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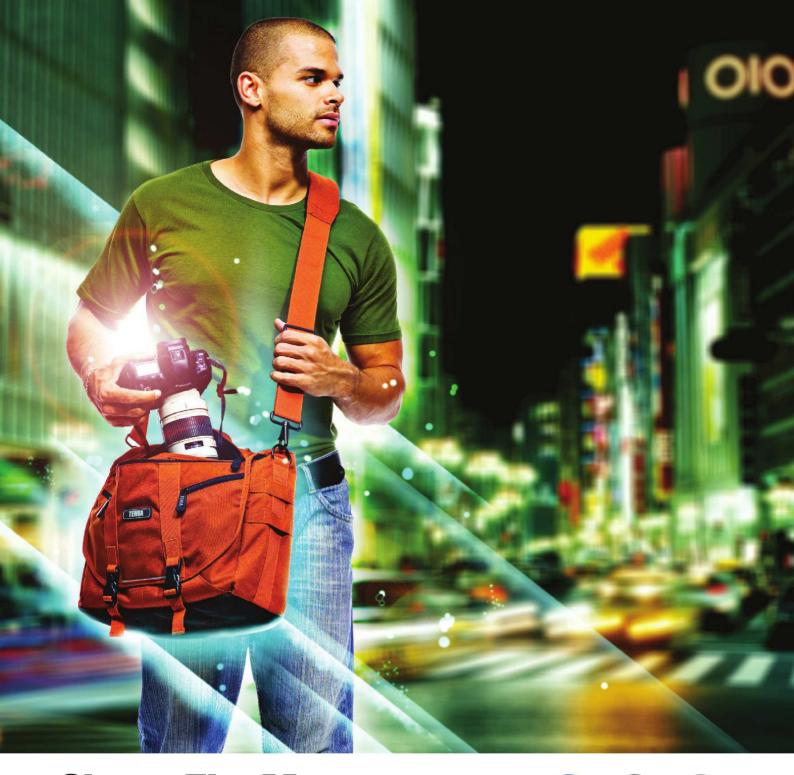
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# 200183108 Get To Know Your Cover Model

Photography by Andrew Gates Make-up and hair by Kimberly Hill

ennifer Nukul was raised in Mission Viejo, California. She first got into modeling back in 2006 when she attended HIN and Sema as a promotional model for various car companies. Since then she has been concentrating on getting published in magazines, catalog and on websites, although, she still does the occasional promotional work. Jennifer has been quite successful at getting on the cover of some of the biggest magazines in the automotive world. Aside from modeling; Jennifer is also a full-time nurse and runs a successful graphic design business, which keeps her pretty busy. She is planning the next step in her nursing career and plans to go back to school to obtain her Bachelors Degree. Although, she is passionate about all the jobs she has, her true love is caring for people in need and she feels it's her purpose in life. When we need some TLC we know who to call, Nurse Nukul.





### 20 QUESTIONS

1.What's your Ethnicity?

Thai and White which equals Thai-te. [laugh]

2. What's your zodiac sign?

I'm the exact description of a cancer girl. Sensitive, emotional, caring and feisty...Watch out.

3. Where are you from originally?

I am a total Orange County girl, I grew up by the beach. I absolutely love it here and could never see myself living anywhere else.

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

Mission Viejo. I would have to say I have some amazing memories growing up in the OC. I've been blessed with amazing friends. We have definitely had our share of adventures.

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

Well, believe it or not I am a total closet nerd.My mom was pretty strict while I was growing up so I was definitely afraid to ever get out of line. Thai mama's are a force to be recond with. However, one time, when I was about sixteen, I didn't even have my drivers permit, my friend's older brother and cousin let me and my girlfriend take turns driving her parent's van on the street. Just as luck would have it, right after I got behind the wheel I look in the rearview mirror and my mom is in the car right behind me. I just about had a heart attack, it was worse than if a cop were behind me, luckily she never found out and hopefully she never reads this. [laugh]

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

Define "crazy." [laugh] Believe it or not I do have somewhat of a daredevil side to me. My friends and I once went off-roading in Glamis with no head lights on. I hopped a 12 foot fence in high heels once. The first time I went to a shooting range, I discovered I was a natural born sniper.

7. What's your favorite hobby and why?

Surprisingly, I recently started running, I have never worked out in my life until a few weeks ago. I was at home and felt like getting out and doing something and decided to go to the beach and go for a run. It's a beautiful atmosphere and after about an hour I went to sit on the sand and got into my zone, it's so relaxing and refreshing.

8. What's your guilty pleasure?

Talking dirty. I mean...my sweet tooth. [laugh] I eat hot fudge sundaes for breakfast on a very regular basis.

9. Who do you admire and why?

Well, I could think of a few celebrities I greatly admire because of not only their talent but their actual passion to do good in the world as well, however I would rather name two people I know

personally and think the world of and that would be amazing photographer Cesar Aristeiguieta, MD and Model/Life Coach Cindy Cohen. Both of them are very extraordinary individuals who are beautiful inside and out. They are extremely accomplished and both have been through incredible adversity. More than anything I admire strong good hearted people who make a positive difference in other's lives...completely selflessly and that is the very definition of both of them. I'm very proud to call them my friends.

10.If you could change one thing in the world what would it be and why?

Besides modeling, I am a full-time nurse. A big part of who I am is always wanting to fix everything and everyone. I see someone suffering and I can feel their pain. I want to fix them and make them better. Whether its medically or emotionally, I have a deep need to care for others. I think our world just needs more love and kindness, even if it's just one person at a time.

11. What's one of your personal goals?

I would love to go back to school to do a bridge program and further my nursing degree. It's not so much for the credentials as much as it is to strengthen my skill level and knowledge so I can better serve the patients I care for everyday.

- 12. What do guys compliment you on the most? My lips. I'll admit it...I kinda like them too.
- 13. What's your favorite body part on yourself?
  My Legs. I'm 5'9" and pretty much all legs!
- 14. What do you look for in a guy? Confidence, honesty, kind hearted, great character and ambition.
- 15. What's the first thing you notice about a guy? His Smile.

16. What's your ideal first date?

I love a man who is thoughtful and romantic. My ideal first date would be going to a nice restaurant at the beach and then maybe doing something fun; like watch a stand up comedy show. I love to laugh more than anything.

17. What turns you on?

An amazing kiss. It says so much about your attraction and compatibility with someone.

18. What turns you off?

Guys who are cocky and rude to other people, it's an instant buzz kill!

19. What's your biggest pet peeve?

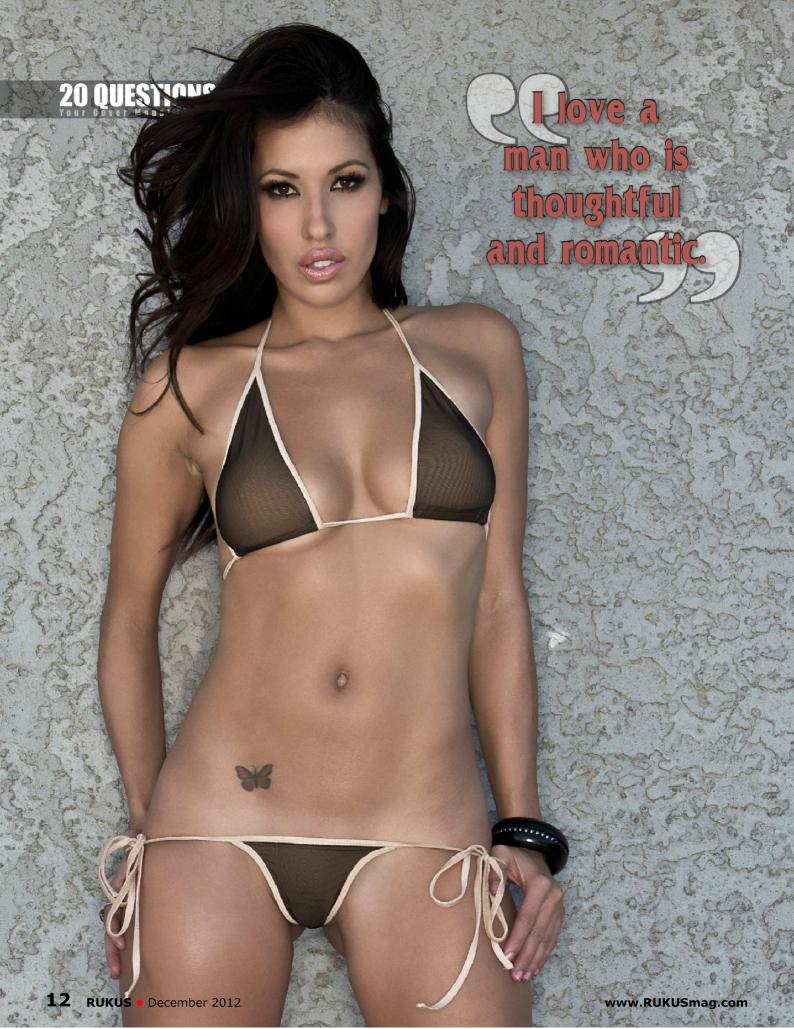
Listening to other people boast. I admire successful people, but I think it's more admirable to be humble and grateful for what you have.

20.Who's your celebrity pass?

Eric Winter! He's hot, handsome, classy, talented and a true family man. He's perfection!









# atest Albums

### es The Kid

Photo by Clay Pairick Mebride

Rebel Soul is the ninth studio album from Robert James Ritchie, better known as Kid Rock. The Michigan native has changed his sound more often than ex-wife Pamela Anderson changed her breast size, going from underground hip-hop artist to big time rap rocker to his current status as blues-country-rock singer/songwriter. I'm hoping he tries for opera next time around. That should be fun.

The album kicks off with a song called "Chickens in the Pen" because...well, why the fuck not? We get a steady drum beat and then the scratchy familiar scream of Kid Rock letting us know that "The mule keeps kicking the chickens in the pen!" This is followed by some run-of-the-mill semi-bluesy guitar and we find out that because the mule keeps kicking those chickens in the pen, that we should, "Rock all night and do it again." Pretty decent way to start out the album with the party-it-up attitude that all Lil' Kid Rockers out there have come to know and love.

Next is "Let's Ride" because you can't stick around after rocking two nights in a row, you got to go somewhere else and take a shower or something. This song is a little more modern-day rock than the previous bluesier song with the melodic chorus of "Come on and grab the gun, let's ride." If that sounds familiar to you, it's because it's the first single and one of the catchier tracks on the album.

Don't worry, the blues return on "CATT Boogie." Kid even pronounces the word "situation" as "sitch-y-ation" to provide that down-home country feel that you can only get growing up outside of Detroit. But you get some cool wah-wah on the gee-tar, so what else can one really ask for? A cover of Ronnie Love's "Detroit, Michigan" follows suit next, featuring some re-worked lyrics that talk about other cities besides Detroit.

The album gets a little more radio-friendly with the title track "Rebel Soul," which I wouldn't be surprised to see as the next single. Pretty catchy, but with a familiar sound to it. I don't know if the familiarity of the song comes from sounding like many other songs on the radio over the past few years or because the album just doesn't seem to go anywhere. As "God Save Rock and Roll," comes on next, I begin to think that it's the latter reason.

Next is a cover of John Eddie's "Happy New Year," and it's plain to see Kid Rock just simply doesn't have the depth to his voice that Eddie does. He does say, "Let's get shitfaced," in there, so there's that. "Celebrate" is next and moves a lot faster, but other than that it's just more of the same.

"The Mirror" is a much slower song than anything else on the album, but also features the most auto-tuning than any other track. The lyrics, "I feel like I'm not ever gonna rise above you," make me wonder who Rock's talking about? Or maybe he's speaking about his music itself? Either way, it is an interesting change of pace for the album.

The album continues more same ol' same ol' as before with "Mr. Rock and Roll," before Kid Rock briefly returns to his roots with "Cucci Galore," a semi-cover of Ultra-V's "Playboy Mansion." Here, unlike anywhere else on the album, Rock does a little rapping and bellows out his famous rock scream. Fans who love Kid Rock's as-far-from-urban as possible image will probably enjoy "Redneck Paradise."

The last two songs "Cocaine and Gin," and "Midnight Ferry" are actually arguably the best songs on the album—the former because of its good use of old-time slow country and the latter probably because it's the best musical arrangement on the record. If you can make it through the rest of Rebel Soul before these two superior tracks, I applaud your patience.

Rebel Soul starts off decent enough with some catchy, blues tracks, but the album never really progresses and the sound quickly starts to grow old. While the last two tracks are rather impressive and not something one would expect on a Kid Rock album, I still think it may be time for Kid Rock to either advance to a new sound or return to his rap/rock roots.

**Artist:** Kid Rock **bum:** Rebel Soul site: kidrock.com

\*\*\* **Label:** Atlantic Records **Release Date:** November 19, 2012





# A Legendary



Written by Jeremy Weeden

There aren't many MCs more legendary on the west coast than hip-hop veterans Too Short and E-40. The two rappers combined have over 40 years' experience in the hip-hop industry and have been constants on the west coast hip-hop scene longer than almost anyone else. Not only are Too Short and E-40 both from the Bay Area, but the two rappers have also had similar career arcs with their longevity in the game and their independent/underground status. They also have in common that they have refused to change who they are or their music in order to reach a wider audience. Therefore it only makes sense the two would get together and bring the public a double serving of great music with the double LP *History*. *History* is divided into two separate albums: *Mob Music* which has classic west coast rap and street anthems, and *Function Music*, an album of songs more likely to be played in a club or at a party. The lines blur at times as *Mob Music* has songs you would play in the club and *Function Music* has a couple of gritty street tracks, but the results are still the same, great music from two hip-hop legends.

Of the two albums, Function Music is definitely the one that fans of more current hip-hop will get more out of. The subject matter of each song is more of a celebration and club centric and the production is a bit flashier. This album has more high profile guest appearances as Tyga, Travis Porter, Wiz Khalifa, Jeremih, as well as fellow west coast legends Ice Cube and Sugafree. Wiz Khalifa is featured on the high energy bass heavy "Say I" and delivers a solid verse, while Tyga and Travis Porter are featured on "Slide Through" and "Dump Truck" respectively. If not obvious from the way they are named, these are two songs for the ladies designed to make them "back it up like a dump truck." But, the real highlight of Function is definitely "Cali" a song which samples Roger Troutman's soaring vocals from 2Pac's hit "California Love." This song, an obvious homage to the west coast, brings Function Music to a very satisfying end and leaves the listener wanting more.

The Mob Music album is catered more towards the streets than the clubs and will be reminiscent of the duo's older material. For the most part, it's more subdued than the Function Music half of the release, but still maintains the trademark hyphy sound, with crazy synths, heavy bass, and funk-inspired drums. While Mob Music does not feature the same level of high profile guest appearances as Function Music, it allows the listener to get a more organic experience as the MCs collaborate with fellow west coast artist like B-Legit and Kurupt. "Ride with Me" and "Do You Remember?" feel like throwback tracks complete with clever verses, booming bass kicks, synths and high hats. Too Short's laid-back flow fits perfectly with E-40's frenetic, rapid-fire verses and multi-syllabic flow. Mob Music is what any longtime fan of E-40 or Too Short would be expecting from the LP.

Overall, *History* is a good album that will fit in well to each of the rapper's musical catalogues. There are tracks that will please the casual rap listener as well as the diehard fans of the Bay Area legends. Both albums offer the characteristic heavy booming bass and west coast hyphy sound that made both rappers living legends.

**Artist: Too Short & E-40** 

**Album: History: Mob Music and Function Music** 

**Website:** facebook.com/tooshort or /E40

**Label:** Heavy on the Grind/EMI **Release Date:** November 6, 2012

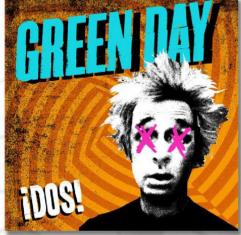
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### ALL ACCESS

# SPOTLIGHT

Written by Jonathan Hayes

Facebook.com/GreenDay



### Green Day, Dos!

Dos! is the 2nd release in the Green Day <code>Uno!/Dos!/Tre!</code> trilogy. Where <code>Uno!</code> was a pop/rock driven album, <code>Dos!</code> goes for a more garage-rock sound. This formula works slightly better than what <code>Uno!</code> had offered, but that doesn't mean rule <code>Uno!</code> out. This album picks up right where <code>Uno!</code> left off. <code>Dos!</code> keeps the party going, but ups the tempo due to the grungier garage sound. You hear clear instruments and smooth guitar riffs all the way through. After the album's intro comes the very candid "Fuck Time," a song all about the act itself. The lead single "Stray Heart" is one of the best on the album and appeared on a Green Day themed level of <code>Angry Birds</code>. The album ends with a dedication to the great Amy Winehouse entitled "Amy." <code>Dos!</code> Is no doubt leading into what I'm sure will be the best effort with the final chapter of <code>Tre!</code> The series of albums could be consider successful even before its complition with not only <code>Angry Birds</code>, but also <code>CSI: NY</code> reaching out for the band to lend some of their songs to appear on various projects. <code>Tre!</code> is scheduled for a January release.

### T & N, Slave to the Empire

Slave to the Empire is the debut release from heavy metal band T&N, who is formerly know as Tooth and Nail. The band was formed in 2011 by current and past members of Dokken. Currently, George Lynch (guitar), Jeff Pilson (bass), Mick Brown (drums), along with many guest vocalist inlcuding; Doug Pinnick, Sebastian Bach, Tim Owens, Robert Mason (of Warrant) and many others are featured on the bands debut release.

The debut album, *Slave to the Empire*, features five remade Dokken classics alongside seven new tracks. "Tooth & Nail" and "It's Not Love" are among the best of the classic remakes. This time Doug Pinnick of King's X is guest vocalist on "Tooth and Nail" and Robert Masson of Warrant leads "It's Not Love." The remakes feature more current sounding heavy metal vocals but at the same time makes you want to play the Dokken's orginals to hear the smooth 80's sound whe the songs orignanited. Stand outs among the new tracks include the albums opener "Slave to the Empire" and the soulful "When Eagles Die". The band is rumored to be in the works of a second release for 2013.

SlaveToTheEmpire.com



Facebook.com/AndyAllo



### Andy Allo, Superconductor

Andy Allo is a beautiful young songstress/songwriter/guitarist from Cameroon, Africa. She is arguably a woman of many talents. Her debut album *UnFresh* was released in 2009 and in 2011 she found herself joining Prince's New Power Generation. *Superconductor* is her second release, which features three songs co-written by the legendary Prince, including the title track "Superconductor." "Story of You & I" as well as "The Calm" another song co-written by Prince serves as love stories which couldn't be sung better by any other than Andy Allo herself. The album's six remaining tracks are written by her and after listening to the album in its entirety you realize how hard it would be to categorize her into one genre. Her music has heavy vibes of the Motown soul era, it's oldies at its best, however its current music. "People Pleaser" is a heavily funk driven track has already gained her much attention and success. "Yellow Gold" and "If I Was King" are feel good tracks that leaves you wanting more. She's an artist who shouldn't be slept on and if you haven't heard of her, it's probably time to have a listen.



# The Live Show Reviews

## Matt Toka

Photos by Nicolas Bates Written by Dan Sinclair

The line of punk rock kids stretched from The Wiltern down Wilshire and around the corner down Oxford on a rainy November night. And though most were surely there for the bigger acts such as Falling in Reverse, Enter Shikari or Letlive., hundreds were there hours early to pack the front of the stage for a green-haired young man named Matt Toka. Seriously, as I entered the beautiful old theater, it occurred to me that I've ever seen so many fans crowded in front of the stage anxiously awaiting a seven o'clock opening act on a weekday night where three other bands were still to come. But Matt Toka has a very dedicated, loyal following.

Matt takes stage donning a sleeveless black shirt that says "Drug Free," and the crowd goes wild. But not wild enough apparently, as the confident frontman raises his bare arms to louder cheering. It is provided to his satisfaction and he grants his fans an official greeting: "Hey, Los Angeles, my name is Matt Toka."

Toka kicks off his set with his cover of Adele's "Someone Like You." I'm curious how many of the kids here know that it's a cover (I only say that because I didn't—had to look that one up. Not up on my Adele I guess). Matt goes right into the crowd to sing the song, letting all those in attendance to get the Matt Toka show up close and personal. Someone gives Matt a pair of glasses and he is more than happy to put them on for the rest of the song.

Oh, did I forget to mention that he has a band playing for him? If you're interested, the guitar player's halrcut and style seem to be a perfect blend of new-wave meets metal and the bassist has long curly hair and super tight jeans. The drummer is bald... and, um, all seem to be at least passable musicians. Anyways, back to Matt, as he is definitely the focus of the show.

On a return to the stage, Matt lowers the mic stand to about his crotch and tells the crowd, "If it's okay with you, my penis is gonna sing the next one." Fortunately this is not the case as Toka's pants remain on as he goes into "Ode to My Family." During this song, he asks the crowd to join him in putting their middle fingers in the air. They oblige because, well, kids like saying "Fuck you." He then asks, "You guys want to fuck the world tonight?" And yes. Yes they do. Why not? Come on, let's all fuck the world tonight.

Then Matt yells out, "I want to see you guys get crazy on this next one." He then goes into his version of Nirvana's "Territorial Pissings." And now the crowd and I have reversed roles as they now all seem as perplexed as I did at the Adele song as I'm like "Right on, Matt. Play that grunge!" I say that in my head, of course. He wouldn't have heard me if I said it out loud anyway. A girl screams out, "I love you," and he definitely hears that as he hadn't smiled bigger the entire show.

Matt then says, "Whoever said mo' money, mo' problems is an asshole. I'm broke as fuck and this song is about that." That song is the semi-rap song "Get Money," which the crowd eats up. For the record, it was Biggle Smalls that said that and I don't think he was an asshole. And Biggle was right, by the way, because he got a lot of money and then was murdered. That's kind of a problem.

Matt is back in the crowd and finishes the song by walking along the railing separating the floor space from the next level up. He finishes his set with "Say 10," which features, among other things, counting. It's good to hear some educational music for once. The crowd actually drops Matt at one point during his crowd surfing, but the punk rocker doesn't miss a beat and finishes the song.

He thanks his fans and exits the theater through the crowd and then waits to meet them all in the lobby. He seemed to be a genuinely friendly guy who really appreciates his fans—and he had plenty of them. The Wiltern has a strict policy about not being able to come back in after you leave and plenty of people left after Matt's performance. Not bad for an opening act, huh?

**Venue:** The Wiltern **Website:** matttoka.com

Date: November 28, 2012 City: Los Angeles, CA



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### LIVE & LOUD

### And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead

Photos by Nicolas Bates Written by Dan Sindair

How well do you know ...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead? Obviously not well enough because I didn't see you at the Echoplex on November 9th. Okay, in fairness, the Echoplex is dark as fuck, so there's a good chance I wouldn't have seen you there even if you stood right in front of me, so you will know me by the break I give you there. ...And you will know the band better by my amazing coverage that begins right now. ...And you will know the end of my "you will know" jokes by the end of this sentence. Maybe...

The start of their set didn't come until very close to midnight, but the hundreds of Trail of Dead faithful only grew in numbers and enthusiasm as the experimental/math/progressive/noise/arthouse/post-punk/alternative rockers from Austin finally took stage. Conrad Keely was first out, front and center with a guitar, but was soon joined by his co-frontman Jason Reece, also donning guitar. Jamie Miller sat behind them on drums and to the far left was the band's newest member, bassist Autry Fullbright II.

The band wasted little time in doing what they do best: playing the shit out of their instruments. What first sounds like sprawling chaos somehow organizes itself into this beautifully hypnotizing music. In this particular case it was the epic intro to the album *Worlds Apart*, "Ode to Isis." It's a constantly mounting and moving instrumental that lets everyone with ears know that something big is coming. And that something is "Will You Smile Again," which also features its own captivating, pounding-drum-driven two-minute instrumental before slowing down for Keely's vocals: "Close the door and drift away into a sea of uncertainty." The crowd, who only moments ago were jumping and thrashing to the heavier intros, now slowly sway and sing along, anxiously awaiting the chance to explode again. The drums get steadier... the beat gets a little faster... right into "Worlds Apart" and all go nuts.

Next, the band gives the crowd a taste of their new record, *Lost Songs*, with the heavier "Catatonic" and "Up to Infinity." The crowd eats it up and rock just as hard to the new songs as the old ones. Trail of Dead then goes old school for "Mistakes and Regrets" before making everyone's night with "Caterwaul." All sing along hard and pump their fists the whole way through. If "Caterwaul" wasn't already everyone's favorite before, it surely would be now after experiencing the on-point energetic live version of it this night at the Echoplex.

For the rest of the night it seems the band loves to go into their own world to jam together with some crazy, energetic hardcore psychedelic rock sounds, taking a break only every once in a while to break out into a song. Those songs include: "Relative Ways," "A Perfect Teenhood," "A Spiral Jetty," "Weight of the Sun," and "Homage," which Jason sings from the crowd.

Though every band member gives his all the entire show, it seems that Jason has more fun than the rest. Perhaps it has something to do with his explanation for fucking up some lyrics early on: "I'm on drugs." Though I don't know for sure whether he was only joking or not, I can confirm that he loves whiskey as he went off stage to grab a bottle, came back and chugged some on stage before taking it around to the rest of his band mates to do the same. Several times Jason switched places with Jamie to bang on the drums while Jamie made some crazy reverb noises with the guitar.

They finish their set with "Totally Natural," the band exiting one by one until only Conrad is left on the stage to play one last guitar part for the crowd. He waves goodbye and thanks the crowd but thanks to the enthusiastic cheers from the loyal fans craving more, Keely doesn't leave the stage for more than a second. Autry and Jamie quickly join him but Jason is nowhere to be found. Keely even calls for him on the mic but no one knows where he is. After they decide to start without him, Jason shows up so they can close the show with "Richter Scale Madness."

To add to the "madness," the band invites the fans on stage with them and at least 20 take them up on the invitation. The band somehow manages to play the song through all the chaos and if you know nothing else, know this: ...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of the Dead knows how to put on an amazing live show and give their fans exactly what they want from start to finish.

**Venue:** The Echoplex

**Nebsite:** andyouwillknowusbythetrailofdead.bandpage.com

**Date:** November 9, 2012 **City:** Los Angeles, CA





ewel Alexandra Brangman grew up in Dutchess County, New York. Her ethnicity is of Caribbean and European decent. She began performing and modeling at a young age. Jewel has found a niche, using her gymnastics and dance background, to help further her modeling career and it has really paid off. Her passion for expression and music is what drives her and has help land her various gigs in music videos, fashion videos and print modeling. Jewel plans to continue her quest in combining her physically expressive mind and body into artwork for the ages; fashion, glamour, swimwear and lingerie. In the future she would like to work on some big modeling campaigns in both fashion and advertising. Ultimately, Jewel would like to open her own practice as a sex therapist for couples and write self-help books in hopes of topping the best-sellers list. This blazing hot girl has the mind, body and soul that will propel her straight to the top, we only hope she remembers us when she gets there.

Make-up & hair by Kimberly Hill





### THE STATS

Birthday: **November 5** 

Zodiac Sign:

I'm a true Scorpio, driven by sex and passion. [wink]

**Measurements:** 26B-23-32

Height:

Weight: 100 lb

**Ethnicity:** 

I'm of Caribbean and European Decent.

Hometown: **Hopewell Junction, NY** 

**Turn Ons:** 

Confindence. A man who knows how to be a man, there is nothing more unattractive than a grown man temper tantrum (it happens more often than you think).

**Turn Offs:** 

Selfish people. Men who are materialistic and who are obsessive over how I look.

Ideal first date:

Simple, active and fun. Bring me to the beach and bring me to get food. I love to eat. I also like beach time because it allows us to shed some clothes without getting down in the bedroom, sort of a prescreening for what you might be getting into.

**Guilty Pleasure:** 

lithout a doubt it's dessert. I have a

**Pet Peeves:** 

**Celebrity Pass:** 

have had the biggest crush on Paul Valker for as long as I can remember, he is actually one person I think if I met I would be a little star struck.

See more of Jewel at





aria Leanna is 100% Greek. She was raised in Phoenix, AZ, although, she currently resides in Las Vegas, NV. She always knew she wanted to be a model, even as a youth. She always told her friends that she would be a model one day and it finally came true. Maria is not just something to look at, though, she also has brains to boot. She has been featured in many car shows, music videos, websites and blogs, but doesn't want to stop there. Maria would like to have her name globally recognized as some point and is working hard to try and make this happen. All we can say is, "we're glad we met you and we wish you the best."





HE STATS

Birthday: June 20

Zodiac Sign: Gemini

Measurements:

34D-25-36

Height: 5′5″

Weight:

125 lb

Ethnicity: Greek

Hometown: Phoenix, AZ

Turn Ons:

Being kissed and nibbled on my neck, it sends chills everywhere throughout my body.

Turn Offs:

Bad teeth, arrogance, bad body odor, doesn't know how to dress and a dry personality.

Ideal first date:

My ideal first date would be dinner (sushi or steak) with some red wine, netflix and if everything goes well then maybe some cuddling.

**Guilty Pleasure:** 

I need to have a two hour DEEP tissue butt massage at least once a week. I love it!

**Pet Peeves:** 

Oh, I have a list! The one at the top though would have to be leaving your socks laying around the house.

**Celebrity Pass:** 

I have two that are tied for first place; Denzel Washington and Eric Bana.

See more of Maria at

# e Latest Games Review

## imer Rede

Written by Jesse Sellhan

Halo is a flagship Xbox property and helped build a foundation that has allowed Microsoft to become dominant in the home console market. The first game is considered by most, including myself, to be a pinnacle of gaming and with Halo 4, we have potentially the last entry of this generation being made by a new studio, 343 Industries. They understood the pressure and created not only an excellent Halo game, but one of the best games on the system yet. The graphics are stunning, the soundtrack is mesmerizing, and the story reaches new heights. For those obsessed with online killing sprees, the revamped multiplayer is back and potentially their best yet. With a dozen game modes and the ability to create custom games, one should never get tired of all that Halo 4 has to offer.

The multiplayer is addicting as ever, although the coat of Call of Duty-esque XP system is stale. You might end up fighting someone that has unlocked a whole host of weaponry that makes your puny pistol seem insignificant. The daily and weekly challenges from Halo: Reach are back, as is the world-building Forge mode, but gone is the wave-based Firefight mode. In its place is a series of challenges that you and three others can engage in known as Spartan Ops. These missions are broken down into five smaller chunks and have a consistent storyline that 343 will be updating for the next three months. Most focus on the new race of enemies, known as the Prometheans, who offer a new level of strategy with their flying robotic helpers and ability to walk along walls and ceilings. These new enemies introduce a new host of weapons, which feel right at home with their excellent sound effects and stopping power.

The story is the franchise's most ambitious to date, introducing a true antagonist for the first time. Master Chief is awoken from a deep sleep in space to stop the world from ending. I know that doesn't sound like too much of a stretch, but the stakes are extremely high as your A.I. buddy Cortana is losing her mind and a new breed of enemies present themselves to be much more dangerous than the imbecilic Covenant. Over the course of the six-eight hours it will take to complete the main campaign, you will pilot or drive half a dozen vehicles and slaughter thousands, all while looking at one of the most gorgeous console games I've ever seen. The missions are what Halo has dished out before - scaling alien architecture while Cortana turns stuff on or off, depending on the mission. Between objectives is the real treasure, where the combat has been refined to the perfect level, unseen since the first foray in this series. Halo 4 succeeds in telling an epic space opera where others, including two thirds of Bungie's original trilogy, have failed so consistently. This is a must-have for all fans of the genre, any Xbox 360 owner, and anyone that doubts the staying power of this franchise.

**Came Title: Halo 4** 

Producer: Microsoft Studios

orm: Kbox 360 **Nebsite:** halo.com

\*\*\*\* **Batinus:** Mature First-Person Shooter **Release Date:** November 6, 2012





## assassin's i



Written by Josh Schilling

After playing Assassin's Creed 3, I began thinking about my game-playing past. Not because it takes place in the Revolutionary War-era of the United States, but because this game does seem to reach a milestone in gaming for me. I have come to the conclusion that one of the following must be true: either I have become far too jaded to appreciate the magnificence of what the gaming world has become, or that the gaming world as a whole has jumped the proverbial shark. As a gaming consumer, I can't be satisfied by doing the same thing over and over again. There has to be something new, something exciting and interesting to hold my attention and keep me wanting to run home to grab my controller for another great session. Assassin's Creed is a franchise that has done that in the past for me because it is unique in many different ways, from its massively detailed storyline to its fairly accurate representation of not-often-used historical locales. This installment presented an especially intriguing aspect of taking place in colonial America, and introduced a Native-American main character that could be seen leaping across the treetops as he stoked the fires of a monumental revolution. But to make a tremendously creative project like Assassin's Creed 3 work you have to consider some of the easily overlooked things in order to make it an overall success.

This game has a main storyline like no other. From ancient pre-human civilizations, to contemporary high tech science, you span centuries in the guise of many interesting characters throughout the Assassin's Creed franchise. I am truly impressed by the detail that lies in this saga, and the individual storylines are interwoven extremely well within this ambitious tale. But this game is flawed in too many important ways to cash in on its aspiring narrative. Clunky controls destroy the game-play aspect and glitchy programming breaks the immersion into the story. Desmond, the over-arching main character of the series, is forgettable and the flow of the game is slapped with too many glowing-white loading screens that spring up whenever there is a split between cinematic and game-play, which are entirely too numerous. You even have to play for hours before you finally get to be the main character you see on the cover of the game box, and by then I already begun to ask myself "how much is too much?"

This game has an incredibly sizeable open world, but does it need to be that big? There is a great many different gaming aspects, but does it really need to have the sailing parts? There are many ways to play this game, but do I have to spend five hours playing before I could finally utilize them all? Did you have to put in checkers? Maybe I am too jaded. Maybe I am as guilty as most gamers by crying for "more, more, more," instead of demanding "better, better," I do know that I did not enjoy this game as much as I wanted to. I feel that it could have been so much better with the critical eye of a solid editor who knew how to trim the fat. I do, however, admire the ambition of Assassin's Creed 3, but I do recognize that it was that same type of ambition that sent the Fonz out on the water on a pair of skis.

**Came Title:** Assassin's Creed III

**Producer:** Ubisoft **Platform:** PS3, Xbox 360, PC, Wii U **Website:** assassinscreed.ubi.com

\*\*\* **Ratings:** Mature **Cente:** Action/Adventure <mark>Release Date:</mark> October 30, 2012

