About My Last Synthetic Division Show (SLIDESHOW)

June 1, 2022 By Shawn Decker

The last Synthetic Division show was a joy... the set list was four originals and four covers. Two days before I added a Depeche Mode cover after the news of founding member Andrew Fletcher's passing. "Enjoy the Silence" seemed appropriate. My next blog post will be all about that...

In the meantime, here are some pictures from the show.

The neon sign ALWAYS looked amazing, on any sized stage and I played them all... from a fire code 50 max to up to a 750 capacity!

DJ Cadybug DJ'd before, in between and after the Synthetic Division and Ships in the Night sets, which really set the mood for the dance party. As a DREAM Night event, Gwenn had the place decorated up so well- the merch area was part of our makeshift Starcourt Mall and we called it "DAMN GOODY". There were lots of nods to some of the most iconic imagery, Jeremi Rimel of

Miscreation Toys crafted the infamous season 1 wall of lights and letters for a previous show. What was cool was that this was our fourth Stranger Things dance party. With each one we built on the last...

Which, there is a final season coming up. Maybe I'll be a demogorgon for that one? Really, I had as much fun making the fake trees you see onstage as I did rehearsing the set. Synthetic Division wasn't just a place to make music, it really was just a giant arts and crafts project. And my final Synthetic Division show surely isn't the last time I get up there and shake my moneymaker.

Thanks to Gwenn for getting me that neon sign for Christmas in 1999. And for all of the support over the years. My goal when I decided that "Synthetic Division" would be my band name in 1992 was world domination. To have the everyone know and love my music, just like my idols in Depeche Mode. But, for me, something different was in store- the spotlight would turn my way for something else, the one thing that music helped me forget about: HIV. And I love how I blended those two worlds once I was open about my status... I'd never have had the confidence to sing and act the fool onstage if I hadn't talked openly about my life with HIV first.

More adventures certainly await, and I am excited about the space created and content with my decision. The toughest thing in life is when something important is taken from you, without warning. Last weekend was the absolute perfect time to "sign off" on this chapter. 17-year old me would be proud of what was accomplished and the songs that would be written under this banner.

Although Synthetic Division has been part of my life for thirty years, I know it's probably new to most people reading this on my POZ Blog. Here's a slideshow of some of my favorite moments in front of the soft glow of electric sex that was the neon sign.

In 2006 Kyle Wiggins and I were introduced my a mutual friend, Micah Consylman, who produced this album. The collab was a turning point for me as a songwriter. (photo by Stephanie Steinmetz)

I'd be remiss not to thank Gopal Metro for book my first C'ville show at The Dawning, which gave me a home and place to get comfortable performing live in the basement of the Tokyo Rose. Or Marshall Camden for playing so many shows with me from 2008-2010. Or Barton Lidice Benes for letting me use his incredible artwork for two Synthetic Division album covers. And Johnny Major for producing my first CD in 1992, which will be availble on Bandcamp on June 19th for my final Synthetic Division merch blowout sale.

I'll remind you, don't worry. In the meantime whet your Synthetic Division whistle with these highlights:

The last Synthetic Division digital release was a cover of The Beatles song, “And I Love Her”, released on the 40-year anniversary of John Lennon’s passing.

My friends and I spending Halloween paying tribute to Depeche Mode at Mockstars Ball 2016, as “Depeche Mock” (me as Dave Gahan, Alethea Leventhal as Martin Gore, Ethan Lispscomb as Alan Wilder and Christina Fleming as dearly departed Fletch.) “Master and Servant”, baby. It’s a lot like life, it’s played between the sheets...

This is only for those of you with a lot of time and patience on your hands. But- Synthetic Division’s history has always been riddled with instances of the unexplained... the demogorgon last Saturday wasn’t the first time that strange forces sought to destroy Synthetic Division. This short film follows me and Josh on an east coast tour, where all isn’t quite as it seems...

If you made it this far- thanks for indulging me! If you had any hand in helping Synthetic Division along, you are not forgotten. One of the joys of calling my final shot was the flood of memories and gratitude that came along. I realized that there were so many points when making and performing music might have fallen by the wayside were it not for someone else’s support for me and the project.

I’ll forever be proud of the body of work, from the lush to the ludicrous, and will post whatever adventures are next here.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.