of Rust” just did not come out that way! Anyway I’m pretty sure since now, that one day we’ll say that our second album will be the best one! 😊 I wish myself to say that! The reason for this is that, fortunately, we are not bounded by a contract that forces us to publish a new record until a certain date, we are totally free to take our time to work on new song with no hurry. I am sure that this condition will give us the chance to take care of every song for the necessary time and in the end the result will be great. This is the way we worked for “Kingdom of Rust” and the good results that the album is scoring suggest us that this could be the right way to work!

How do you best promote an album today? Is playing live still a great way to spread the word of the band? How hard is it to get press coverage today?

[Andrea] Oh yes, I still think that playing live is the best way to promote an album and, by the way, live performance should be the goal for every musician. The problem is that today live activity is quite a hard task... Famous bands are forced to do never-ending tours to earn the same amount of money they once

earned from record sales. On a total opposite situation are newcomer bands, as us, that must invest big amounts of money in touring supporting big names. This crazy situation is due to the fact that record market is drowning because of illegal download and illegal streaming. Moreover touring has become more and more expensive these days even if it is still, in my opinion, the best way to promote a band and the most fulfilling experience for a musician.

[Davide] Regarding press coverage I am not really able to answer you, Massacre Records is promoting our album to the press and, till now, "Kingdom of Rust" has been reviewed by many webzines and magazines. So it seems that it is not so hard to get press coverage if you are a more than twenty years experienced label like Massacre! Perhaps the problem today is to give the appropriate value to the press coverage, I mean, it is all around full of reviews and articles about albums, DVDs, demos and so on, the risk is being just a drop in an infinite ocean, that's why playing live is still the best promotion.

What part does internet play in promoting a band? Are webzines like ours a great way to spread the word of the band?

[Davide] Internet plays a very important role, for example "Kingdom of Rust" has been reviewed by more than fifteen webzines in less than fifteen days! The high number of webzines helps a lot in having a sufficient number of reviews to do a statistic analysis in order to understand whether the album have been liked or not, really understood or not. Moreover webzines are spread all over the world so that there can be a global response to the release, and that's great!

[Andrea] On the other hand it is always necessary to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of having a quality information for free. When you buy a paper magazine, you pay for it and you require a certain quality degree, when you do not pay for quality you are not sure of how good are the information you read. Fortunately we've been very lucky till now, we read just a couple of reviews where it was clear that the reviewer listened to the album just one time loathly.

Is it your opinion that the better looking an album is the better a chance it has of being noticed? How pleased are you with the look of your album?

[Andrea] I think that artwork is an important feature of an album, of course music and lyrics are the most important things but artwork is an important detail. I am happy of the artwork of "Kingdom of Rust", it is a surreal concept but it was realized in a quite realistic way so that it doesn't look like a "super-graphic" artwork, if you know what I mean! The artist is Candace Hoeckley, we noticed her on the net and contacted her in order to know if she could modify one of her artworks to fit our concept: the skyline of a rusty city facing an immense wheat field.

[Davide] We also love the inner inlay of the jewel case CD box, it is another wheat field enlightened by the sun, a photography in totally different colors than front artwork. This chromatic distinction reflects the contrasts we have in our music, the mix between heavy and mellow atmospheres. So, as you can see, the graphic design plays an important role in "Kingdom of Rust" and we are very happy of the external artwork. I can't really tell the same for the internal booklet design because, unfortunately, it was realized in three different sessions during a year so it didn't went exactly as we planned, but in the end that's not a big problem!

What part do the lyrics play in your music? Are they a necessary evil or do you have something you like to say with them?

[Andrea] No, they are not a necessary evil, we have something to say in every of our lyrics even if sometimes they are quite symbolic and not easy to understand. We don't have a typical topic but, exactly as our music, lyrics shift from an argument to another. Some of them are just stories and some of them are strictly connected to our feelings and thoughts. For example the lyrics of "Waxhopes" tell the story of Icarus from the point of view of Daedalus, the father who reminds the loss of his son. The lyrics of "Love moan" tell also a story of a mother who decide to take away her life and her daughter's one to protect them from all dangers of this world. "Burning the air", "Sacrifice" and "Social contract" are a trilogy about the compromises that everybody has to do to live in society, compromises of behavior, emotions, way of life, conflicts.

[Davide] The most metaphorical songs are “Losing time” and “The secret garden”, for this reason they are not so easy to explain in few words, we can say that everybody can give its own interpretation because, basically, these songs describe images and views instead of having an explicit meaning. “Run with me” is a song about the feelings related to the awareness of people’s own mortality. “Among the fields or rust”, the opener track, has an explicit duality in lyrics just as it has in music, it tells the contrasts between a rusty world and a field, a kind of peaceful shelter from our society’s craziness. It is quite biographical and can be considered as our manifesto due to the fact that incorporates almost every kind of music we played in the album. “High waters”, the last song, is a song about sudden changes and the way they can come into one’s life, all the troubles they carry with them but also all the new points of view that can unfold. A happy song at least in the end!

What future lies ahead of you?

[Andrea] Fame, money and groupies! 😊 Nah, I wish fame, I’m not sure about money, I hope groupies! 😊 Seriously, to be honest we cannot tell anything for sure, these are very bad times for newcomer bands as us and it is hard to guess how music business will evolve in the next years. One thing is for sure, we want to play live as much as we can so that people can know who we are and see how we perform on the stage! That is the plan for the next months, or maybe for the next years because, as we said before, touring is becoming more and more expansive, especially for new bands, so we must be very careful and evaluate every move twice. I guess it will take us a little bit more time to record a new album, not because we don’t have new songs, we actually never stopped composing, but because we think that “Kingdom of Rust” is good album and its songs deserve to be performed in front of an audience. For this reason we are focused on live activity before than stepping the studio again. So... see you on the road!

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Anders Ekdahl ©

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