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## Interview with Clutch's Tim Sult

Clutch is a band that has earned the respect of rock fans and bands worldwide, not only managing to break out of Maryland over 20 years ago, but keeping the same lineup intact through all the ups and downs the music industry throws at a band. Genre-wise, they've been tagged everything from Blues Rock to Alt Metal. From what I witnessed at [last year's Shindig festival](#), I would have to agree that their sound is too complicated to narrow down to just one label. Is "Funk Punk Trippy Metal" a thing? If yes, then that's how I would describe them. Neil Fallon has a unique stage presence, staring the crowd down right in the face as he bellows back and forth across the stage while guitarist Tim Sult, bassist Dan Maines and drummer Jean-Paul Gaster back him up with their dark, intense sound. Check out their latest video, "[X-Ray Visions](#)", to see what I mean. Going by this introduction, it might surprise you that one of the members, Tim Sult, was a huge RATT fan during his teen years. I learned this unexpected fact when I got to speak to Tim at last weekend's Food Truck & Rock Carnival:

**Lorraine Schwartz: You just came from the Shindig Festival yesterday in your home town area of Baltimore.**

**Tim Sult:** We did indeed, yes.

**LS: Were there any bands you particular enjoyed yesterday?**

**TS:** I definitely like Anthrax. I've been a fan of Anthrax since I was a teenager, so it's always fun to play with them.

**LS: Did you get to see them play as you were growing up?**

**TS:** You know what, I did not see them growing up. I didn't get to see them till I was older.

**LS: Luckily they happen to be on the bill today as well! This festival bill is actually interesting in that it's featuring 80's-era glam metal bands like LA Guns and Lita Ford. Though it's not something I would expect from you given your sound, were you ever into any of those bands?**

**TS:** Well you know, I was into the super early stuff. Like when Mötley Crüe's "Shout at the Devil" and the first RATT album came out. I was around 13 or 14 years old, and I was definitely very, very into both of those bands at the time.

**LS: Do you find that they played any kind of influence on Clutch in any form?**

**TS:** Hm...no.

**LS: Ha! Well, being that Clutch's style isn't super flashy and doesn't lean towards a pop-metal sound, I figured that would be your answer.**

**TS:** No, no. But both those bands, at least "Shout at the Devil" and the first RATT album, were very heavy. And I like to think Clutch is heavy!

**LS:** It seems that fans of heavier music dropped out after "Shout at the Devil." Maybe it was the addition of fluorescent pink clothes. I'm not sure.

**TS:** Well, it stopped being Metal. It turned into more of a commodity.

**LS:** Changing gears, but still talking about bands that have been around a while, Corrosion of Conformity will be returning as a guest on your upcoming headlining tour. Can you tell me how it came about that they will join you again?

**TS:** Well we've known COC for years and years. Actually Reed from COC was really the early reason that we got signed to a label in the first place. We actually went to a show and gave COC a bunch of our first 7-inches (we had a 7-inch that came out '91 or '92). We gave our records to them because we wanted to play with them. He ended up giving a record to this kid in Lawrence, Kansas who had a fanzine. This kid listened to it and fell in love with Clutch. Then he turned Earache Records onto Clutch and from there the whole ball got rolling. All thanks to Reed Mullin from COC. But we've toured with those guys many times. 2000, 2001, and I think it was 2006 also. We've had the 3-piece COC out with us as well.

**LS:** So it seems to be a good package for you guys, as well as

**the fans, I'm sure.**

**TS:** I hope so! That's the plan.

**LS: You have a little bit of a break before that tour. Do you have any special plans?**

**TS:** We've had a huge break this summer. This is probably one of the longest breaks we've ever had since the beginning of the band, to tell you the truth. This is only our fourth show since June, I think it was. So I've had a good amount of time off. I think we're about ready to start playing now!

**LS: Clutch has been a tight unit for the whole 24-year career of the band. From your perspective, where do bands commonly fall apart, and how has Clutch avoided some of these pitfalls?**

**TS:** I think a lot of bands fall apart because they're going to expect their label to constantly give them money and support them, and that they won't have to do anything for themselves. We learned early on that if we wanted to do this, we're going to have to do it ourselves. And, use any kind of money we make and put it back into the band to help keep the whole thing rolling.

Back in the early days when we were on major labels, we got tour support a couple of times. So we could've easily packed it in like a lot of bands did, at least in the early 90's. Once their tour support ran out, they would just stop touring and not tour anymore. Because they didn't want to go back to touring in a band and not making any

money. But I guess we believed in our music and we wanted to do it.

**LS: It sounds like Clutch had the drive and some people just don't!**

**TS: Yes!**

Some bands just aren't meant to stay around for long. But not Clutch. They're definitely here to stay!

Clutch will be releasing their new album, "Psychic Warfare" on October 2nd. They begin their headline tour on October 3rd at Revolution in Ft. Lauderdale, FL and will be back up North the following week, playing Upstate Concert Hall in Clifton Park, NY on October 10th and Toad's Place in New Haven, CT on October 11th. Opening will be Corrosion of Conformity and The Shrine. For more info, including their upcoming festival dates and co-headline tour with Mastodon elsewhere in the US, visit their official [website](#).