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One on One Interview with Papa Roach's Tony Palermo and Jacoby Shaddix

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Lorraine Schwartz

Papa Roach is a band that has survived a lot in the last decade: "Gonorrhea, Herpes, the downfall of the music business, Scabies..." jokes lead singer Jacoby Shaddix. All kidding aside, **Papa Roach** has had some pretty rough times right alongside the good times since the release of 2000's "Infest" up until their current CD "**Time For Annihilation**." They've fought through personal demons, parted ways with their longtime friend and drummer Dave Buckner, ended a difficult relationship with their record label, toured relentlessly, and have managed to overcome numerous challenges that all rock bands have had to face over the last ten years, which as Shaddix mentioned, includes the downfall of the music industry.

I sat down with Jacoby and drummer Tony Palermo at their recent show at the Sherman Theater in nearby Stroudsburg, PA to talk about Papa Roach matters of the past, present and future, beginning with the most recent drama they were able to put to rest: the end of their roller coaster relationship with their former record label Interscope.

Whether it's pouring their guts out on paper to create great music, leaving their families to travel the world on diverse tour packages to broaden their audience, or setting aside time to keep the grassroots-style connection with their fans via live chats, blogs and meet n' greets, Papa Roach is a band that puts their heart and soul into everything they do. However, during the promotion of 2009's *Metamorphosis*, it became apparent to the group that it was time to leave Interscope, when they realized they were no longer getting the same energy back from the company that has also [seen the departures](#) of other major acts recently, such as Marilyn Manson, Eve, Snoop Dogg, and Nine Inch Nails.

Besides losing label attention to pop and hip-hop acts, the band was tired of being on the receiving end of broken promises. For example, getting approval for video shoots, only to have the label turn around and abruptly cancel them. Palermo says, "They would get a quarter of the way there and then switch their minds and be like 'Nah we're not gonna give you a budget for another video.'" The CD's most popular single, "[Lifeline](#)", proved the band is still a force by staying at the top of Fuse's and Billboard's rock charts for weeks and beating out bands like Paramore, Shinedown and Daughtry to face Britney Spears in the final of a fan-voted Fuse Best Video Tournament. Despite that single's success, Interscope canceled the video shoot for the next planned single, "Had Enough." And if that wasn't disappointing enough, they did it the day before the shoot was to take place. "They just dropped the ball," Palermo says.

Making matters worse, and adding slight embarrassment to the situation, the band had already publicly hyped up the expected videos for "Had Enough" and what they thought would be another future single, "Change or Die." This frustrated the band as well as their fans, who were left confused when the videos never surfaced. Shaddix further explains, "I said 'We're gonna do a video for 'Change or Die!' Then it was 'D'oh that's not happening, sorry.' (The label) was like 'Nope we're not shooting the video and we're not doing the single.' We were like 'Cool, right on. Now we know where you stand and we know where we stand.' So, it is what it is." However, even though they have been speaking freely in recent interviews about the ups and downs during their time with Interscope, Shaddix maintains that they don't necessarily hate the label: "No, we don't hate it, it's just the way that it ended...it was just kind of a bad relationship."

By joining up with Eleven Seven Music and Tenth Street Management, Papa Roach has finally begun to experience the support that their previous label couldn't provide. "Right now we have a team that's on both sides. They're on the label's side and the management's side," Palermo continues, "The hardest thing before was trying to get the label to follow through with the plan." But now things are different. Shaddix says, "We've got 'follow-through-itive-ness'. They don't. Now we have a label who really believes in us."

The band is excited things have already been going satisfactory with the promotion for "Time For Annihilation", the first release with Eleven Seven which combines 5 new studio tracks with a selection of live material recorded on tour last year. Not only have the video shoots been completed for the new singles, but they finished them in an extremely timely manner. Palermo says, "We just put out 'Kick In the Teeth' and just made two more videos all within like two days for 'Burn' and 'No Matter What.'"

The concept behind "Burn", which will be the second single, "is just obvious," Jacoby says, explaining that the visual will naturally incorporate loads of pyro. He continues, "That's a f***d up relationship song, not about me, but about somebody close to me. I love both of the people very much, but you know what I'm saying? Karma is a motherf***er. As much as you don't wish harm on somebody, it's just that repeat offender kind of thing where it's like somebody keeps doing the same f***d up thing over and over and over, and you just see this happen, and it's like... it's gonna catch up." Though the song's lyrics are about a bad romance, they can be about any messy relationship close to the listener's heart. Tony says, "We also think of it as 'The Label Song' too."

For "No Matter What", Jacoby explains "It's a total love song, but I didn't want to go the typical average white guy rock video for that. I wanted something cinematic and dramatic and something gunslinger. So we just went the opposite route. It still expresses the sentiment of the song, it's just...graphic." Palermo adds, "We filmed in the desert at Joshua Tree. There's some slo-mo action stuff, like a shoot 'em up kinda deal."

Along with the CD's first single "**Kick in the Teeth**", which features characters sporting "I's (to represent "Interscope") on their chest while they beat the life out of Jacoby, Shaddix says that all three videos are based on "destruction of the band", which coincidentally fits nicely with the CD's title. "Really ultimately and truly, in all the videos we get destroyed", Jacoby says. Palermo adds, "And it's fun!"

For additional photos of Papa Roach from the Stroudsburg show, click [here](#).

You can catch Papa Roach on tour this fall, headlining on their own and with Skillet. They'll be returning to the NY area on October 6th for a string of dates in Wallingford, Clifton Park, Atlantic City, and Worcester. Check their [website](#) for dates, venue and ticket information. Follow me on Twitter and stay tuned here for the next installment of my interview with Jacoby and Tony.



Lorraine Schwartz
NY concert Examiner

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