



anemo interview



Anemo (www.myspace.com/anemomusic), fronted by Hazelle Woodhurst is an awesome British Band that I was originally turned onto when some while ago, I obtained their 'Slowburn' cd. Fast forward several months, and I am listening to their new album, 'Stentorian'. This band to my ears deserve to make the big time, and there are not an awful lot of British rock acts doing that at the moment. The sheer quality of the music on both their albums is amazing! Here is an interview I recently conducted with Hazelle, so read on!

Hi Hazelle, it is a real honour for me to be given this opportunity to interview you, and a singer with a great British Band too. I have your cd 'Slowburn', and that is an awesome morsal of tuneful rock music. And from what I have heard, 'Stentorian' follows a similar melodic path. Can you tell me more about the songs on both recordings?

Slowburn was our first record and includes some of the earliest songs that Kings, Matt and I wrote together. There was a real process of us learning together, as well as building our studio at the same time. There are a lot of different influences in that first record, drawing on the diverse musical backgrounds of the songwriters. Kings with his



classical and experimental electronica background, Matt with his ROCK background and me with a whole pile of influences ranging from R&B through to modern pop. So the album ended up with a real mix of styles of influences, from the title track Slowburn using double bass, loop and electronica, through to Kursk with its epic big heavy rock ending. In contrast, a lot of songs on Stentorian came about because the whole live band had been touring them in 2006/07. So the new record has a much more aggressive band like feel to it, because that's the way the songs developed and that's the way that they were recorded. The underlying theme in both records though is the focus on melody.

Can you also tell me more about the band Anemo, and how did you arrive at the name?

ANEMO means "of the wind" from the Greek word. It's a word used to describe changing forms (like as in an ANEMOMETER). We like the idea of a name that reflected a band that could choose to go wherever it wanted musically. Also, if I was absolutely honest, like lots of bands, we started to go through the dictionary looking for interesting words. Didn't get very far through it as you can see.

Cool!! For those unfamiliar with the band, how would you describe your music?

Hmmmm, melodic, aggressive, intense, hopefully fun as well. The lyrics I write I try to make about interesting things, rather than the usual "I Love You" or "You're dumped" type of thing. For example, Heaven is Waiting from Stentorian tries to capture the thoughts of a condemned murderess on her way to the end of her life (cheery, but an interesting idea), and Pray is about counting the human cost of war, inspired by a new report by BBC world affairs editor John Simpson.

Where did you record your albums, and how was the studio experience in general?

Mostly in our own studio in Brighton. We also recorded some of the stuff in Brighton Electric and Metway (home of the Levellers), both in Brighton. The mixing for Stentorian was done part at Miloco 5 in London (working with James Lewis) and the rest in Broadhill in Sussex working with Michael Fallon. People don't realise how much work goes into making records these days. The experience can be quite intense, especially as our studio is underground and you might not see daylight for most of the day. There's also a lot of sitting around while things like drums get set up. Most of the time it's good fun, but it can be equally frustrating as well.

Have you or any other members of the band been involved with any other musical projects, that you would care to perhaps let us here at Ravenheart Music know about?



Our drummer Mike Kelly also plays in a band called She Said who do a kind of country noir thing, with a stand up bass. That's really fun, especially to watch live. You should definitely look out for that. Their lead singer Dominique has a kinda of French style chanteuse feel and they have tracks called things like "Texas Chainsaw Manicure".

What got you into the music business in the first place?

I have always been fortunate enough to be able to sing, in fact, my great grandmother was an Opera singer, so it must run in the genes. I used to sing in the choir at school and did the solos at Christmas, with my mum sitting there mouthing the words in time with me from the Pews. I studied music at school and even played the Tenor Sax for a while. I think a lot of it though comes down to my dad, who was an amazing guitar player and bought me one at the age of 9, but I wasn't really interested at that age, it looked too much like hard work.

I listened to the likes of AC/DC, Henry Gross, Nazareth, The Stones Boston, Zeppelin and many more thanks to my dad bringing me up on the good stuff. I loved watching him play along with the guitar parts, or zone out with his headphones on, playing guitar late at night if he couldn't sleep or was waiting for me to come home from a night out (which he always denied of course when I asked him, but that's when we had our best conversations). We wrote a few tunes together too and he accompanied me on stage at school performances a few times and on some early gigs, playing at the pubs. Music has always been a huge part of my family upbringing. I remember Mum and Dad picking me and Erika up when we were little and dancing round with us to AC/DC or something... it was fun.

I've been in and out of bands from the age of 16, because finding people who are committed to what you are really trying to achieve is tough. I think you get to an age where you think I don't want to compromise anymore and that's when - if you're lucky - things start to go right because you are being true to yourself.

Do you have any tracks on either of your cds that you class as your personal faves?

Hmmm, the title track on Slowburn is always good to listen to. Kings and I play that live often just as piano and voice, so the emotion really comes across. Pray and She's Not Me on Stentorian are always great numbers to play and always go down well with our audiences.

I am interested in your label. They are an American label I understand? Can you tell me more about City Canyons Records?

Yes, they are based in New York. CCR are an independent label with quite an



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international feel. They have US, UK and Norwegian bands on their roster. For us, working with an independent label gives us much more freedom in what we do than if we were with a larger label. You can find out more about CCR at their web site at www.citycanyons.com.

I can see your style of music going down well in the USA. Was this a deliberate move going to an American label, and have you had interest from the UK or Europe?

Not really - it was more of an accidental meeting. We were introduced to the label through a German company called Music2Deal. We've had lots of interest in the UK. For example, Bruce Dickinson on 6Music gave us a lot of airplay, TotalRock and people like Ace from Skunk Anansie of his new music show based in Brighton. We also played with the Classic Rock Society a few times and even won one of their best live act music awards, which was nice.

As a female in what is still regarded in some quarters as a male-dominated genre, is there ever a problem with you being taken seriously as a musician? Not really, but I have better shampoo than the average rock bloke. It can be annoying sometimes when people rate what you think you might be about by looking at your first rather than listening to what you do. But like at the shows we did for the Classic Rock Society, once the band gets cranked up and people hear what we do, then they take us at face value, and we get lots of nice comments from really serious rock fans.

Musically and spiritually who/what are your inspirations?

Lots, from ACDC, through to Evanescence, Pink!. Spiritually, I guess that would really have to be my family, like my M

What music do you listen to in your spare time, and what bands are your favorites?

Spare time?

And indeed, what band if given the chance would you just love to tour with or hang out with?

Hmmm, maybe Pink!. She's a really strong singer and songwriter and has a really strong on stage persona.

I quite like Pink myself too actually...And Anemo's future plans?

World domination. But not until we've had another cup of tea. At the moment, we are spending a lot of time promoting our new album. We did some dance mixes of our last single MusicBox and that was fun to do. We might do some more of that kind of thing in the future.



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All I can say is good luck in all what you do, and we at Ravenheart wish you all the very best. Finally is there anything that you would like to say to anybody across the world via this website?

Errr, buy our records so I can buy a castle. And then everyone would be invited and we could set the world record for the world's largest and most complex murder mystery event.

Dave Smith (7 Dec 2008)

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