Video Reviews, Depeche Mode Covers, Cobain Remembered

April 8, 2011 By Shawn Decker

Got lots swirling around in the ol' nugget today, but I want to lead out with yet another remembrance of Kurt Cobain. I know many think he's overrated and overmentioned, but this week marked 17 years since he took his own life... time flies, doesn't it?

Near the end of high school, I really got into Nirvana. The first time I heard them was just before Teen Spirit blew up. It was a random group of guys, hanging out in someone's basement. A cassette tape was pulled out and played, and despite the different musical tastes of everyone in the room (from Primus, to Depeche Mode, to Phish fans) we all agreed: Nirvana was awesome.

One thing I loved about Cobain was his understanding and empathy of the underdog. Back before the modern era of Lady Gaga- a strong advocate for the gay community- Cobain rose to fame on the strength of a catchy guitar riff and an intense music video that MTV played with the feverish excitement that is now solely reserved for reality TV shows. At the height of his fame Cobain did an interview with The Advocate Magazine, appearing on the cover to talk about how he appreciates the gay community. Since we all know his music, I thought it would be more interesting to share this.

At the time, I probably appreciated his stance of gay issues because I'd taken a small amount of shit for in junior high and high school for having Depeche Mode as my favorite band. They were European and played keyboards, in Waynesboro, Virginia that somehow qualified as being gay. I don't know how many times I was told my favorite band was gay- so many times that I figured it didn't matter if they were or not. It's funny, but even the thought that a band was gay, a band that had influenced me and helped guide me through the somewhat treacherous experience of puberty, probably had a lot to do with my opinion that sexual orientation is not something that matters in the slightest.

Speaking of Depeche Mode- I had the great experience of helping my friend, Andy Deane of Bella Morte, with a cover of one of Depeche Mode's classic songs. It sounds great- I'll reveal the song when Andy does. It's being done as part of Bella Morte's Kickstarter campaign to help fund their new record, After the Flood. The Depeche Mode cover is an exclusive giveaway to anyone who donates to their campaign, which ends of April 16. So if you want the tune, and want to help a very gay-friendly group of musicians in their own right, you have a week to donate.

It was a lot of fun singing back-up vocals on a song that I'd drive circles around Waynesboro singing in my car back in the day. Glad I could put the harmonies I worked out twenty years ago to good use!

Lastly, I'm humbled by the kind response that the Synthetic Division music video has received. If you want to hear me talk about music more, then check out an interview I did for Horrorshow Radio this

week, The Life and Times of Shawn Decker. Geek Crafts also featured the “Out of Time” video, and called me a “geek chic trifecta” due to my involvement in music and writing, as well as the fact that I named my band after math... Speaking of the music video, if you look closely you’ll see a Depeche Mode music video within the Synthetic Division music video. (It’s *not* a clue as to which song Bella Morte covered, btw!)

Hope you have a great weekend.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

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My CD, Synthetic Division, A Symptom of Life, is on iTunes!

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