

K O R N

JONATHAN DAVIS: Vocals
JAMES "MUNKY" SHAFFER: Guitars
FIELDY: BASS

In the song 'Evolution,' Jonathan Davis lyrically speaks to mankind's distinct *lack* of evolution--while the entity known as Korn has made amazing progress since their self-titled 1994 debut. That growth is evident on the 13 tracks populating Korn's untitled, eighth studio album. The follow-up to 2005's multi-platinum *See You On The Other Side*, Korn's latest, Davis says, is "about us growing up and our minds opening up more. We weren't necessarily worried about 'oh, is this too poppy? Or too this or that? We started thinking that way when 'Got The Life' came out and we thought, 'oh, we can't put this out, it's got a disco beat and it's too dancey.'" It made us scared. But that's something we like doing," he emphasizes. "If we do a song and put it out and we're *not* scared about it, I guess we're not doing it right, because we always want to evolve, experiment and change." Further proof of that credo? The lack of an album title. "This album felt like it didn't need to have a title or boundaries," Davis says. "We thought it would be cooler for fans. Metallica had a Black album, the Beatles had a White album, and Peter Gabriel put out a bunch of albums he didn't title. We're throwing it out there and letting people use their minds and imaginations."

The experimentation, change and growth doesn't stop there. Guitarist Brian "Head" Welch left the band in 2005, and drummer David Silveria has been on a hiatus from Korn since 2006. Davis notes: "The dynamics and chemistry have of course changed, and it's reflected musically and creatively on this album. Munky has done an amazing job taking on all the guitar duties; he's really grown as a player. We've all had to step it up, and the core of us--me, Fieldy and Munk--we share a passion. I don't think we'd be alive if we didn't have our music and weren't able to do this."

In 2007, that passion is channeled into the making and release of the band's triumphant untitled album and the 2007 FAMILY VALUES TOUR which last year sold close to 500,000 tickets. The groundbreaking festival was founded in 1998 by Korn and management company the Firm. Last year's FAMILY VALUES TOUR sold over 500,000 tickets. Korn, who have sold more than 25 million records worldwide and earned six Grammy nods and two wins to date, have upped the ante with each successive record and project, always innovators in the use of media, fan interaction, collaborations, business models, and most importantly, music. On the untitled album, produced by innovative British programmer/remixer Atticus Ross with The Matrix taking some additional production credit, band favorites include "Starting Over," "Hold On," and "Innocent Bystander." Shaffer notes, "Musically, I feel our last record was songs we wrote and put on an album, whereas this time it's much more cohesive; you have to listen to the whole thing for it to tell the story." From the record's "Intro," the tone is set--the creepy demented circus-influenced ditty portends what's to come, which includes the primal industrial power of "Starting Over," which is balanced with the song's haunting bridge section and beefy bottom end. With ambient touches, cool melodies and the return

of Davis' bagpipes, Korn's newest may be its most dynamic and experimental effort. Of course, that's not unexpected, coming off the heels of the *MTV Unplugged: Korn* release, which debuted Top 10 in the *Billboard* 200 in March, 2007.

Since the band's inception Davis has been venerated for his visceral personal tales, and on the new untitled album, he does not disappoint. "Innocent Bystander" is self-referential, as he sings, "I'm a spectator/the motivator." Davis explains: On the road, he is (and has been for several years) completely sober, but that said, he laughs, "I love to pour drinks, roll joints, do whatever to get the party started. But I am now the 'innocent bystander.'" "Innocent Bystander," with its raw, taut musicality and insinuating riffs, even contains a Korn first—a guitar solo. Then there's a song that's in the signature Korn style, "Hold On," which takes its cue from death metal, a genre that Davis loves. That commanding, aggro vibe of the dramatic and epic "Hold On" was achieved with the help of one of the three drummers on Korn's latest album: Terry Bozzio (Frank Zappa, Missing Persons), Brooks Wackerman (Bad Religion, Suicidal Tendencies) and even one Mr. Jonathan Davis, in his first recorded drumming since *Issues*. Bozzio is on "Hold On," and Davis raves, "Terry has gotta be the best drummer in the world; he brought a more progressive feel to the band. His drum kit was huge, and all the colors and sounds he made pushed our music in different directions we might not ever have thought about going." Adds Fieldy, "The drums are amazing on this new album; you get a big variety instead of just one drummer doing the same style throughout." Playing live drums for Korn on tour is another stellar player—Slipknot's Joey Jordison, who jumped at the chance to tour with a band he cites as one of his main musical influences Rounding out Korn's touring line up is Clint Lowery of Sevendust on guitar and keyboardist Zac Baird. In addition to Zac being on the road with the band since 2005, he played keyboards and took on writing chores for the new album.

With all the successful and liberating change evident on the untitled record, one thing remains constant: Davis does not shy away from exploring his anger, inner life and the painful closeness between love/hate, which made the singer both famous and infamous thanks to songs like "Daddy," "Shoots and Ladders" and "Hollow Life." On the untitled CD, the songs "'Ever Be' and 'Love and Luxury' "are me, venting about our ex guitar player. I didn't get it all out on the last record!" Davis laughs. "This is the last time I'll write about it, and I love the guy; I'm glad he's happy and doing his thing." "Evolution," a grooving, heavy and strong representative kick-off for the album, is the first single. Musically, Davis says, "I wanted to stay away as much as possible from just beating on cymbals, which just make this crazy white noise over the music, and you can't really hear what's going on. Lyrically, 'Evolution' is about us as a human race, who has basically not evolved since monkeys. If you look back and compare us, animals and humans are pretty much the same." An apt analogy is also drawn in "Killing." "A bird on a wire, you have a gun pointed at it, but it sits there and stares at you. The same goes for people--we like to take abuse, that's our human nature, our trained response. Anything horrible happens to us, we're preset to reset to dumb." Another intensely personal track is "Starting Over," which was inspired by Davis' near-death experience with ITP, a blood disease that struck the frontman while on tour in Europe.

In their 14 years of togetherness, the L.A.-based lineup has both survived and thrived, and the songs on the untitled record are rife with detritus of decadence and lessons learned. That fervor and authenticity is felt and appreciated by both fans and peers, Korn's groundbreaking sound spawned a plethora of imitators. But the fans know where it began, and show their loyalty. "Now we have a new generation of young kids at our shows," observes Davis. "When we started, most of our fans were 14, 15, and now they're lawyers and doctors who are bringing *their* kids. We're transcending generations. It's cool." And Korn will not disappoint. On the 2007 FAMILY VALUES TOUR, the band serves up its biggest stage show ever, and in the set list are songs they haven't performed in 10 years. "It's definitely different for us. Fans are going to be *very* happy," believes Davis. "The statement Korn wanted to make with this record and tour was, 'yes we're down three members, but we're still very creative and still love making music.' We're so happy to be doing this 14 years later. This is our eighth studio album, but eleventh release overall. [And eight of those releases sold platinum or platinum-plus]. What a career, and we don't see any end coming soon! I measure my success by challenging myself and seeing if I can help take Korn to new levels," Davis concludes. "If we wrote the same records over and over but were still commercially successful, I would consider that a personal failure."

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