

Dali Van Gogh – Complete Bio Information – Sept 2018

Dali Van Gogh are a guitar driven hard rock band from Halifax, Nova Scotia. With a sound that has been described as "rugged and rugged and vibrant, reminiscent of early years AC/DC and Led Zeppelin" (Stewart Rankin). The band has received worldwide radio play, and have officially released 3 records: Verbal Warning (2010), Mask Identity (2012) and Wild Blue City (2012).

Founded in 2008 by guitarist Isaac Kent, the band evolved out of Isaac's previous project, the pop rock band Eight Days To Saturday. With a passion for guitar, and the business sensibility and drive to create something special, Isaac set out to form a hard rock band in his own image and style.

In early 2008, the first lineup of the band came together featuring Shawn Bray on vocals, Megan MacKenzie on Bass, Lee Dauphinee on rhythm guitar, and Nason Scribner on drums. The band set about writing & tracking songs, and began to rehearse for the stage. They produced an unreleased EP titled White Noise, before vocalist Sean Bray chose to leave the band to spend more time with his young daughter. Shortly after, Lee left the band to pursue a career in web design, and the remaining trio set about to find a new vocalist.

In spring of 2009, the group found a video of the then little known vocalist Marcel McNeil on Youtube. Discovering that he was from the city, they immediately contacted him and within a few days Marcel had joined the band.

The foursome quickly set about re-writing the songs from the days with Bray, as well as some new material that would become their debut demo release Verbal Warning. This record marked the bands first foray into the wider music scene, both in the Maritimes and beyond. The band's very first ever appearance on air was on the 5 time Music Nova Scotia award winning station CKDU, on the radio show The Most Maple Mourning hosted by Freddy Webber. Both the station and the show continue to support the band to this day, and will always receive the debut of new DVG material.

It was also in this time that the band was contacted by 272 Records out of Hollywood California to be a part of the label's compilation release to radio across the US. DVG's single "The Demon" was selected and played on more than 100 stations coast to coast.

A short time later guitarist Jeff Parks joined the band who then embarked on a run of shows throughout Atlantic Canada, promoting the newly released Verbal Warning. This included an event to help launch Halifax based alternative radio station Live 105. Parks left the band a few months later over disputes with the group, and now performs with Nova Scotian band Carry The Lost. DVG continued on as a 4 piece and was invited to take part in the Roger's (Mobility) Battle Of The Bands, a nation wide contest to find the best up and coming artists in Canada. Winning the provincial contest by a landslide in February of 2011, the band moved on to the National finals, placing 3rd and winning a large scale marketing campaign through Supernova, a music publicity company founded by Kim Mitchel.

In fall of 2011, Nason Scribner and Megan MacKenzie left the band, wanting to pursue goals outside of music. Nason is now a graduate of the Culinary Institute of Canada, and lives with his wife and child in PEI. Megan is working as an animal care specialist with Hope For Wildlife here in Nova Scotia.

With bookings through the winter, DVG immediately replaced it's lost members with long time friends of the band Sean Sawler on drums and Scott turnbull on bass. The band completed it's 2011 dates and began eyeing future opportunities.

In late 2011, Dali Van Gogh was contacted by A&R Select out of Los Angeles (California). The company was interested in signing the band to a publishing and promotion deal, however, in order to do so, the band would have to re-record and master the material from Verbal Warning, as it was highly sought after by the company which was only completed to the demo stage. With short deliberation the band signed with A&R, and began to re-track their old material, as well as several new songs. With a much more seasoned and polished sound, the band completed the recordings, and released the radio singles Not My Worst, Weight Of The World, and Sober in a major radio campaign across Canada and the US, as well as the digital EP Mask Identity, featuring the songs.

With regular play on more than 400 stations, the time was right for the band to fully launch their new sound, With the release of Wild Blue City LP, the band catapulted into mainstream radio success. The title track from the album debuted on the CMJ charts at #166, and climbed as high as number #67 in the following months. Locally, the band sat at the top of the Reverbnation rock charts for Halifax, Nova Scotia, for 27 weeks straight, and "Wild Blue City" was ranked #16 on Q104's top Nova Scotian songs of 2012.

Throughout 2012 and 2013, the band performed and promoted the release live, on air, and online. Expanding their global reach, the "Wild Blue City" single received play on thousands of radio stations around the world, including the launch of Skunk Radio in London, England. They were featured in numerous magazines, blogs, and other publications, as well as nominated for several awards both in Canada and the US. The band played shows and festivals throughout the Maritime provinces, and began to plan a US tour. But that was not to be.

On November 1st, 2013, the band played what would be their last show for some time, at the Cunard Center in Halifax, NS. The event was part of the Rock For Dimes annual charity fundraiser for children with disabilities. The band blasted through a covers heavy set in front of 2000+ music fans, and detonators to the cause. A few weeks later, vocalist Marcel McNeil announced he was leaving the band, citing irreconcilable differences with the band members. This effectively ended any touring plans until the band was able to find a replacement.

In early 2014, after several unsuccessful auditions, the band decided, after several years of continuous work and performances, that it was time to take a break and pursue other projects until the right vocalist turned up on the scene.

Guitarist Isaac Kent went on to expand Dali Van Gogh Music (the business entity behind the band) into a full fledged record label, while the other former members of the band move on to various other projects.

Dali Van Gogh Music garnered success throughout 2014, signing and producing several artists both from Canada and around the globe, continuing to spread the name Dali Van Gogh. However, in spring of 2015, Isaac Kent's home and recording studio caught fire. Within 5 minutes the building was a total loss, including all musical and recording equipment, every computer, every master disk, as well as all the contents from the rest of the house and Isaac's Family's life. Nearly nothing was recovered. Needless to say, this brought the advancement of the business to a near halt.

But, with earth shattering events comes profound realization, and so did it too with Isaac. It had been far too long since he had taken the stage under the Dali Van Gogh name.

Over a year after the fire, with renewed drive and focus, Isaac has reformed Dali Van Gogh with a new lineup, and is currently in pre-production on the long awaited followup to Wild Blue City. The band continues to feature Isaac Kent on Guitar, with new members Jaad Stewart (previously of Musical Affair) on Drums, Cyrus Robertson-Orkish on Bass (previously of Keith Moon and the Wrecking Crew), Devon Roberts on Keyboards / Synthesizers (previously of Division Of Self), and John Scotto as the new Lead Vocalist.

Dali Van Gogh returned to the stage on Oct 7th at Montes Showbar, the de facto home stage of the band for many years. In front of a packed house the band performed selections from their upcoming record (From Ashes), a few covers, and the classic DVG songs “Heavy Living”, “Sober”, and “Wild Blue City”. Bell TV1 was on hand to capture it all for a future special on the band, as well a photographers and music press from across the city of Halifax.

Through fall of 2016 the band embarked on a Homecoming Tour that hit all corners of the Maritime Provinces and accepted a residency at Dalhousie University in Halifax, NS, sponsored by Molson Canadian. The band's first single in several years, God Help Me I Like It, climbed to #13 on the European Independent Music Charts (all genres).

On March 25th, 2017, Dali Van Gogh released their new album; From Ashes. Featuring 11 brand new songs from the band, From Ashes is largely inspired by the 2015 fire, and is representative of a band that is back on the fast track. Described “a band that has found it's way home” (RockWired Magazine), this spring Dali Van Gogh is now on tour throughout the Atlantic Province promoting the new album, and will make their way east through the summer. The album's pre-release single (God Help Me I Like It) has also advanced to the semi-finals of the SOCAN Canadian Songwriting Competition.

Following an extremely successful 2017, DVG retired to the Studio through the winter to begin pre-production on a new album. Returning to the stage in the spring of 2018, the band released a music video for the single "Outside Looking In", which lead the band to a victory in the Garrison Brewing Battle Of The Bash competition. Awarded a slot opening for the Glorious Songs, Dali Van Gogh used this opportunity to announce a 3 month long summer tour through the Atlantic and Eastern/Central provinces from June through September of 2018, including dates at Riverfest 2018 and Music Mountain Rock Fest 2018.

Completing the tour back in Halifax at a private event for the Canadian Armed forces, Dali Van Gogh is now in full production on the hotly anticipated follow up to From Ashes, which is expected in Spring of 2019.