



Sean Williamson – Guitars | Joe Varga – Bass/Vocals | Dan Fila – Drums

When you're born and bred in a city that's nicknamed "The Hammer", it goes without saying that you will be raised on a healthy dose of metal music. For Sabbath, it was Birmingham, England. For Varga, that place is Canada's Steeltown - Hamilton, Ontario.

The ties between Joe Varga (bass and vocals) and Dan Fila (drums) are as far reaching as grade school. But it was in their teens when they would begin receiving local recognition as a fearsome rhythm section. After adding Adam Alex (guitar) and later, Sean Williamson (guitar), the once Glendale based outfit did what all aspiring young bands do. They bought an old beat up bread truck and hit the road playing covers on the local Ontario bar scene.

It was during this dues-paying time when the four realized they could make a sound all of their own, and released the 5-song cassette demo 'Multiple Wargasms' in 1990. "It was a hybrid – we had progressive influences from early Rush and heavy influences from Megadeth, Metallica, Slayer and the classics Judas Priest, Black Sabbath and Iron Maiden and fused it into a progressive metal sound," recalls Joe Varga.

In 1992, Varga signed with New York label Maze America, but after completing the album, the label folded, and the album was never released. It was at that time, during a gig at the infamous Gasworks in Toronto, that Varga caught the attention of the A&R department at BMG Canada and left home to tour the continent. "When we got to the major label, we were a little more streamlined and straight forward metal but they were good songs and we enjoyed doing it. The '90s were a crazy time for heavy metal – it was kind of clashing with the whole grunge thing so we just did what we wanted to do at the time. We started incorporating a little more of an industrial sound to it. We got to tour a lot through Canada and the States, did some shows with White Zombie, opened up for Metallica and we got a lot of roadwork."

Getting signed to the major labels and becoming regulars on MuchMusic and MTV – including a thumbs up feature from the Mike Judge animated icons "Beavis and Butthead" – seemed to secure the band's place in the Canadian hard rock music canon but after their 1993 Prototype and 1996 Oxygen CDs, the band simply faded out of the spotlight. "We were never really all that comfortable with the direction the music industry and the label were going in at the time, and Oxygen basically sealed the deal for us, so we walked away."

The band never officially broke up, just focused on different things and still remained good friends over the years.

Dan Fila and Sean Williamson would help form HYPODUST in 2003 (with Julius Butty, Terry D'Andrea, and Marko Lubarda). The members of Varga even maintained their collective talents as SUPERBLASTER, offering awe-inspiring album recreations (with Julius Butty on vocals) from Black Sabbath, Metallica and Iron Maiden. When I witnessed their version of Maiden, the question only was with this kind of talent, why hadn't Varga continued making music?

"We just parted ways for a while and that while turned into 13 years," explains Varga. "It's always been on my mind to get the guys back together and go back to square one – the more technical, thrashy, progressive metal."

In 2011, Varga re-united, entering the studio for the first time since the 1990's, re-working unreleased and unfinished material from the Maze America era. Recorded at both Six Nations' Jukasa Studio, and Silo Studios with Julius Butty (Hypodust, Protest The Hero, Alexisonfire) producing, those sessions would become ENTER THE METAL (2013) and RETURN OF THE METAL (2014).

After the departure of Adam Alex in July 2015, the band continues to move forward as a power trio. "The three piece opens up space and highlights parts and sections that I never noticed before. It puts a new angle on the Varga sound," states Dan Fila. "A new chapter begins, a crushing metal beast awaits."

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