

KORN

Jonathan Davis – Vocals
James “Munky” Shaffer - Guitars
Reginald “Fieldy” Arvizu – Bass
Ray Luzier - Drums

Their ninth offering, *Korn III—Remember Who You Are*, is their first effort for brand new label home, Roadrunner Records, and it bursts at the seams with that very feeling that defined the band from the get-go. Each song unleashes an uneasiness reminiscent of Korn's earliest and most unbridled material, but there's also a modern refinement that's epic in its execution. Korn definitely don't lose sight of their roots on *Remember Who You Are*, but they also venture into uncharted darkness. All that truly matters is where they're going. The album strikes a balance between their past and their future, as it finds the band reuniting with producer Ross Robinson, who manned the boards for their first two records, all the while joining forces with Roadrunner Records, the world's leading rock label.

With *Korn III – Remember Who You Are*, it's their time...

Korn bleed with unsettling and unpredictable aggression on *Remember Who You Are*'s 10 tracks. "Oildale (Leave Me Alone)" buzzes with an eerie clean guitar that slowly gives way to a steamrolling bass and riff assault. "Move On" morphs from a myriad of creaking tones into an explosive vocal freak-out that's impossible not to connect with it on a visceral level. Then there's the neck-snapping "Fear Is A Place to Live" tempering deadly guitar dissonance with an unforgettable chorus. This is Korn reborn.

"This album is a reflection of us being a band since 1993," says vocalist Jonathan Davis. "We worked hard on the previous records, and we experimented a lot. For *Remember Who You Are*, the four of us got together in a small room with the intention of writing an old school Korn record. This album is a perfect mixture of everything we've done, and this version of the band is the best ever." It's as if Korn revisited their storied beginnings, but as a wiser, tighter and more precise outfit blessed with the benefit of experience.

In order to tap into the chaos that made their self-titled debut a modern classic, the band enlisted the help of the man who helmed *Korn* and *Life is Peachy*—producer Ross Robinson, whose goal was to bring Korn back to square one. He undoubtedly succeeded. Davis had an intense and invigorating recording session. "Ross helped us remember what we used to do this for," the singer says. "It was more psychological than anything. Ross was right there pushing me and he drove me insane. I sing about a lot of things that hit really close to my heart and he knew how to trigger that. I nearly fucking broke down at the end of almost every song, but I got it all out."

For guitarist James "Munky" Shaffer, the experience was no different. He elaborates, "Teaming up with Ross has brought that raw, emotional feeling back to the music. Ross is the only person in the world that's ever been able to draw us to that place. He reminds us why we're here, why these songs are important to our fans and why what we do as a band relates. He made us remember how our music saves lives, and he came into the picture at the perfect time. We had no record label and just wanted to make a great album. Ross stepped in at the right moment to hit the reset button."

Hitting that "reset button" involved stripping down the process. There would be no Pro-Tools, no tracking separately and no heavy post editing. In order to conjure *Remember Who You Are's* claustrophobic yet wholly organic chaos, Korn recorded on two-inch tape and locked themselves inside a 10x10 room buried within their Los Angeles studio, nicknamed "The Cat Box." Being in such close proximity to one another stirred up a torrent of explosive music. Bassist Reggie "Fieldy" Arvizu remembers, "In that room, even if I turned my bass head, it would hit somebody. Getting back in there was like a family reunion. We felt like brothers again. Being older and setting egos aside, we were able to focus on making the best record we could."

Davis dug deep for cuts like "The Past" and "Never Around." About "The Past," the singer says, "A lot of people dwell on the past, and they feel guilt. There's nothing you can do about the past because it's gone and it's blown up. We're here now." On *Korn III – Remember Who You Are*, Davis is fully present and at his most vitriolic, violent and vibrant on the likes of "Move On" and "Are You Ready to Live?"

He goes on, "I let everything flow, while I was coming up with lyrics. They're about me living my life for others when I shouldn't, people-pleasing all of the time, stress, guilt and all kinds of emotions we live with everyday that destroy us and tear us down. I write about all of the fake people around us and how I always try to fix other people's problems. I write what I feel, and it comes out naturally. I've got a lot of shit built up inside me; that doesn't go away."

Even though Korn went back to square one, they continue to break new ground. In a career marked by innovation, they *still* smash boundaries. Munky even fingerpicks certain instrumental passages, while trying out new tones on echo-y soundscapes. "The heavier I play, the more you can hear the aggression. The lighter I pick, the lighter the mood is," he said. "I used vintage guitars, echos, long delays and reverbs. When we did the first two records, we broke the music down to a completely emotional beast. Through

the years, we started to experiment with vocal harmonies and more orchestrated pieces. Recording this album, we brought that knowledge into the raw emotion of what we already knew. You hear the melodies and layers, but it still comes from a very primitive Korn."

That primitive Korn includes drummer Ray Luzier, who became Korn's touring drummer in late 2007 and was made an official member in 2009. On cuts like the deadly "Fear Is A Place to Live," he propels the aggression. Fieldy says, "Ray is like the missing Korn member we never had. He just fits so well. When we found him, it just clicked because his playing sounds like Korn. He plays with me, and the way that he plays is exactly what I needed. We know what we're doing on stage with each other, and everybody's on the same page. I've waited my whole career for Korn to sound like we do now."

Korn may have changed members with Brian "Head" Welch and David Silveria departing in 2005 and 2006 respectively, but Jonathan, Munky, Fieldy and Ray capture the feeling that was there in the beginning.

For Davis, the album name covers it all. "It comes down to one question: 'Who the fuck am I?' It's about remembering where we came from. The title sums up everything I'm talking about lyrically. During the first two records, we were kids, and we didn't have anything. We were making music, having fun and not worrying. I went back to that place where I wasn't worried. I wanted to be completely honest with my feelings, express myself and let them out. People get so wrapped up in social communities, the Internet and technology that they forget who they are and what life's really about. I fucking forgot who I was until I did this record. This album is just a bass, a guitar, drums and my vocals. I look at the records we've done as slots in time, and I believe *Remember Who You Are* is very special."

The album captures the band's legendary performance style that's ignited crowds worldwide on stages ranging from *OZZfest* and *Projekt Revolution* to *Woodstock* and *Download*. It's the same spirit that gave pop culture hits such as "Blind," "A.D.I.D.A.S.," "Got the Life," "Falling Away from Me" and "Twisted Transistor." It's clear, however, that *Korn III – Remember Who You Are* is another thrilling chapter being etched into Korn's already impressive history.

"There's that timeless space that we enter where nothing else matters on stage," says Munky. "It's us, the crowd and the music. We lose track of where we are and who we are, and it's just a timeless shared space between us and the audience. We lose ourselves in the music. I want fans to lose themselves in the new music by forgetting about any problems or anything going on in their minds and let their hearts hear it. It's the same experience that I get when I'm on stage."

The process brought them back to the beginning, but it also encouraged serious growth. Everyone is locked in like never before. Fieldy adds, "We want to take you on a rollercoaster with this record. There are spacey and weird parts where the bass can

breathe and there are some heavy moments. On *Remember Who You Are*, I'm doing what I really wanted to do on our first record."

In the end, this is for the people that made Korn—the millions of kids worldwide that buy every record, wear every shirt and never miss a show. Davis concludes, "I love doing what I do. I love helping kids. I love hearing fans say, 'You got me through this or that.' It makes me feel like I've done something positive. I want kids to feel what I'm saying and really hear it. I'd love for the new songs to provoke them to think about what goes on around them. We're very fortunate to keep doing what we're doing, still be relevant and create music that invokes feelings from people."

With music this powerful, no one will ever forget who Korn are.

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