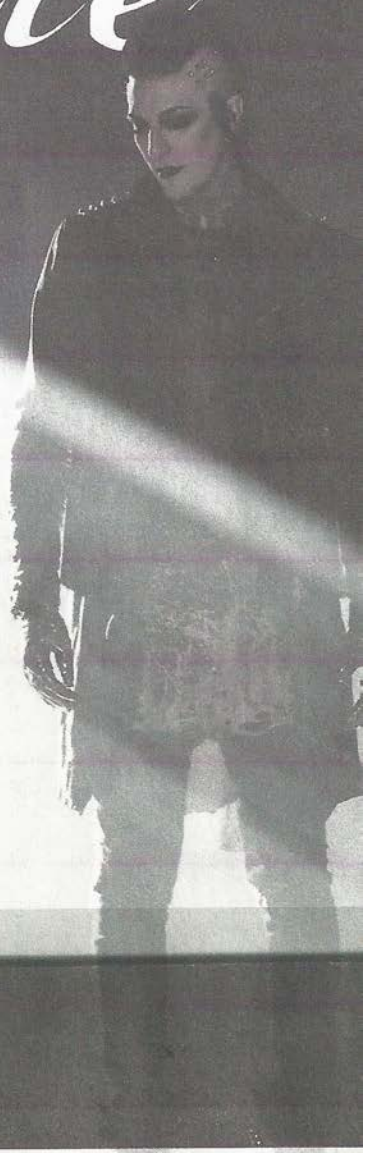
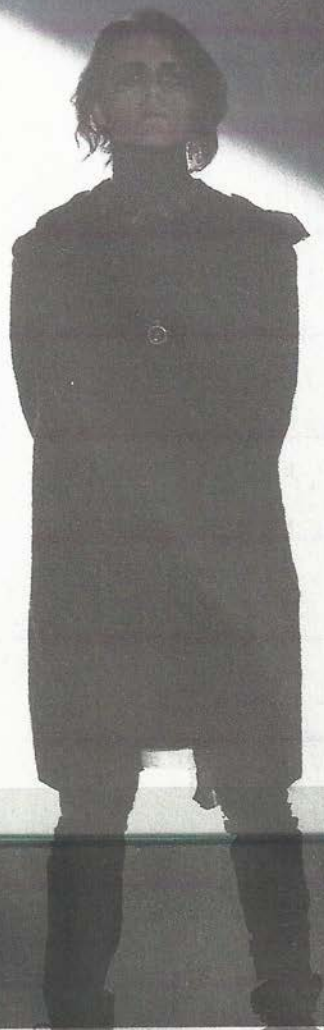



A Motionless in White



NOW IT'S THEIR PARTY



The search for **MOTIONLESS IN WHITE**'s true identity is over. As they continue to dominate the realm of modern industrial metal, they're embracing the hungry creatures they were when they first started.

STORY: Taylor Markarian

PHOTO: Jonathan Weiner

L-R: Sitkowski, Mauro, Motionless, Sola, Horror



Ten years into their career, Motionless In White are *still* hearing from fans who miss the sound of their first record, *Creatures*. Other bands might let that sentiment fall on deaf ears—or even weigh them down. But vocalist/founder Chris Motionless is proud to say that MIW took it into account when writing the band's fourth full-length album (and major-label debut), *Graveyard Shift*. See, unlike other successful bands, MIW refuse to forget where they came from.

"We love a lot of things about *Creatures*," Motionless insists. "Something that we talked about [with] this record was being more of a look back on everything and refining what we felt were the best parts of Motionless In White, according to us and according to the fans. It was a lot of recognizing what the fans really did like and what we loved about the past three albums and bringing it together... essentially taking the best of everything and making it one record."

Graveyard Shift certainly does have all of the components that MIW have worked on over the years: theatricality ("Not My Type: Dead As Fuck 2"), heaviness ("570"), melody ("Eternally Yours"), industrial beats ("Queen For Queen") and straight-up rock ("Voices"). The album seems to restore the various characteristics of the band into one cohesive identity. But combing through the past decade was no small undertaking. Bringing all of these elements together required not only a hand deft at songwriting, but one that was willing to dig through the mountain of memories the band had collected throughout their career.

"The title speaks for itself," Motionless reflects. "It encapsulates 10 years of hard work, of nonstop grinding it out. From the very beginning, I could tell that we weren't gonna give up. I remember on a tour a long, long time ago, we had about five dollars a person to eat a week. We were basically surviving off the McDonald's dollar menu or stealing shit off Wal-Mart shelves. A couple of the guys had pneumonia on one tour because we didn't have the money to keep

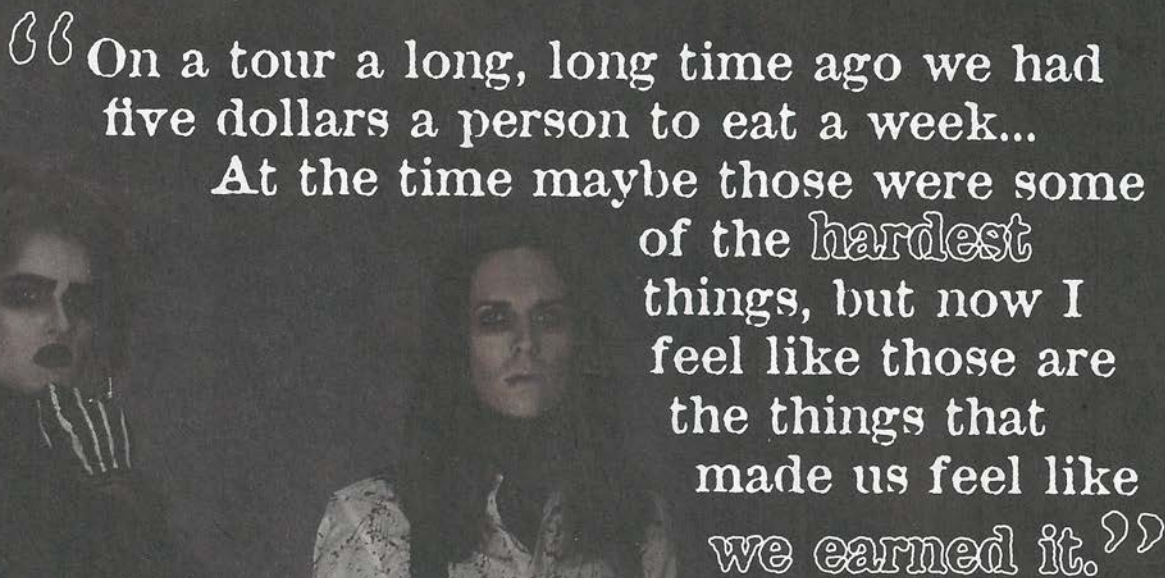
our van on overnight to keep the heat on in the winter. We had to sleep on top of each other in the freezing fucking cold. At the time maybe those were some of the hardest things, but now looking back I feel like those are the greatest things that happened to our band. Those are the things that made us feel like we *earned* it."

All of those tour memories and feelings of determination ended up being corralled into one track on *Graveyard Shift*, "570." In between the insane guitar work and metalcore breakdowns that harken back to the band's early days, Motionless' isolated voice stands tall: "No money, no sleep—dedication/10 years on the road/This is sacred."

"It's likely going to be my favorite song for the remainder of our career," the vocalist boldly states, "and likely my favorite song I've ever written in my life, just because it's the most intensely personal and deep song that I've ever written. Every single line in the song has its own backstory to it. It was like a soul-searching moment to find the lyrics for that."

It's not only the band themselves that put their souls into these words, but the entire fanbase and the community that MIW—Motionless, guitarists Ricky Horror and Ryan Sitkowski, bassist Devin "Ghost" Sola and drummer Vinny Mauro—have built up around them. This community truly shows itself in the song's music video, where the band are being swallowed by fans while playing. "There were definitely some doubts if we would have people showing up to be in the video," he explains. "I was like, 'No, trust me, they'll show up. They'll fuckin' be here to represent.' And sure enough, we got way more people than we even needed and proved a lot of people wrong. That just [reinforced] what the song is about, what the band is about, what the fanbase is about—and I love that. That video is supposed to represent that community and our world of people just being out there and standing all for one, one for all and coming together."

Keeping with the spirit of proving people wrong, the band throw an amusing left hook at the metal handbook with their song



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“Necessary Evil” On the same song that features nü-metal icon Jonathan Davis from Korn, “It’s My Party,” the biggest hit from ‘60s singer Lesley Gore, becomes the basis for the chorus. Motionless sings the beloved valley girl lyrics, “It’s my party/I’ll cry if I want to” with a much more gothic, rockstar twist. “I can’t say that I’ve been inspired by Lesley Gore throughout my career,” Motionless says, laughing, “but that moment of the song was very fun [and] tongue-in-cheek. It started out as a joke, but it came to be a serious thing that I can’t believe ended up in the song—but I love it for that reason. It’s got an aspect of seriousness, an aspect of fun and entertainment, and I love that we can show those sides [of us] in just one song, nevermind a whole album.”

It’s those exact characteristics that make *Graveyard Shift* such a landmark record for Motionless In White. If the music community has learned anything by now, it’s that MIW are a band that love to break expectations and throw the remaining pieces back in naysayers’ faces. *Graveyard Shift* brings this attitude to the forefront more than any other MIW record, adding a level of refinement to their classic “fuck you” mantra.

“We’re gonna always push from right to left on how far we can go in each direction with the styles of music that we really love and are influenced by,” Motionless says. “We don’t feel that we have to abide by any unwritten rules of what you can do on an album. It’s still angry, it’s still heavy, it’s still energetic, there’s still a message. It’s all these things that have always been part of the band. It’s come to a point that we love that about us rather than being afraid or being hesitant about showing that side of ourselves.”

That kind of confidence can be difficult to find, not just as an artist but as an individual, which is why community means so much to this band. It’s not solely about helping themselves, but about helping every single person who listens to their music to rise up with them. “For us, the message is continuously about individuality,

self-fulfillment [and] finding peace within yourself,” he shares. “You finally come to a point where you can look at yourself in the mirror and love yourself. As a bunch of guys who are coming from a life where that wasn’t always the case, now we can look at ourselves and we see that. I feel like at this point, after 10 years, ‘570’ and a few other songs on the album represent that we’re trying to continue to inspire people to make a difference in their lives and find happiness for themselves.”

As Motionless continues to talk about the new record, it becomes ever clearer that he can’t look forward without looking back. *Graveyard Shift* comments on the past, present and future of the band, demonstrating what it really means to come full circle in more ways than one. Even as the band play the biggest stages they’ve ever played in 2017, he still remembers the days when they weren’t on top fondly. “Those are some of the memories that we can’t move on from,” he says. “We could play an arena tomorrow and we’re gonna love every second of it, but we’re still never gonna be able to let go of those early shows; playing on the floor, sweating the skin right off [our] bones. I honestly would give anything to go back for a week and just experience that and really be humbled by it!”

Still, being among the bands on top of the metal scene isn’t a bad place to be, and that is a spot that MIW’s fourth full-length secures. But unlike most rock stars, that status doesn’t seem like it will ever change the kind, down-to-earth nature of Chris Motionless. After a decade of clawing to the top and finally getting everything he ever dreamed of, he still acts and feels like just another dude who’s grateful for the opportunity to be heard. Meanwhile, his fans look to Motionless In White for hope and a place to belong—something the compassionate vocalist will never shy away from.

“When I look at our guys and I look at my own accomplishments,” he says, “and even the members that have come and gone—everyone who’s been involved—it is nothing but pride.” ALT