

Attached you can find the original Interview between Sascha for Soundmagnet.eu and members of the band from Falls of Rauros.

**Congratulations to Keys to a Vanishing Future, you really created a masterpiece with this one! How is the album received so far and are you happy with how it turned out?**

**Jordan:** Thank you, it's great to hear that you like the album! It has received more attention than our previous releases, probably because we've been at it for so long. I'm definitely happy with how it turned out. I like and am still proud of all of our albums, and this one is no exception. One of my favorite responses, which I heard a few times about this record, is when folks acknowledge that we're always evolving and incorporating new influences, but that our music always sounds like Falls of Rauros.

**Aaron:** I think with this record we took a slightly bigger step outside of our comfort zone than usual, which I found to be artistically satisfying. The climate and circumstances under which we wrote and recorded the album affected both the music and production, resulting in what is likely our most eclectic and adventurous set of songs. And people seem to like it, which is great! But of course, when you change up your sound you can't please everyone.

**The lyrics are really deep and thought-provoking, and also leave room to interpretation. As far as I understand they touch areas such as the growing strength of religion and superstition, but also a decay of values and knowledge, and a generally negative view of our own existence, its meaning and its future.**

**Could you enlighten us a bit more about what thoughts went into the lyrical side of the songs and what messages or warnings you want to convey?**

**Aaron:** I'm hesitant to explain the meanings behind the songs too precisely, but the overarching theme centers around obligatory inheritance; the fact that each generation is born into the world in its current state, with century upon century of history behind them that dictates both the present and the future. Culture and tradition press upon the living in both positive and negative ways. And then there are factors such as physical and mental health, political turmoil, and socioeconomic status that force their way into our lives without consent. The album has such an open concept to it that I only scratch the surface of these ideas, but I can say for sure that the lyrics are critical of the enduring influence of religion and superstition in the modern world. They also question the role of tradition, which has the potential to sustain values and knowledge, but can just as easily be weaponized and act as an impediment to progress. But I'll leave it at that. They're intentionally vague.

**Are there different roles in your band considering the creative process, I mean, is there a single person writing the lyrics and base song structure, or do you have a more collaborative approach to creating music for a new album?**

**Jordan:** Generally, for the last several albums, Aaron and I write riffs/sections and then we slowly assemble song structures together as a band. We then rehearse these song structures, record rehearsals, and gradually tweak them over the course of several months. Usually, the songs are a knitting together of riffs we've both written, but for *Key*, Aaron and I wrote the "skeletons" to 3 songs each, so perhaps our distinct writing styles are a bit more obviously on

display this time around. That being said, everyone collaborates on the song structures, rhythms, tempos, and all the rest of it, and Aaron and I wrote layers, leads, and solos to “each other’s” songs, so all the songs are still a big soup of compositional DNA that includes all four of us.

**Now to the new album: how was the production process, when did it start and did the pandemic have any influence on the creation of the record?**

**Jordan:** We wrote *Key to a Vanishing Future* entirely during the pandemic. With no shows for the foreseeable future, we just focused on writing, and it came together rather quickly (for us), over the course of 5-6 months. We recorded drums at our rehearsal space, and guitars, bass, and synthesizers on our individual home recording setups. Vocals and acoustic guitars were done at the rehearsal space as well. Then we sent all of that stuff to Colin Marston, who re-amped the guitars and mixed everything and I think the results of his work speak for themselves - I really dig his production, I think it suits our music perfectly.

**I really love the sound of the album, did you use analog equipment to record it or did you use digital tools? Is there a preference for one of both approaches?**

**Jordan:** I’m glad you like the production too! Everything is digital on the recording end, though Colin did re-amp our guitar tracks with tube amps, they’re not digital amp simulators (at least that’s what I *think* he did). Analog is cool, but way more expensive and more difficult to deal with, so I prefer working in the digital world. I suppose if I was much more versed with reel to reel tape I might have a different opinion, but I honestly think the obsession with analog equipment is mostly smoke and mirrors. There are so many high quality plugins that an engineer can use during mastering to make an album sound compressed & EQ’d like it was recorded on analog tape, if that’s an aesthetic that you’re going for. Digital is just so cheap and amazingly efficient to work with; I’m not particularly interested in using analog recording gear.

**Aaron:** The fact that we mic’d up the drums, acoustic guitars, and vocals ourselves helped to limit the risk of overproducing the record. It sounds natural and almost analog probably because we recorded much of the record in a non-professional rehearsal space and in our apartments; this gives it an inherent rawness that you wouldn’t hear in a high end studio. But then Colin went in and worked his magic and left plenty of dynamics in the final master. It’s neither too raw nor too polished, which I think works wonderfully for these songs.

**The American Black Metal scene has grown and become revered around here for its quality outputs. Could you tell us more about US Black Metal in general or your local scene? There seem to be a lot of friendships and interrelations between bands, such as some of you also playing in Panopticon.**

**Jordan:** We’re lucky to be a part of an (inter)national scene that includes many great musicians and people. At this point, we’ve been able to meet many folks on tour that we’d only previously known through listening to their records. It kind of feels like a lifetime ago, as we’ve only played one show since the pandemic started... As far as our local scene goes, it’s tiny but pretty cool. Bandcamp actually wrote an article about it, which is insane considering

how small our scene is, but here you have it for those who might be interested:  
<https://daily.bandcamp.com/scene-report/maine-black-metal-list>

**Aaron:** I believe US Black Metal boasts some of the best music in the genre: Leviathan, Xasthur, Negative Plane, Chaos Moon, Thralldom, the Black Twilight Circle. The list could go on forever. Judas Iscariot was a big influence during our demo era too. And then we've become friends with several bands that date back to the 00s, such as Alda and Velnias. We've known Austin from Panopticon since our first record came out back in 2008. He played session drums on our second record, *The Light that Dwells in Rotten Wood*, and we put out a split with Panopticon in 2014. Eventually Ray and I began playing in the live line-up for Panopticon (Ray much earlier than myself). Tanner from Obsequiae is involved too. Having talented friends is a trip.

**What about your fans: is there a difference in your popularity between the USA, Europe and other parts of the world?**

**Jordan:** Hard to say! We've only toured in the USA and Canada, so we've yet to meet many of our overseas fans. Extreme metal fans in general tend to *really* care about it, and I'm super grateful for that.

**Aaron:** I would *guess* that the USA is where we have the most fans. We've toured the most here, and there's something very "American" about our sound and attitude. I know we have fans around the world but it's tough to gauge how any other country or continent feels about us.

**Metal has splintered into a multifaceted and deep genre of music from its beginning over 50 years ago till nowadays, subgenres sprouted, prospered or died, fans hold endless debates about trueness or what the essence of Metal is.**

**About the genre of Black Metal: bands like Agalloch, Panopticon and you have evolved from the roots of Black Metal to a unique approach, that lets in influences from Post Rock, Folk and Heavy Metal. How would you define the genre you're in, and what are your thoughts on putting music into genres or the evolution of extreme music in general?**

**Jordan:** This is tough to say, but I suppose we're roughly in the "post-black" these days? As I said in another interview recently, I'm not really sure what post-black sounds like, but it seems like a term for bands that use black metal as their core and add other styles to it. We've been called this, as have Oranssi Pazuzu, Enslaved, and Alcest as well. Putting us in a category with those bands and bands like them makes sense to me. Separating music into subgenres I find quite helpful for listeners and musicians to communicate about music; orthodox opinions about what genres should and shouldn't be are pretty silly to me and seem to come from a place of insecurity.

**Aaron:** Interesting question! For me, I love the essence of metal to death, and I love the classics as much as the next person. But as a musician, I don't have all that much interest in being a nostalgia act, or paying tribute to the legends, or trying to adhere to any strict genre conventions. I honestly love listening to a lot of newer bands that play retro/throwback stuff;

it's great! But when it comes to writing music, we tend to draw from a wide range of influences, which in most cases means alienating the purists. Old-school or forward-thinking, either approach is valid.

**Your new album can be streamed on Spotify, Bandcamp and the like, physical versions can be ordered on CD and Tape, a vinyl version coming later. Which format do you personally prefer, what are your thoughts on streaming music digitally and is the tape release just for nostalgic collectors or THE definitive format?**

**Jordan:** I mostly listen to music via streaming - the big record labels have changed my behavior to be exactly as they want it. I used to have a digital music collection but I just found that storing and formatting that much music was annoying, and most of what I want I can listen to using a combination of Bandcamp, Spotify, and YouTube. I also have a modest record collection, and definitely enjoy the ritual of listening to vinyl. I love vinyl for a few reasons - the artwork, the fact that it keeps you engaged (flipping the record, staying near the turntable), and the format forces albums to be a certain length. I think - and we've talked about it a lot as a band - that a single LP is generally the best format for an album - 40-44 minutes with a break in the middle. But yeah, I usually listen to music streaming because it's dang convenient and I listen while on my computer, on a run, or in the car.

**A final question I ask in every interview is a question from metalhead to metalhead. Could you tell us your top three Metal albums, or if that's too hard, the bands/albums that influenced or shaped you the most?**

**Jordan:** Great question - for me, at least today, it's Opeth - *Still Life*, Death - *Symbolic*, and Agalloch - *The Mantle*.

**Aaron:** Extremely difficult to narrow this down to three but you can't go wrong with Bathory - *Hammerheart*, Emperor - *In the Nightside Eclipse*, and Ulver - *Bergtatt: Et eeventyr i 5 capitler* have never let me down.

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