

# HALESTORM

## "ReAniMate 2.0: The CoVeRs eP"

Grammy-winning Halestorm front woman Lzzy Hale is the ultimate rock 'n' roll fan, and considers it an honor to record and perform tunes from her favorite musicians of past and present. "In all honesty, we did *ReAniMate 2.0* half as something fun for our fans, but it's also a little selfish for our part," she says. "It's a chance for us to learn more about our craft and play fun songs that we either grew up on or loved on the radio, and break them down and build it up as our own." *ReAniMate 2.0: The CoVeRs eP*, produced by Howard Benson (My Chemical Romance, Motorhead), Mike Plotnikoff (Aerosmith, Van Halen) and Halestorm, showcases six songs dear to their ears: Judas Priest's "Dissident Aggressor;" AC/DC's "Shoot to Thrill;" Marilyn Manson's "1996;" Pat Benatar's "Hell Is for Children" along with Fleetwood Mac's "Gold Dust Woman" and Daft Punk's current hit "Get Lucky." "We learn a lot about ourselves and musicians and songwriters by doing this," she furthers. "It's actually more difficult than doing an original album, because there's so much to choose from, and you want to pick songs that reflect you while adding your own spin and honoring the original. So we're challenging ourselves, and it's a way to keep it fresh."

Halestorm's first covers outing, March, 2011's *ReAniMate: The CoVeRs eP*, which included their versions of songs by Guns N' Roses, Skid Row and Lady Gaga, yielded some major creative benefits. "Skill wise, you have to learn maybe one of your favorite riffs of all times—how to play it and not totally screw it up!" Hale says. Those new skills and songs assisted the with their own songwriting—and in fact, helped win them a Grammy. "On the last EP we did Skid Row's 'Slave to the Grind' and 'Out Ta Get Me' by Guns N' Roses. Those were songs and tempos we hadn't really attempted in our own repertoire. But after doing those, it inspired us to write something in that tempo, and we got "Love Bites (So Do I)." Of course, "Love Bites" earned Halestorm a 2012 Grammy for Best Hard Rock/Metal Performance in a tough category also populated by Anthrax, Iron Maiden, Lamb of God, Megadeth and Marilyn Manson.

Though 2012 was a heady year for the band—their second studio album, *The Strange Case Of...*, debuted at No. 1 on *Billboard's* Hard Rock Albums chart entered the top 15 of the *Billboard* 200. "Love Bites (So Do I)" made history by hitting #1 at Active Rock radio, marking Halestorm as the first-ever female-fronted group to top the format's airplay ranking. The group followed that with a second #1 at the format with the song "Freak Like Me."

Despite the accolades, constant touring and tons of press, Halestorm made time during their Grammy week in Los Angeles to record *ReAniMate 2.0*. “We decided to do the opposite of what we did on the last covers EP, which was a big production, like one of our regular albums,” explains Hale. “This time, we basically had four band members in a room doing all the basic tracks live, essentially a song a day. It’s raw and not overly produced. We wanted to feel we’re jamming and doing something we love, without all the bells and whistles.”

Of course, with four rabid music lovers, it was hard to narrow down the list to six songs. Hale explains: “We all come from the common rock place, but from four different corners. Joe [Hottinger, guitar] comes from a ‘90s place, my brother [Arejay Hale, drums] brings a more metal side--and dance music!-- and Josh [Smith, bass] is coming from a very Fleetwood Mac chill place, and I’m the 80s metal nut. To see all of these lists, it’s like ‘how did we every meet each other?!’”

There’s something for everyone on *ReAniMate 2.0: The CoVeRs eP*, including their take on Daft Punk’s huge hit, “Get Lucky.” Acknowledging the “oddball” choice, Hale notes, “We tore that sucker apart to make it a rock song. It’s harder when it’s more DJ- and dance-driven and you have to break it down.” Hale naturally took to the two female-fronted covers: Fleetwood Mac’s “Gold Dust Woman” and Pat Benatar’s “Hell Is For Children,” though she notes: “I try not to sound like them as a female, I just give it my own twist.” However, when tackling one tune originally sung by a man, Hale choose to channel a ‘60s legend. “The AC/DC song was the most difficult for me and my brother,” she begins. “People have this perception that the drum and vocal parts of AC/DC are easy, because it’s screaming and four-four. But it’s not; there’s a lot of push and pull and different flavors that go into making them so great.” To that end, and capturing the attitude and precision, Hale channeled Janis Joplin. “When doing the vocals, I took it like, ‘how would Janis Joplin sing this song?’”

Which begs the question—maybe a Janis song on the next covers EP? There will be one, right? That’s a likely affirmative to a third in the series for Halestorm. “It’s getting to be far too much fun to stop making these,” laughs Hale. “We’ve played covers for years, even before Halestorm had any success. Some of these songs were one we were covering back when I was, oh, 19! It’s fun for us,” Hale concludes, “and hopefully fun for our audience and to get to know us a little better, about where we come from.”

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