

# Flyleaf

## "Memento Mori"

**Flyleaf** bleed, grow, love and live on **MEMENTO MORI**.

A focused fire burns bright at the heart of **Flyleaf**'s second full-length album. The platinum-selling Texas quintet's latest offering is a collection of poignant, passionate and pensive hard rock songs. From the kinetic first single, "Again," to the touching album closer, "Arise," guitarists **Sameer Bhattacharya** and **Jared Hartman** trade orchestral riffs that seesaw from soaring to searing. Drummer **James Culpepper** smoothly propels every groove forward, while **Pat Seals**' bass anchors unforgettable hooks. Gliding across this majestic melodic backdrop, **Lacey**'s vocals build into beauty from pain. Her voice reaches transcendent heights on songs like "Set Apart This Dream" and "Missing." **Flyleaf**'s flame keeps rising...

**Lacey** describes **MEMENTO MORI** best. "This album feels like an emotional rollercoaster. While listening to it, I was holding my breath at points. The issues definitely got heavier and a little more intense."

For **Flyleaf**, it's all part of growing up. In October 2008, the band entered a Los Angeles studio with producer Howard Benson (My Chemical Romance, Papa Roach, All-American Rejects) to record the follow-up to their self-titled debut. Immediately, these five individuals tapped into the same chemistry that made **FLYLEAF** a massive worldwide hit and yielded songs like the breakout single "**I'm So Sick**" in 2005.

"As songwriters, we all have such a great rapport. None of us are really possessive or territorial about what we write," explains Pat. "There are a lot of different flavors that work perfectly together. We grew up a lot since the first record, and I think that particularly shows in the selflessness that each of us now brings to **Flyleaf**. We're vastly different people, but we're united in what we want to say and how we want to say it."

That unity shines on songs like "Beautiful Bride," which just poured out of the band one day in rehearsal. The track came together instantly, and Lacey was able to write lyrics on the spot. She says, "Pat started playing this new song, and the words came out all at once. I'd been dealing with a conflict in my family and this song was born out of that moment. I got a phone call the next day that an amazing reconciliation had come within my family. Both the song and the situation started out painful and ended up glorious. This just proves to me how everything can work together for a greater good. Like a family fight turning into 'Beautiful Bride', a song about unity."

The record is made of messages like that. **Flyleaf** titled the album **MEMENTO MORI**—a Latin phrase meaning "Be mindful of death"—in order to remind the world how precious life is. The band tries to take advantage of each and every opportunity presented to them, and they're an example of dreams coming to fruition through never giving up. For Sameer, that sentiment of living every day to its fullest is essential for creating music. "Each day is a new beginning. It's never too late to become the kind of superhero you imagined you'd be when you were a kid."

These sonic superheroes have created an experience for listeners, stretching far beyond the recorded sounds. **Flyleaf** looked over the 13 songs that would become **MEMENTO MORI**, and saw how they all come together to form a sort of parable if you listen from start to finish.

Lacey evinces, "Every track is like another chapter of the story. In my head it feels like a movie. The story becomes a parable for important life lessons we've learned over the years. After coming through these life and death experiences, we have learned to be more grateful and purposeful with the time we are given. We want to pass the torch at the end during 'Arise.' Perhaps someone will come away from the story and be more grateful and purposeful with their own life and the world will change for the better."

Flyleaf began composing these stories as they toured the world on the 2006 and 2007 installments of the Family Values Tour and on a European trek with Korn. Sharing the stage with the likes of Stone Sour, Deftones and Evanescence, **Flyleaf** captivated fans everywhere as their self-titled debut continued to ascend the charts. Singles such as "**I'm So Sick**," "**Fully Alive**," and the RIAA gold smash "**All Around Me**" pulled audiences in, and **FLYLEAF** reached RIAA platinum heights while the band toured endlessly. The album spent 133 weeks on the Billboard 200 while staking claims in the top 5 of the *Billboard* Hard Rock Albums chart and the top 15 of the *Billboard* Rock Albums and Alternative Albums charts.

In 2006, **Flyleaf** released **MUSIC AS A WEAPON**, a four-track EP; its sale supported the work of World Vision. Last year, the band contributed their rendition of "What's This?" to the star-filled compilation **NIGHTMARE REVISITED**, a rock homage to the music of director Tim Burton's now classic 1993 film, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. The following year the band treated fans to a special, limited edition, two-disc version of **FLYLEAF**.

Now the world will receive **MEMENTO MORI**, and it's **Flyleaf's** greatest gift. Right before they put the finishing touches on the album, they embarked on an acoustic tour for U.S. troops overseas in Afghanistan, debuting two songs, "Circle" and "Chasm." The band's itinerary took them from Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan—where they performed before nearly 1,000 soldiers—to the distant Forward Operating Base Baylough in southern Afghanistan, near the Pakistan border.

Lacey explains. "It was the last thing we did before we finished this record. It was really life changing for us. Everywhere you turn in Afghanistan, you're reminded of your mortality—in a good way. These troops were so thankful that we were there and that they could just enjoy life for a minute. That's exactly what **MEMENTO MORI** means. Life's important, and it's brief. You never know when it's going to be over for you or the people around you. You have to make the most of every opportunity you're given. We got to talk to the soldiers about so many things, but there was a bomb the next day and many of them were killed. We came to know these men personally in a short time though. That was **MEMENTO MORI** at its highest."

"Missing" is another song that shows how important love and life are. The hook is massive, but there's more to it. Lacey continues, "The bridge says "Down here love wasn't meant to be for me, all is vanity underneath the sun." The phrase makes you ask 'What would the world be like if we took love out of it?' Love is painful. It requires work. It's selfless. Even though it's difficult, if you take that out of the earth you're going to end up with nothing. C.S. Lewis said, "The only place in all of the world where you can escape the dangers of love is hell." Nothing could be truer."

On the other end of the emotional spectrum, Lacey drew inspiration for her vocal performance for "Set Apart this Dream" and "Tiny Heart" from her relationship with her younger sister. She says, "My sister is 17, and she's about to become a woman. She's

always looked up to me. As much as I can, I want to make sure she doesn't make the same mistakes I have. She listens to me. This record has stories about failing and consequences of wrong decisions. My songs are usually hopeful in a really dark way. Many times artists can communicate deep feelings for other people and it heals them. That's what art does."

That's also what Flyleaf does. In the end, this band is about giving. "This band's formation was one of the most natural things I'd ever experienced and I knew it would change our lives" says Sameer.

However, it's evolved into something even larger. Lacey concludes, "I want to let kids know that they have a purpose and can do something great. I believe that one hundred percent. Growing up, my mom was a single mom with six kids. We struggled for absolutely everything. Here we are now with so many blessings. It doesn't even feel real sometimes. I just feel so thankful."

That's why **MEMENTO MORI** is going to last in the hearts and minds for listeners for a long time.

# # #

