

DELAIN Bio 2016

From humble origins in Zwolle, Netherlands, to their current status as one of the hottest bands in the entire heavy music world, Delain have written their own story, with every successive chapter taking them deeper into the spotlight's glare. They began life as a symphonic metal band with big ambitions and bigger ideas, led by keyboard maestro Martijn Westerholt and the supreme vocal talents of Charlotte Wessels. Emerging at a time when the world was clearly in need of music with a big heart and a grand vision, the Dutch crew made an immediate impact with their 2006 debut album *Lucidity*, singles *Frozen* and *See Me In Shadow* /and/ the extensive touring that followed, wherein these young musicians swiftly developed a reputation for putting on a dazzling show.

In the decade that has followed *Lucidity's* release, Delain have marched remorselessly forward, gaining momentum and winning over thousands of converts with each successive album and tour. Their most significant breakthrough came with 2012's *We Are The Others*, and now, two years on from the release of fourth album *The Human Contradiction*, Delain are back to further cement their status as modern metal champions.

"We are creating our own niche in the genre," says Charlotte. "I'm really pleased with where we are heading right now. We're having a spectacular year. Not even counting all the headline tours and festivals, we released our *Lunar Prelude* EP early in the year, we have our new album *Moonbathers* coming out in August, a newly remastered version of *Lucidity* coming out to celebrate its tenth anniversary in October and then we have our PledgeMusic funded 10th anniversary show and DVD recording coming up, so this is definitely our biggest year so far."

The release of Delain's fifth album, the stunning *Moonbathers*, looks certain to further enhance their already sturdy reputation. In collaboration with guitarists Timo Somers and Merel Bechtold, bassist Otto Schimmelpenninck van der Oije and drummer Ruben Israel, Charlotte Wessels and Martijn Westerholt have conjured what is plainly the most diverse, daring and powerful album of Delain's remarkable story so far. Ranging from the thunderous pomp and melodic might of opener *Hands Of Gold* and the brooding rush of *Suckerpunch* through to the dark, exploratory grandeur of *Chrysalis – The Last Breath* and an exhilarating cover of unsung Queen gem *Scandal* (originally from the British legends' album *The Miracle*), *Moonbathers* showcases the blossoming of the Dutch band's creativity and collective chemistry.

Martijn elaborates: "Releasing a Queen cover is risky business, but the song *Scandal* just fits Delain perfectly having exactly the right vibe. With the blessing of Brain May we were able to create our own surprising version of it. The result is a typical Delain sound on a legendary song. Opening track *Hands Of Gold* is a song I'm very proud of as well. It's very heavy, very fast, and Alissa's grunts, growls & backing vocals are fantastic and refreshing. A new sound for Delain, and an especially heavy introduction of this album."

"What we usually do at the beginning of an album process is consider what we liked and didn't like about the album before, and we realized that we really liked the production on *The Human Contradiction*. We deliberately chose to keep certain factors similar to that," explains Martijn, who took the producer position for this album, as he did on their previous one. "We worked together with the same mixing team, the same master, and the same classical arranger, and in that sense we continued where we left off." When it comes to the songs themselves it's a different story. "We had the luxury problem of doing back to back tours. As we didn't have the time to take a break from touring long enough to write and record an entire album, we decided upfront to chop up the entire process into three chunks, in order to utilize the smaller timeframes between tours and give the songs the time and attention they needed. As a result, it's a very varied album. It's an album of extremes: the heavy songs are heavier, the ballad more sensitive, and then there's songs with a real rock vibe, and that's due to the way we recorded it, in different times, in different places and in different moods."

Renowned for penning lyrics that resonate with Delain's huge fan base, Charlotte has excelled herself on *Moonbathers*, drawing from her personal experiences and taking inspiration from literature and cinema to compose the band's darkest but deepest set of mysterious messages yet.

"I was looking at the lyrics and some of them were dark to the point of being morbid!" she laughs. "There is a lot of thought about endings, both figuratively and very literally; songs about death. Negative emotions are a trigger for my creativity, but though most of my lyrics originate there, I don't want to glorify it. So as a lyricist I try to make sure that there is always some sort of light at the end of the tunnel. I also realized that when I feel bad, it is sad music more than anything that makes me feel better. So I embraced the idea that it's possible to find comfort there, and I went looking for a metaphor for finding that light in the darkness, the ultimate icon of that, for me, is the moon. So I chose *moonbathers*, rather than *sunbathers*, as a metaphor for those who find comfort in darkness."

Martijn looks back with a smile: "Moonbathers turned out fantastic. The productional quality, heaviness, contrast between light and heavy parts is very refreshing. The sound is exactly what we were aiming for. Heavy but transparent, I think we achieved the typical Delain style now. Very recognizable, and with its own identity."

2016 has already proved to be a special year for Delain, but the sky's the limit for this most ambitious and enthusiastic of bands. *Moonbathers* proves that their artistic impulses are still firing with full force and with an ever-expanding global audience anticipating their return to the live arena, this band are plainly on the fast track to ever greater and more enduring success.

"We don't know how we'll top this year, but after we're done with all the 10th anniversary celebrations, we'll set our eyes back to the future!" the band concludes. "Let's start preparing for that next decade of Delain and our 20th anniversary! Releasing new music is always an exciting process and we're enjoying our time on the road so much now that we just want to keep going onwards and upwards and continue the road we're on."

Dom Lawson – July 2016