

SHUDDER TO THINK:

Shudder To Think are most often credited as being the creators of the “Emo” movement, being one of the first – if not the first - bands to successfully fuse intensely emotional melodic vocal performances with raw guitar driven punk music. Shudder To Think’s singer and songwriter Craig Wedren has been hailed as a major influence by many of today’s most popular musical icons including Dash Board Confessionals’ Chris Carrabba, Dave Grohl of Foo Fighters and Nirvana, the members of OK GO, and Conor Oberst of Bright Eyes (Oberst released Wedren’s solo album “Lapland” on his own Team Love / Saddle Creek Label in 2005. Grohl took Wedren with him to perform with Foo Fighters at the Sydney Opera house in 2007).

Shudder To Think were born in the Washington DC hardcore music scene in the mid 1980s, releasing records on the widely revered “Dischord” label before being one of the first passionately “indie” bands to break rank and sign to a major label. Once signed to Epic / Sony by Michael Goldstone (whose two prior signings at the label were Pearl Jam and Rage Against The Machine), the major label machinery set out to make Shudder To Think a top charting band. The band released their seminal “Pony Express Record” on Epic Records in 1994. “Pony Express Record” created a unique musical template by fusing skewed avant garde prog-rock musical equations with Wedren’s melodic hooks and operatic vocals in a revolutionary way. It developed an intense following and is regarded by many musicians and critics as a wholly unique reinvention of the rock medium. The music on “Pony Express Record” is still referenced by taste makers including writers at Pitchfork and Stereogum for it’s powerful impact on the musical landscape. Sometimes equated during this period with an avant-punk-rock version of Freddy Mercury and Queen, Shudder To Think toured nationally with Smashing Pumpkins, Pearl Jam, and Fugazi, while being featured regularly in Rolling Stone Magazine for their live exploits, and having a spread in Vogue Magazine long before the rock + fashion tie-ins became a staple of both industries (STT had an unusually polished sense of style during the “Grunge” era, often wearing tailored suits and glam accessories). During this period Shudder To Think also had videos for two singles appearing regularly in MTV’s “Buzz Bin” and on MTV’s “120 Minutes.”

The band’s momentum was unfortunately curtailed when Wedren was diagnosed with Cancer even as the band was becoming a national sensation. Because touring was no longer possible as Wedren battled the life threatening disease, he and guitarist Nathan Larson took the band in yet another direction re-configuring Shudder To Think to write and record music for films. Wedren successfully overcame his battle with Cancer, and in their final incarnation Shudder To Think created brilliant music and score for the films “Velvet Goldmine,” “High Art,” and “First Love Last Rites,” often working with special guest vocalists including Jeff Buckley, Liz Phair, Cheap Trick’s Robin Zander and Nina Persson of The Cardigans (who is now married to Larson). Shudder to Think parted ways officially in 1998, even as many of the fans who were too young to attend their concerts were coming of age, starting their own bands, and hoping for an opportunity to see Shudder To Think - the fathers of the their scene - perform the songs that inspired them live.