

**ORDER OF VOICES INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY BETA COURTESY OF [MESCALINE INJECTION](#)  
(German version can be found at: [METAL.DE](#))**

They have high ambitions, the love for music runs through their veins and they have set their sails: Hailing from Great Britain, ORDER OF VOICES have come to stay... and maybe they will be your next favourite band!

I'm already enthralled by their debut album, and now the time has come that YOU, dear reader, make up your mind about this fantastic band. You might know these fine gentlemen already from other bands: Ash Homar (guitar), Stefan Blackwood (guitar), Ian Gaunt (bass), Aynsley Dickinson (drums) and Leigh Oates (vocals).



1. You formed in 2009 and somehow it seems you stepped out of nowhere. How did you come together as a band? Please introduce yourselves!

Ash: Hi i'm ash, guitarist, Well I guess it started when Stef and I started a studio together, We've all been in bands for years and so had enough experience and interest to try and set up a studio for ourselves. Whilst testing different recording methods, we decided to knock together some riffs and play with them.

Stef: We have a lot of musician friends in Sheffield and the surrounding areas, and many were eager to lend a hand and try throw some bits into the mix. It was then that Ian got involved. He's played bass in a couple of bands before with Ash and they really work well together.

Ash: Yeah, Ian came in and put some bass down to a couple of bits we had floating around. It was then that things started to sound a little more 'song-like' and we three decided to work on it as a bit of a project and write some new stuff.

Ian: At that time other bands were in and out recording things, so Ash and Stef really learned how to work the studio, and started producing some really good sounding music. At this time we were still using programmed drums and had no idea about singers.

Ash: I emailed Aynsley, who we know from another band, that we'd played with a few times, more to see if he knew any available drummers than anything else. We respected him and knew he wouldn't recommend anyone who wasn't up to the task.

Aynsley: I received the email containing a couple of mp3 demos they'd done, and within the first few phrases I could see the massive potential in their music. I also thought that Leigh would be well into this music and so suggested to the lads that we both came to the studio to jam through some of the tracks.

Leigh: That first session worked out better than we all could have imagined, and so ideas and demos were passed backwards and forwards mostly via email until we had four or five song structures down. Then it was straight into the studio.

Ash: By this point Stef, Ian and I had gotten use to the writing/recording process, and so most of it was put down musically before we'd played together as a band.

Leigh: Once the lyrics were written, the songs then took their final form around that, and we started to record the drums.

Ian: The songs were changed and tweaked so many times over the next few months, and we spent many late nights adding and stripping away pieces from the tracks until they took their own shape.

Stef: Looking back, the hardest part was getting the first song to find its own 'sound', once that was done, they all seemed to write themselves, the band had taken shape and direction, and we all flowed with it.

2. I thought about the band name, and one guess was that "voices" could refer to the different voices you hear on the record, not only vocals but also the instruments. What does "Order of Voices" mean, why did you choose that particular name?

Ian: you pretty much got it spot on there! The name came way down the line, without sounding too artsy, the tracks gave us the identity, and it fits the name quite well I think...

3. You come with high ambitions to create outstanding music (which you did) while other bands maybe content with just "recording an album". What thoughts and motivations drive the band ORDER OF VOICES forward? Is it something completely new, something you wanted to do for a long time?

Ash: I think were all in this for the long run. We've all been in successful bands for years, and we all have the same motivation and ideas about where we want to take this.

Ian: It's a welcome change not to have to carry a band member; none of us see this as a hobby. We do this for the love of music and aspire to be able to make this our career.

Leigh: Definitely, we're taking this band very seriously and making sure that we push ourselves creatively as far as possible.

4. "Reaching Down" was the first song I heard from you, and it left a lasting impression. A song of such high quality, coming from a band of such young age – that's a rare combination. I take it that ORDER OF VOICES is not your first band, that you all have different musical backgrounds, and that you can look back on years of experience. What projects and other bands have you been/are you involved in and since when are you musically active?

Ian: I started out much heavier, a bit of a tech-head. I was in a band with Ash called Asuras, before that I was in Tangaroa a speed-tech-metal type affair, before that it was back with Ash again in a prog-rock/metal effort called Nyasiforte. Previous to that another tech metal band called suffer as one, which followed a number of years in various rock bands. Its fun to play fast and tech, but the song writing always lacks something. For haunting melodies and soulful progression, the alt-rock market certainly is more rewarding to write.

Ash: Having played in a few heavier bands in the past I really wanted to move away from it all and once I'd taken a step back to think about what it was I wanted to do with myself it was obvious to me where I should try to take it. 'Reaching Down' was the first song I wrote for what would become OoV and I really tried to inject as many different musical influences as I could. Things that I could've never used before and it's just been a progression from that point on.

Ayns: I've been in various bands over the years. My first 'serious' one was Hardware (Goth/Industrial Rock) who were signed to the German label Bulletproof back in the mid 90s. After this band folded I eventually hooked up with Leigh in 2002 and joined Ninedenine (a Tool meets Kyuss style). This band lasted a couple of years before it came to a halt. After which, Leigh & I joined Rise To Addiction.....which then led neatly to Order Of Voices!

Leigh: Again, like the other guys I've been in various bands, my first serious band was Bias who released one album in the late 90's on CMC, then Ninedenine who released a couple of albums to

critical acclaim in the UK and lastly Rise To Addiction who I joined in 2005 who are still active and released their 2nd album via Belgium label Mausoleum last year.

Stef: A Sheffield based rock band called Existend.

5. Your album is close to the sounds of Tool and A Perfect Circle, but you can clearly hear that it benefitted from many other sources of inspiration as well. Can you tell us about the creation of "Order Of Voices"? What kind of influences left their mark and found their way on the album?

Ash: There's plenty in there. Between us we have a huge range on musical tastes. Rock, ambient, electronic, classical, jazz etc. It's great for writing; we can draw on loads of different styles and approaches without necessarily being influenced by one particular band. I'm sure there's plenty going in there subconsciously that we don't even think about.

Leigh: From a vocal point of view I love melody and wanted to weave lots in, I wanted the vocals to be powerful and emotional but also use a large dynamic range, not to show off but to give the songs as much light and shade as possible. Voice wise I have too many influences to even try to list but hopefully I've come up with something people will find original and like!

6. Is there a special concept or line of thought you followed while writing the songs? To me, "Order Of Voices" sounds very much like a concept album because it gives you a great sense of harmony; all songs fit into the place and are somehow interlocked with no real barriers between them. Not necessarily an album "in one go", but one you can't let go.

Ian: Thanks, that is a great compliment, but it wasn't written in that way, the songs came naturally and found their own life and voice, and if each one sounds like an 'Order of Voices' song, then that means we did our job well.

Ash: a lot of discussion went into the track order on the album. We have a good range of songs with different dynamics, and we didn't want the album to sound disjointed in any way. I'm happy that the flow of the album works for you.

Stef: in fact the last tracks were written right at the end of the recording, we'd listened to the album and wanted to end it in a way that would either encourage you to listen again, or leave you with a sense of calm. Leigh and Ayns came in to put their parts down right at the end, and what you hear on the album is pretty much one take on the spot.

Leigh: it just shows that we were all in the same mind-set and knew almost instinctively what the songs needed. I've never been in a band where everyone is so much in the same headspace when it comes to writing.



7. In the booklet the writing credits are attributed to the whole band – so I guess, there is no main songwriter and you all are involved? How is a typical OOV-song composed and crafted? Do you jam in the studio and go with the flow of the music, or does everybody contribute the ideas he developed on his own?

Ian: If I were to compare us to a sculpture, I would say Ash is the clay, he brings the sketches and raw material we need in order to work. I would tear away at the clay, producing the backbone structure. Stef would chisel in the fine details and smooth over bits. Leigh would add the shading and depth, and Ayns would fire-blast the thing in a kiln, making it a solid and finished and polished work of art.

Leigh: Love that! Hehe! Everything you hear on the album was created very organically and evolved very naturally as a band, everybody contributes and that creates a great dynamic to work with.

8. What comes first – the lyrics or the music? In my opinion the album sends out a very positive and powerful message. What themes do you cover and what do the songs mean to you personally?

Leigh: It's always the music first to give me something to work with, I then refine the melodies and phrasing and lastly I write the definitive lyrics, this then in turn helps to refine the song structures. Its how I've always worked. It's been great working closely with the guys to really bring the lyrics and melodies to life in OoV! The themes covered in the songs relate to the human condition really, they touch on love, hope, desolation, longing, determination, forgiveness...I like people to take the lyrics and take their own meaning from the songs, and I'm always very interested to hear people's interpretations.

9. The album comes with the beautiful artwork of Fernando Medina. You can see faces looking like death masks hanging down from parachutes, mountains and a big, livelier looking face on the ground. What can you tell us about that?

Ian: We worked very closely with Fernando on this project and wanted rich colours and depths that matched the album in feel. The concept itself needs to remain mysterious, let the owners of the CD make the connection.

10. You are active on many social and music platforms like Myspace, Reverbnation, etc. How important is the feedback you get from there for you? Would you say that this kind of online promotion is more effective than old-fashioned mouth-to-mouth propaganda, flyers or ads in print-magazines?

Leigh: I think the feedback from these sites is very important for a band; it gives you a real sense of what people like and how they perceive your band and music. I would say it's been a great help to get the word out about the band and made us many new fans that ordinarily it may have been hard to reach. I think this kind of promotion can really help a band but flyers & ads as well as features in print magazines are still a great help too, as a band you need to target as many outlets for your band as possible! Another great way to promote your band is of course getting out on the road and hopefully meeting all the people that say such good things about you online.

11. I guess with the album being out since a few days and the songs playing in your widgets you already got a good amount of responses. How's the feedback so far?

Leigh: The feedback so far has been fantastic; we couldn't have hoped for a better response from people, it seems a lot of people like what we're trying to do with the band.

12. How much is the internet helpful to gain new fans and spread your name – and how much can it be a burden or danger to you and your musical work?

Leigh: I think the internet has been invaluable in helping the band raise its profile and be able to reach people who without it would have been far more difficult. It is also a great 'shop window' for us and hopefully will help to present us with opportunities to advance the band. The only burden is the one of illegal downloads...at this point its just a reality a band has to accept, the argument can run and run without ever reaching a conclusion. I guess my take on it is that if you want bands to continue to make music you should help them out by buying it, this will give them the ability to make more.

13. You released "Order Of Voices" completely on your own. Do you want it to stay that way, to be in control of everything or are you maybe looking for a label as ambitious as you to support you?

Ian: We have high aspirations, and would love to work with a major label that has the backing and resources to help us realise our objectives.

14. How was the video-shoot for "Reaching Down", and what can we expect from it? Where will the video be released?

Leigh: The video will be available on many web sites and will be submitted to all the relevant music video channels, so fingers crossed you'll be seeing us all over the place!

15. Ok guys, thank you very much for answering my questions. I wish you all the best and keep my fingers crossed that your music gets the attention it deserves! Last words are yours!

Leigh: Thank you for the great interview and the support! Please give us a listen, Order Of Voices could be your new favourite band, for all the latest on the band visit [www.orderofvoices.com](http://www.orderofvoices.com)