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20

QUESTIONS WITH

Carissa

Rosario

CONCERT REVIEWS

Apocalyptica
and

Fresh Fest 2010:

Ice Cube, Warren G, Khl
Frost & Tha Dogg Pound



MUSIC REVIEWS...

Atmosphere

To All My Friends



Perfection Defined
2011 Bugatti Veyron 55

GAMES REVIEWED

DEAD RISING 2

HALO

REACH

October 2010

Linkin Park

A Thousand Suns

4

Carissa Rosario

October Cover Model
20 Questions with Carissa.
Photography by Andrew Gates
Make-up & Hair by Christina Chen.

8

Pit Pass

Get In The Driver's Seat!
Featured Car:
The 2011 Bugatti Veyron SS
By Nicolas Bates

12

All Access

The Latest Albums Reviewed!
Albums Reviewed:
Linkin Park:
A Thousand Suns
By Mike Daclan
Atmosphere:
To All My Friends
By Alex Groberman

16

All Access Spotlight

Artists/Bands Featured:
Underoath, Weezer
and Interpol.
By Silas Valentino & Mike Daclan

18

Live & Loud

Live Show Reviews.
Featured Artists/Show:
Apocalyptica and
Fresh Fest 2010:
Ice Cube, Warren G, Kid Frost,
The Dogg Pound and more.
By Nicolas Bates & Alex Groberman

24

Coming Up...

Models To Keep An Eye On
Featured Model:
Ami Haruna
Tokyo, JP

28

Game On

The Latest Games Reviewed.
Games Reviewed:
Halo: Reach
By Albert Marrero, Jr.
Dead Rising 2
By Mike Lowther

On The Cover
Photo by: Andrew Gates
Hair and Make-up: Christina Chen
This Page
Photo by: Andrew Gates
Hair and Make-up: Christina Chen

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EDITOR IN CHIEF

Andrew Gates

Art Director

Trish Gates

Senior Editor

Mary Stafford

Assistant Editor

Larry Herman

All Access Contributor

Alex Groberman, Silas Valentino & Mike Daclan

Live & Loud Contributors

Nicolas Bates, Alex Groberman & Lindsay Murphy

Pit Pass Contributor

Nicolas Bates

Game On Contributors

Mike Lowther, Albert Marrero, Jr.

Contributing Photographers

Andrew Gates & Nicolas Bates

Contributing Videographers

Nate Olson

Contributing Make-up Artist

Lyndsay Gabrielle & Christina Chen

Contributing Hair Stylist

Lyndsay Gabrielle & Christina Chen

Advertising

Andrew Gates

andrew@RUKUSmag.com

Mailing Address

RUKUS Magazine

P.O. Box 91651

Los Angeles, CA 90009

20 QUESTIONS

Get To Know Your Cover Model

CARISSA ROSARIO

Photography by: Andrew Gates
Make-up & Hair by: Christina Chen

Carissa Rosario was raised in Boston, but not even a New England winter could keep the ice from melting when this half Puerto Rican, half Greek sashayed down the runway. Carissa started modeling young, landing her first photoshoot at the tender age of ten. She traveled around the US competing in numerous pageants, taking home five titles. In October 2009, Carissa placed 2nd runner up in the Miss Latina USA pageant. The skills she learned from the pageant circuit made her transition to spokesmodel a breeze, representing AMERICAN DREAM for three years. Her next big break came in Los Angeles hosting the Telemundo show COMO TV, which she parlayed into work with other various Spanish Networks as a host, dancer and model. Carissa's other passion besides modeling is music. She is currently in the studio recording. Keep your ears open fellas, her single will be dropping this fall.





20 QUESTIONS

1. What's your Ethnicity?

Puerto Rican and Greek.

2. What's your zodiac sign?

Cancer.

3. Where are you from originally?

Boston, MA.

4. What did you like most about growing up in Boston?

I loved the family life, having most of my family close by.

5. What kind of mischief did you get into while growing up?

I was a good girl!

6. What's the craziest thing you've ever done?

Bungie Jumping.

7. What brought you to LA?

Spanish television, and to pursue a career in singing and spokesmodeling.

8. What's your favorite hobby and why?

I love traveling, and exploring new places.

9. What's your guilty pleasure?

Chocolate.

10. Who do you admire?

I admire anyone who is doing what they love to do.

11. What's one of your personal goals?

To be a successful recording artist. Also to have my skincare line internationally, and be the face of a copy or product!

12. What do guys compliment you on the most?

My smile.

13. What's your favorite body part on yourself?

My eyes.

14. What's your least favorite body part on yourself?

I don't have a least favorite.

15. What do you look for in a guy?

A guy who is smart, intelligent, and a go getter.

16. What's the first thing you notice about a guy?

His character.

17. What turns you on?

A man who knows how to treat a woman!

18. What turns you off?

When a man has no class whatsoever.

19. What's your biggest pet peeve?

When someone talks with there mouth full.

20. Who's your celebrity pass?

I don't actually have one, Yet! (laugh)

RM

PIT PASS

Get In The Driver's Seat!

Perfecting Perfection

So, how exactly does one go about making the fastest car in the world faster? Simple: more power, more air, more fuel. Right? Well, that, and an abundance of cold hard cash. But when you are exotic sports car manufacture Bugatti, money is of no consequence. And thus, the new 2011 Bugatti Veyron Super Sport: a car that has surpassed its own record for the fastest production car in the world.

As a whole, the Veyron will not mutate or have any completely drastic reformations. Changes to the powerplant include its four turbos growing in size along with each of its four intercoolers. The Veyron will keep its compression to a low 9.0:1 but power will increase from 1,001 hp to 1,200 hp and torque from 922 ft/lb of torque to 1,100 ft/lb of torque. And with the entire, newly fashioned, monocoque and skin of the vehicle being crafted from carbon fiber, an absurd 661 pounds has been shed off the car's weight, bringing it in at roughly 3,825 lbs. The Veyron Super Sport will retain the same 7 speed DSG transmission.



SPECS

2011 Bugatti Veyron SS

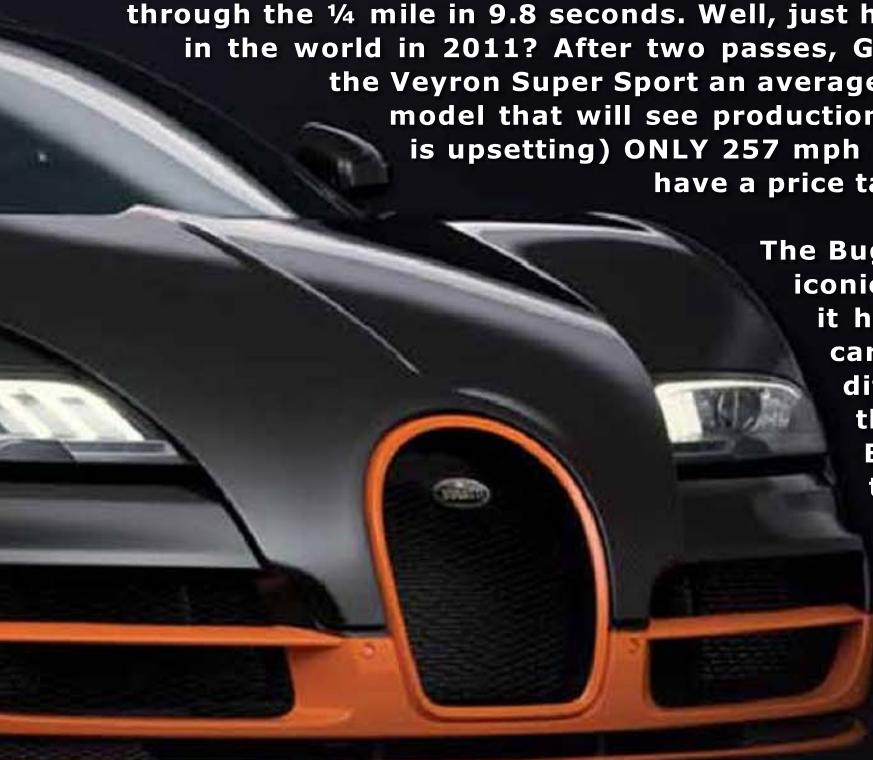
Price:	\$2,500,000+
Engine:	8.0L quad-turbo W-16
Torque:	1,200 lb-ft. @6,000 rpm
Horsepower:	1,106 hp @2,200 rpm
0-60 MPH:	2.2 sec.
Top Speed:	257 mph
EST. MPG:	6.2 city/16.2 hwy
Available:	Production starts fall 2010




Written by: Nicolas Bates
Photos by: Bugatti

Other changes the Veyron Super Sport will see are a slightly more streamlined look. Air intakes that protruded from above the Veyron 16.4's engine will now be integrated into the Super Sport's roof, winning the car aerodynamic points. The front fascia will get a slight make over as well, with the two front intakes slimming down width wise, but getting longer. The rear end of the car may become a little more aggressive looking to some as it will now sport a double diffuser and two wider, yet more compact, centrally located exhaust pipes, in lieu of the single pipe seen previously. The Veyron's hydraulic spoiler will still act like an air brake, tilting to a 55-degree angle when braking begins. The Veyron Super Sport will also see its suspension modified and will now come with longer travel springs, stiffer anti-roll bars and new dampers.

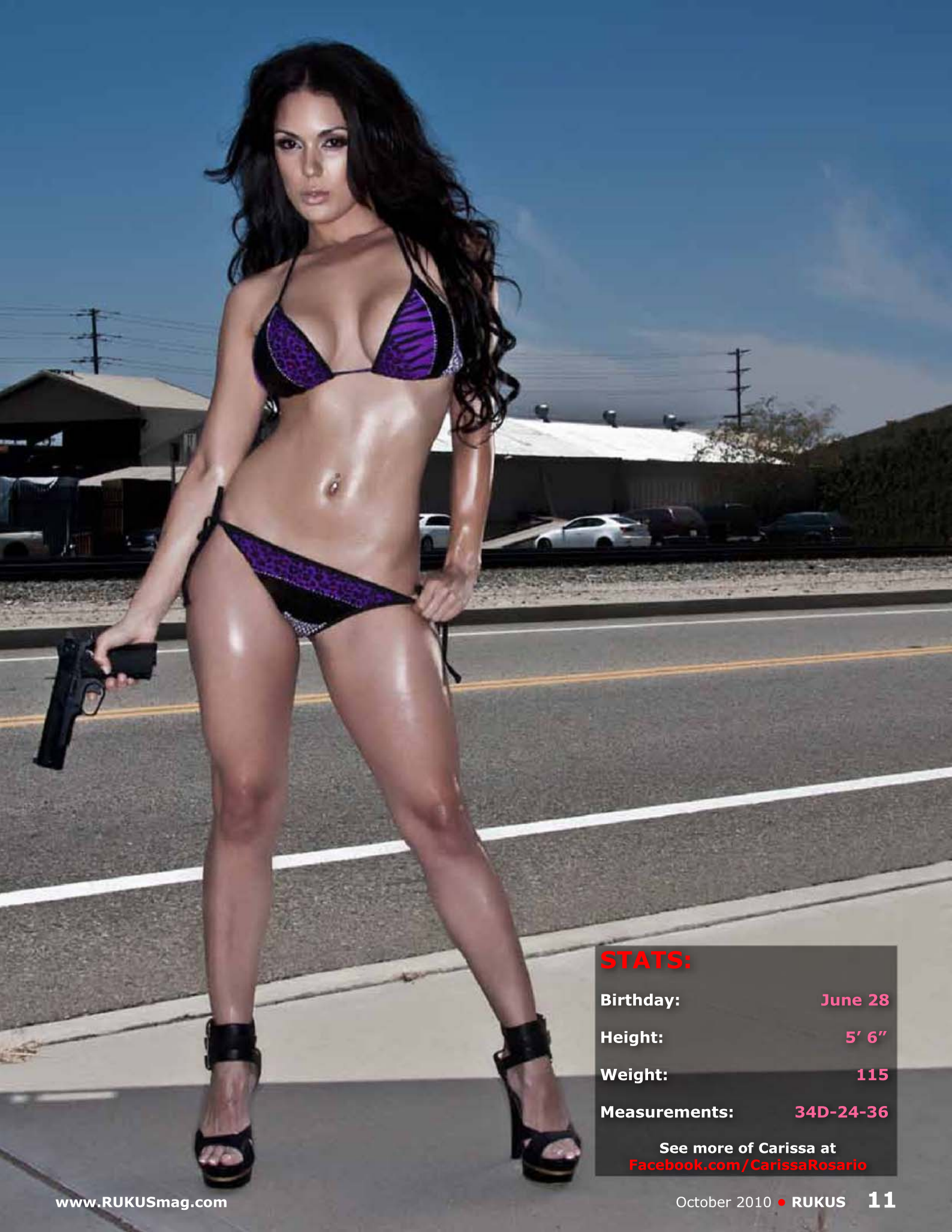
Being deemed the fastest production car in the world, you better believe this car has an amazing roster of time stats to amaze you. The Veyron Super Sport will get you from 0-60 mph in under 2.3 seconds, 0-100 in 5.2 seconds and will send you through the ¼ mile in 9.8 seconds. Well, just how fast is the fastest production car in the world in 2011? After two passes, Guinness World Record officials gave the Veyron Super Sport an average speed of 267.86 mph. However, the model that will see production will be limited to (and I know this is upsetting) ONLY 257 mph to help protect the car's tires, which have a price tag over \$25,000.



The Bugatti Veyron became one of the most iconic sports cars in the world in 2005 when it held the record of fastest production car with a speed of 253.81 mph. Two different manufacturers have stripped that title from Bugatti since. However, Bugatti has exclaimed to the world that it will not be held back for long with the new 2011 Bugatti Veyron Super Sport. Production is to begin fall of 2011 and orders have been taken. This car will only be able to be experienced by some of the wealthiest the world has to offer, but we can still "oogle and oogle" over the mastery it has over almost any other car on this planet. **RM**



*... smart,
intelligent, and a
go getter.*



STATS:

Birthday: June 28
Height: 5' 6"
Weight: 115
Measurements: 34D-24-36

See more of Carissa at
[Facebook.com/CarissaRosario](https://www.facebook.com/CarissaRosario)

ALL ACCESS

The Best Albums Reviewed!

Time For a Change

Photo by: James Minchin

Written by: Mike Daclan

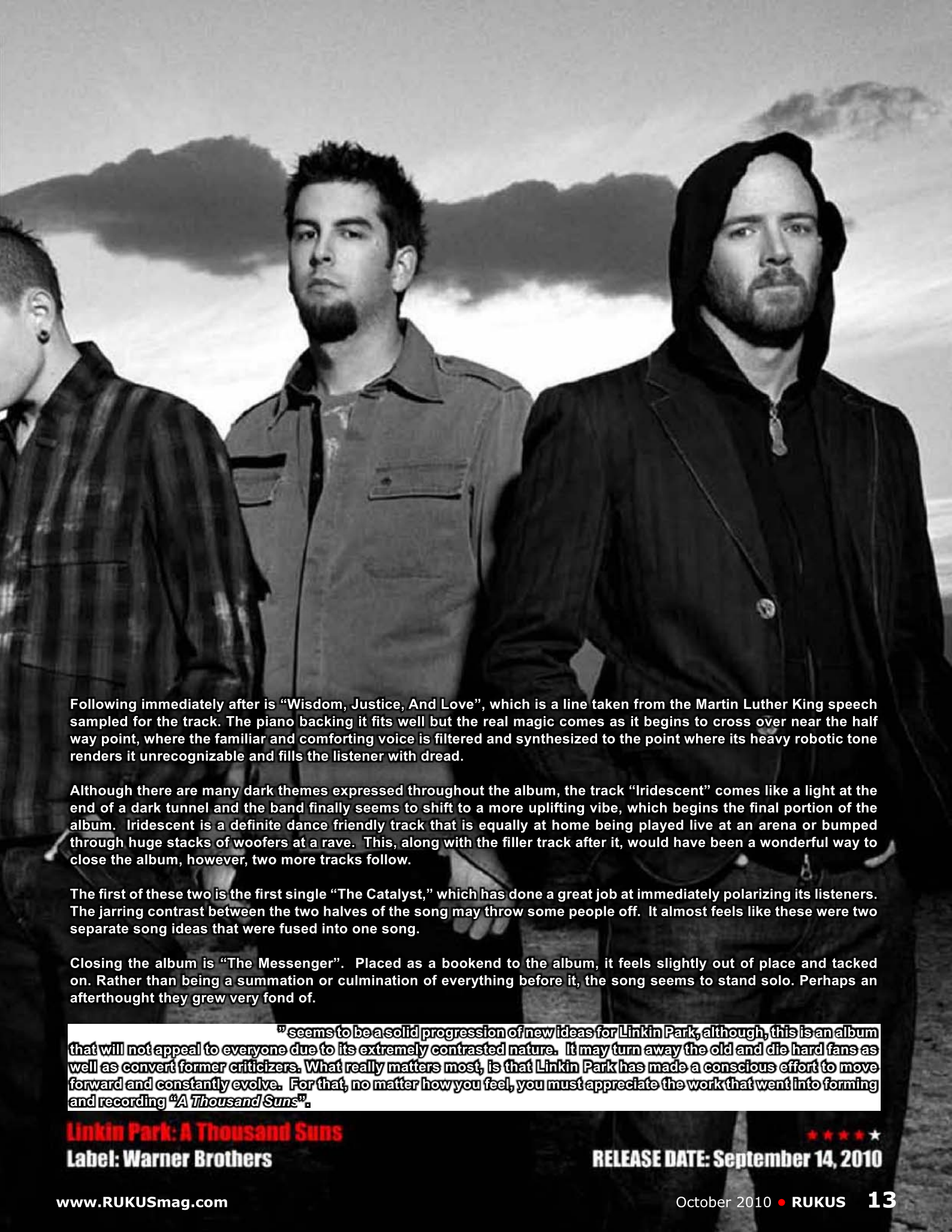
When asked about their latest release, frontman Chester Bennington of Linkin Park states, "We wanted to make an album that would challenge us." A few days before its release the members of Linkin Park gathered with members of their fan base, the Linkin Park Underground, and various friends and family for a special listening party at The Music Box, in Hollywood, CA. Keeping with their usual merging of sights and sounds, the album was to be accompanied by a full laser light show on a screen above the stage. As everyone moved inside and began to crowd around, the lights dropped out and we were treated to the intro to of "A Thousand Suns".

Ethereal sounds wrapped around us while a single piano note rang out in the dark. Choral chanting filled the air before we heard the opening lyrics of the album and it is immediately clear that Linkin Park is trying to head into a new direction. These choral chants and soft female like synthesized vocals were replaced by a somber recorded speech from J. Robert Oppenheimer, in which he talked about what it was like after America had detonated the first atomic bomb, overlaid with a heavy and distorted electronic drum beat. This somber and ominous tone will be a theme that is repeated throughout the album.

This is an album in which Linkin Park are trying to reach out to the listeners and warn them about the problems that society faces. It is a theme that was explored in "Minutes to Midnight," so even though they are treading on familiar ground, there is a maturity to "A Thousand Suns" that was lacking in their previous efforts. This feels more expansive, sonically, as well as lyrically.

Themes and ideas are backed by a wide ranging collection of musical styles, covering everything from industrial (see the intro of "When They Come For Me"), trance and synth pop to straight forward, simple acoustic guitar ballads like "The Messenger". Not all of these quite hit the mark but credit must be given to bands that reach to cover so much in one album.

One of the most notable moments of the album comes not from the band itself, but from a speech given by Mario Salvo, which is used in the song "Wretches and Kings". After Salvo speaks, Mike Shinoda returns to MC duties before Chester brings in the heavy vocals and the song is given a dance hall vibe. Perhaps something only Linkin Park can really do.



Following immediately after is “Wisdom, Justice, And Love”, which is a line taken from the Martin Luther King speech sampled for the track. The piano backing it fits well but the real magic comes as it begins to cross over near the half way point, where the familiar and comforting voice is filtered and synthesized to the point where its heavy robotic tone renders it unrecognizable and fills the listener with dread.

Although there are many dark themes expressed throughout the album, the track “Iridescent” comes like a light at the end of a dark tunnel and the band finally seems to shift to a more uplifting vibe, which begins the final portion of the album. Iridescent is a definite dance friendly track that is equally at home being played live at an arena or bumped through huge stacks of woofers at a rave. This, along with the filler track after it, would have been a wonderful way to close the album, however, two more tracks follow.

The first of these two is the first single “The Catalyst,” which has done a great job at immediately polarizing its listeners. The jarring contrast between the two halves of the song may throw some people off. It almost feels like these were two separate song ideas that were fused into one song.

Closing the album is “The Messenger”. Placed as a bookend to the album, it feels slightly out of place and tacked on. Rather than being a summation or culmination of everything before it, the song seems to stand solo. Perhaps an afterthought they grew very fond of.

“ seems to be a solid progression of new ideas for Linkin Park, although, this is an album that will not appeal to everyone due to its extremely contrasted nature. It may turn away the old and die hard fans as well as convert former criticsizers. What really matters most, is that Linkin Park has made a conscious effort to move forward and constantly evolve. For that, no matter how you feel, you must appreciate the work that went into forming and recording “A Thousand Suns”.

Linkin Park: A Thousand Suns

Label: Warner Brothers

★★★★★
RELEASE DATE: September 14, 2010



Rising to the TOP

Photo by: Rhymesayers Entertainment
Written by: Alex Groberman

In order to fully understand Atmosphere's "To All My Friends, Blood Makes The Blady Ho " it's key to note that this isn't actually a true follow-up/effort to their previous album, "When Life Gives You Lemons, You Paint That Sh*t Gold."

Even though this isn't so much an official album as it is an EP, Slug takes no prisoners right out of the gate as he continues to impart wisdom on listeners for anything and everything.

On "The Loser Wins" he waxes poetic about the trials and tribulations of dealing with friendship and teenage pregnancy. The song feels like it gets deeper with every lyric that he spits, a theme that becomes all too common with this album.

"The Best Day" sends a more general lesson to the people regarding making a bad day into a better day. The beauty of the song, though, is that the subject matter is something your regular folks can understand and relate to. Lyrics like the ones from this particular song are universally understood: "Broken glass, computer crash // The car won't start and the fires went flat // Dog got loose, brought back a dead cat // Daughter found it and had a panic attack // Plus you ain't had sex in how long? // Afraid to admit that the fire's all gone // The better half is talking about separate // You wish you could take it back to yesterday // You're not alone, its hard as hell // But don't waste no time feeling sorry for self // We'll be right here with you, through your war // 'Cause you're the one we make this music for."

The thing that really sticks out about this particular work is Slug's strange ability to tell all of these fictional



stories without appearing like he's preaching to the listener. Even when he takes it back to his own life like he does on "The Number Nine," the way he explains his unsuccessful ways with a female that just wouldn't let him do what he wanted to do makes even the most hardcore rap fan grin.

That's not to say that Slug doesn't take a turn for the more serious at various points. There is no better example of that than "The Major Leagues" where the veteran rapper discusses a friend that he lost to the so-called "dark side." The metaphors on the track alone are enough to cease and astound anyone that takes the time to truly listen and try to understand.

The "Atmosphere" formula has worked for this long in large part due to Slug's storytelling ability, but also because of Ant's production. The growth and understanding of what sounds work and what don't is noticeably better on this piece of work than it was on "Lemons," and it will only make the listeners hungrier for Ant's next project.

All in all, while this may be sold simply and quietly as a "double EP," there is no denying that Atmosphere (yet again) has put out some of the most fulfilling and underrated music you'll hear this year. A true treat for any real music fan.

Atmosphere: To All My Friends, Blood Makes the Blade Holy

Label: Rhymesayers Entertainment

★★★★★

RELEASE DATE: September 6, 2010

ALL ACCESS SPOTLIGHT

[Myspace.com/Underoath](#)



UNDEROATH, *DISAMBIGUATION*

It is within a very intimate setting that the members of Underoath, including new drummer Daniel Davidson (formerly of Norma Jean), sit down with a few friends and members of the press to preview their new album "*Disambiguation*" at Swinghouse studios in West Hollywood. In this, their 7th album, Underoath show amazing growth and progression over their previous albums, as they strive to move away from the "metalcore" label. "*Disambiguation*" has succeeded in entering a new territory that is hard to define yet comfortingly familiar. With drummer and vocalist Aaron Gillespie gone, Spencer Chamberlain has a chance to let his vocals soar from the melodic to the crushing and everything in between. The drums have moved in a more technical direction, creating great drum hooks and breaks which create a wonderful groove the rest of the band layers over. The guitars on the album are not the most technical but the melodies created fit their songs perfectly. Peppered into the songs are several electronica breaks, which provide breathing room and ambient textures before you are slammed with the full force of the band. The contrasting pieces blend together well. When asked about the album, Spencer told us, "I've never been more proud!" And with good reason...

Writers: Mike Daclan & Silas Valentino

Edited by: Nicolas Bates

WEEZER, *HURLEY*

Weezer's latest release, "*Hurley*," continues their tongue-in-cheek take on rock n' roll. The album's cover features the TV show *Lost*'s character Jose "Hurley" Garcia. His big, honest grin sets the tone for the album, which is fun and poppy and does not take itself too serious.

"*Hurley*" is Weezer's 8th album and their third in the last three years. The album does not have that classic "Weezer" feel to it like their first two, but compared to their recent releases, it is a good step forward. Lead singer Rivers Cuomo enlisted some talented and random songwriters to help him write up some tunes for this release. Alternative Country singer Ryan Adams co-wrote the song "Run Away" and 4 Non Blondes singer Linda Perry lends a hand on "Brave New World." The best collaboration comes from legendary songwriter Mac Davis on the track "Time Flies" - an odd, yet completely captivating song about getting old. The guitar on this track sounds old and vintage, yet somehow fresh and new.

Weezer will never make another "Blue album" or "Pinerton." Cuomo will never write another song about his love for a potential lesbian or his ill-fated sweater, but he does not need to. Whatever he decides to do will work, and that is Weezer.

[Myspace.com/Weezer](#)



[Myspace.com/Interpol](#)



INTERPOL, *INTERPOL*

Interpol's new self-titled release carries a dark, ominous tone throughout the album and would make the perfect soundtrack for an October stroll through the park. Songs like "Summer Well," "Barricade," and "Safe Without" stand out as highlights, but on the whole, the album is not as consistent as previous stunning albums like "Turn On the Bright Lights" and "Antics."

The guitars are reverb friendly and sound like they were recorded in a dark, empty New York subway. Music wise, it sounds more like their earlier albums, but does not have that unstoppable lure like "Obstacle 1," "PDA," and "Evil."

David Pajo, of post-rock band Slint, will now replace bassist Carlos D. Baselines in songs like "Obstacle 1" and "Specialist" will be hard to replicate, but the band should succeed.

Starting off with a bang of a debut album and then following it with another hit record is a hard thing to do for any band. To switch labels and bassists can certainly hinder creative juices, but Interpol have proven they can stay strong with their latest self titled.



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LIVE & LOUD

The Live Show Reviews

Apocalyptica

Photos by: Nicolas Bates

Written by: Nicolas Bates

Early September brought the mid-size Club Nokia the larger-than-life powerhouse of orchestral metal that is the band Apocalyptica. Apocalyptica has had a hardcore fanbase since their debut release in 1996, "Plays Metallica by Four Cellos," and it only seems to have expanded. Since then, metal heads, and non-metal heads alike, have been drawn to Apocalyptica's unique blend of contemporary metal covers and original orchestral pieces. These guys do it like no one else.

The 3 classically trained cellists hit the stage hard and commenced their set with Metallica's "Wherever I May Roam". Cellist Paavo Lötjönen took to screaming James Hetfield's lyrics at an audible volume, which only seemed to entice the already revved up crowd. Even to the untrained ear and eye, it was very apparent from the onset that this band is in a class of their own. Each member plucked, strummed, and made their upbows and downbows appear to be so gorgeously violent. This was passion.

The band's set never lacked any form of energy. Whether they were headbanging across the stage, or cellist Eicca Toppinen had addressed them, the crowd never lost excitement for what it was they were witnessing. For tracks, "End of Me" and "I'm Not Jesus," off the latest, "7th Symphony," vocalist Tipe Johnson appeared on stage to step it up a notch. Although Tipe did not record with Apocalyptica on "7th Symphony," no one was the wiser, I assure you.

After blasting the crowd with nearly 220 shredding BPM at times, Eicca Toppinen again addressed the crowd and asked, "I know you like Metallica, but do you like beautiful cello music?" The crowd roared and Eicca was affirmed of what he already knew to be the answer. The band sat down, for the first time that night, and drummer Mikko Sirén rushed over to join the band at the front of the stage. There he would graciously play his single floor tom for the next two classical pieces, "Beautiful" and "Sacra". Both of these pieces were astonishing in every sense of the word, and showed the extreme versatility and talent of Apocalyptica. The crowd became instantly mesmerized.

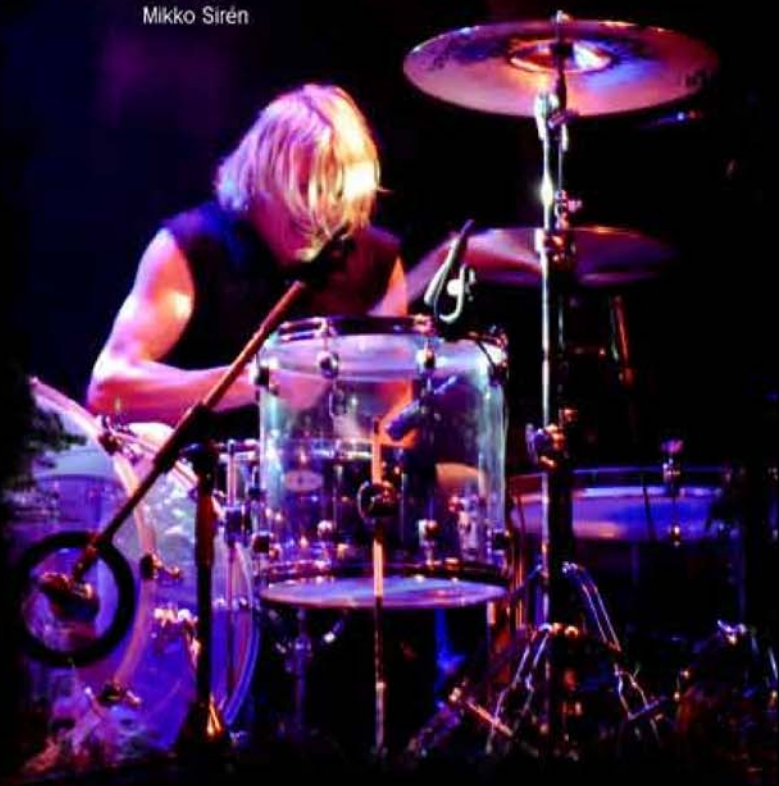
One more song was played before an announcement was made that more manpower was necessary. Eicca then welcomed Tipe Johnson and vocalist Kyo from Dir En Grey (who had played previously that night) on stage for what was to be, "a world premiere for the next song." After a brief moment, Apocalyptica and Kyo ripped into the song, "Bring Them To Light," where Kyo was really able to showcase his amazing guttural growls, high shrieks and standard singing skills. Shortly thereafter, Apocalyptica finished out their night with an encore of, "I Don't Care" and classic piece, "Hall of the Mountain King".

With genres being broken everyday, Apocalyptica still maintain an originality that no one or no band can ever take away from them. They have crossed lines and boundaries that no one had dare cross before them, and they have been greatly rewarded for it. To date, the band is said to have played 850 to 1000 shows in 50 countries. I do not see why that number will ever cease to grow.

Show: Apocalyptica
Venue: Club Nokia

Date: September 9, 2010
City: Los Angeles, CA

Mikko Sirén



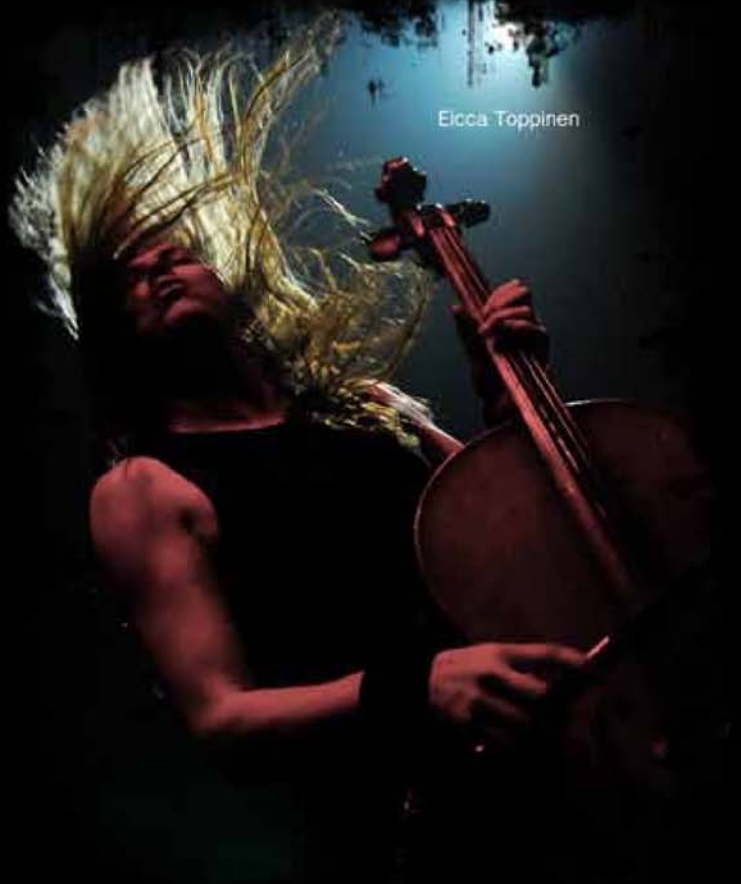
Paavo Lötjönen



Perttu Kivilaakso



Elcca Toppinen



Fresh Fest 2010

Photos by: Nicolas Bates
Written by: Alex Groberman

Putting on a show that would have been completely out of place anywhere outside of Los Angeles, KDAY's one-of-a-kind Fresh Fest 2010 event at the Nokia Theater was a tribute to west coast hip hop and all its glory.

Rodney O and Joe Cooley kicked things off, appropriately so, considering they were truly the first to represent the left coast the way it deserved to be represented. As Rodney made sure to point out there man enough to shout out, "Fuck New York." The performance was the absolutely ideal way to start off a night dedicated to all things anti-east coast just by showing how superior west coast rap was.

Danny Trejo

Next up on the agenda was the first Chicano OG, Kid Frost. Introduced by special guest, "*Machete*" star Danny Trejo, Frost rocked the crowd with all of his classic tunes aside from, oddly enough, "*La Raza*." Towards the end of his set, the famed rapper brought out his son and the two performed a few powerful songs together in what could only be described as an on-stage passing of the torch between family members. The set closed with Frost showing that even OG's can catch up with the times, as he hyped up his Twitter page and told all in attendance to follow.

DJ Quik, with a full band accompanying him, rocked the crowd next, blasting some of his greatest hits like "*Tonite*," "*Down Down Down*" and "*Jus' Like Compton*" to a crowd that was eating up every syllable he uttered. The oddly calming performance became the perfect jump-off point for the latter part of the evening, and no doubt the part of the show that everyone had been looking forward to.

(Cont'd on page 22)

Kid Frost



Lady of Rage



Kurupt



Daz Dillinger



(Sunset Strip Music Festival cont'd from page 20)

Tha Dogg Pound emerged from backstage next, rocking out the crowd with all of their classic tunes. Interestingly enough, they had far more people on stage with them than anyone would have before or after them (possibly in the history of the venue) including Lady of Rage, RBX, Bo-Rock and The Twinz. The highlight of the set, without a doubt, was Warren G spitting the infamous lyrics to "Regulate" while absolutely everyone in attendance rapped along.

When the clock struck eleven and it was time to roll out the headliner, a shiny faced "Sugar" Shane Mosley decked out in a blue suit came out to introduce Ice Cube. Along with his DJ, Crazy Toones and his big brother WC, Cube entertained the crowd with all of his classics, including "Steady Mobbin'," "Bop Gun," "We Be Clubbin'," "You Know How We Do It," and of course, "It Was a Good Day." The west coast legend was also kind enough to drop a few songs from his newly released "I Am the West" album including "She Couldn't Make it on Her Own," featuring his son, and "I Rep That West." Reminding everyone that he was the king of the left coast, Cube ended his performance with a warning for people not to act up when they left, and then headed off stage. No other ending to a concert that epitomized what the west was all about would have been appropriate.

Ice Cube

It was a good day! **RM**

Show: Fresh Fest 2010
Venue: Nokia Theater

Date: September 18, 2010
City: Los Angeles, CA



Warren G

DJ Quik

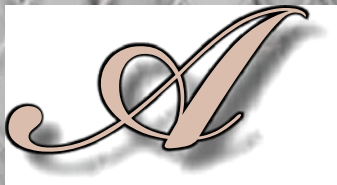
WC

COMING UP...

Models To Keep An Eye On

Ami Haruna

Photography by: Andrew Gates
Make-up & Hair by: Lyndsay Gabrielle



Ami Haruna was born in the Land of the Rising Sun's capital, Tokyo. She started ballet at the age of 4 and soon after began modeling in Japan. She continued her pursuit of dance all through high school, even winning a Silver prize at the Tony Tee World Dance Competition. As Miss Teen Tokyo, Ami made it as a finalist in the Miss Japan pageant, and began working in various fashion shows and on television. Ami graduated university with a BA in Performing Arts, Media and Communication, as well as Psychology. Now calling Los Angeles home, Ami has her eyes set on Hollywood.







THE STATS

Birthday:
October 25.

Zodiac Sign:
Scorpio.

Measurements:
35-24-33.

Height:
5'5"

Weight:
99 lbs.

Ethnicity:
Japanese.

Hometown:
Tokyo, JP.

Turn Ons:
Hmm... ABS. (smile)

Turn Offs:
Rudeness.

Guilty Pleasure:
Hawaiian chocolates
(island princess) they
are SO good!

Pet Peeves:
Bad Drivers and
Traffic.

Celebrity Pass:
Brad Pitt.

See more of Ami at
[Facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)

GAME ON

The Latest Games Reviewed!

Left for VEGAS

Written by: Mike Lowther

It's been a long time since *Dead Rising*. Released almost around time of the Xbox 360's launch date, the original *Dead Rising* proved to be a solid title by combining revolutionary environments with almost limitless capabilities in a shopping mall. It takes the phrase "sandbox" to a whole new level in the action/survival horror genre. This month, we're reunited with the sequel from original developer Capcom and the new Blue Castle - and with no surprise, it's better than ever.

In early September, Xbox Live released *Dead Rising 2: Case Zero* which allowed a sneak peek at the game and acted as a prequel to the full game. In the demo/prequel, you're introduced to the story of motocross star Chuck Green and his young daughter. We learn that his daughter is infected and the virus is continuously contained by providing her with daily injections of Zombrex. This is only a treatment, however, and there's no cure. Throughout a faux Las Vegas, officially tagged Fortune City, there are survivors who are in need of help, and some who can help you. Pawn shops are littered throughout the playing field where you can purchase Zombrex and special weapons. Earn money by hitting the slots, or get drunk and take a sledgehammer to an ATM machine. There's also a special mission to play poker with the survivors. You clearly don't need to be lucky to have fun in Fortune City.

Not only can you pick up just about any object lying around Fortune City, you can combine various items to make more powerful weapons in specialized maintenance rooms scattered around the malls, casinos and hotel areas. Items marked with a little blue wrench icon designate that it can be modified. You can combine a box of nails to a baseball bat and whack zombies with a spiked slugger. I've rigged a car battery to a rake and stab/shocked the brain matter out of nearby deadwalkers. Get creative and use elements throughout the area. Upon rescuing a group of survivors, one of them had a limp and was running too slow to keep up with the crew. I stumbled across a wheel chair and was able to sit him down and push him through crowds of blood drooling zombies. The survivor AI has much improved; they're more agile and can stiffen your chances of group survival on the path back to the safe house if you hand them a fine weapon. Multiplayer has also been added where a friend can join your game and help you push way through waves of zombies and deranged psychopaths. There's also a mode featuring a reality TV based environment stuffed with minigames called *Terror Is Reality*.

There's no slacking in the environment creations, as everything from realistic Vegas structures and interiors to Chuck's clothing is highly detailed. You can even see your own reflection in the mirrors - something even new games today don't even do. The cinematics are entertaining and there's definitely wit and humor from the unique characters and decent reading from the voice actors. There are now loads of save points and much easier player handling with a closer third-person view. We can also run while shooting this time around. *Dead Rising 2* has simpler control of your character, more save spots, and yes - a digital watch to tell the time.

There's not much to nitpick here, other than copious amounts of load times which can drain out a little excitement. Every area of the map requires an arduous load time, but it may improve if you install the disc to your hard drive. Considering the excessive graphic detail and lots of stuff going on in each area, it's understandable. I was surprised to discover you can't give yourself your own waypoint. You can only use the arrowed waypoint to navigate toward a mission or survivor(s) in need of help, but not for your own personal excursions. Sometimes the stock waypoint tries to take you the long way. Find your shortcuts, since they will be a big time-saver for rescuing survivors.

Overall, I'm very confident to say that this is a solid winner. Replay value is a must, as your points roll over to your following playthrough, and unlockable outfits and goodies are a treat. Slashing zombies with absurd, yet interesting items of your very own creation is just a facet of ingenuity in this game that separates itself from the rest of the titles in it's genre. *Dead Rising 2* is a must-own.

Oh, and remember... what happens in Fortune City, stays in Fortune City.



Dead Rising 2

PRODUCER: Capcom

PLATFORM: Xbox 360, PS3, Microsoft Windows

RELEASE DATE: September 28, 2010

RATINGS: Mature
GENRE: Action-RPG

Back to Where it Began

Written by: Albert Marrero, Jr.

Halo: Reach is exactly the kind of game that elicits gamers standing outside of a Game Stop at 11:45pm in anticipation of a midnight launch. If you're reading this, you already know what I'm talking about, so let's jump right in!

The first thing players notice about *Halo: Reach* is the absence of Master Chief. Instead you get to play as Noble 6, a member of an elite Spartan team. The story takes place before the events of the previous Halo games and sets the stage for what we've all come to love and loathe about the Covenant vs. Human war. The graphics are intense, and the gameplay starts out as a slow-burning ember and gradually explodes into full-fledged battles, which is pure bliss. The story is deeply involved, taking one from ground war to air combat and everything in between. As with previous games, you can drag a friend along to be a part of the campaign fun too. I highly recommend this (unless you're going for the A Monument To All Your Sins achievement), because the AI on the computer players? Let's just say that they can sometimes be... aloof. Word of advice, don't ever let them drive a vehicle. You may be able to get by being the Warthog gunner on Normal, but on Legendary, you'll get driven right into a swarm of enemies every time. (Sad face)

Luckily, we have Multiplayer. If you can't find a friend to play campaign with, there's a matchmaking option for campaign, which is cool. Multiplayer has received a slight overhaul, but all for the best. The menus are incredible, and it puts everything right at your fingertips. Check out everything your friends are doing in *Halo: Reach* without having to hit the Xbox button and bring up the menu. They've actually reduced the number of competitive lobbies, which is eh... I dunno yet. When trying to play Slayer, you can end up with Zombies, or SWAT, instead of old school, peck-that-face Team Slayer, so you decide. There's also a ranked competitive division that assigns you a value based on play during "seasons". Sounds like fun to me. Oh, and check out the levels. Nostalgia anyone?

Introduced in *Halo 3: ODST*, Firefight is back, and it's a load of fun. Again, players can select which particular game they want, ranging from standard to Rockets, but it's a vote, so let democracy rule! Ok, so now the major change to multiplayer... New to the game is the introduction of "perks", if you will. You can select different starting perks ranging from sprint to jet-pack. Jet-pack? I won't spoil the fun, but each has it's own strengths and weaknesses, so play around with each until you find one that you really like, and then pwn. There's a new credit system which is awesome too. Unlock armor tweaks, voices, and effects for your character. Complete daily challenges to earn even more points and soon you'll be on your way to a black visor with cool shoulder pads. (I know, it's easy to get geeked out when thinking about how L337 my guy will be.)

I won't elaborate too much on Forge, because if you've tried it in other Halo games, you're familiar with it already. It's a level-designer's playground, so give it a shot if you haven't. Create custom maps and tweak existing ones. I don't have that much free time, but it's a neat aspect of *Halo: Reach* and definitely contributes to that overall "complete package" moniker.

Ultimately, *Halo: Reach* is the perfect swan song for the folks at Bungie. Microsoft Games will now take over the future of the franchise, and I must say it's been a memorable run. From the magnum handgun in *Halo: Combat Evolved* to dual-wielding to jet-packing with a DMR, this game has helped to define a genre, and break records in the process.



Halo: Reach

PRODUCER: Microsoft Game Studios/Bungie Software

PLATFORM: Xbox 360

RELEASE DATE: September 14, 2010

★★★★★

RATINGS: Mature

GENRE: First-Person Shooter



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