

Kobra and the Lotus to bring back the rock

Written by Richard Amery

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Calgary power metal band Kobra and the Lotus, who come to the Slice to play with Lustre Creame, Feb. 27, have come along way in less than a year.

They have toured the United Kingdom and Europe and will release their debut CD, "Out of the Pit," March 9. It was produced by Greg Godovitz from popular '70s rock band Goddo and features Triumph's Rik Emmett soloing on the Kobra and the Lotus's version of Motorhead's 'Ace of Spades.'

"We didn't have a thought in our head that we could have success in the music business. We were just sitting around and writing songs for fun," said singer Brittany Paige, a classically trained vocalist who studied for eight years at the Mount Royal Music Conservatory with Elaine Case, before quitting singing for a few years. She answered an ad to be in a band with guitarists Chris Swenson and Matt Van Wezel and connected with them musically.

"It was amazing," she said adding they have been playing together for two and a half years. Kobra and the Lotus solidified its line up last March with drummer Griffin Kissack and bassist Ben Freud.

Paige didn't have much trouble moving from singing opera to singing metal.

"That's an easy question. They (opera and metal) are so similar. Both are very powerful types of music. A lot of metal has a very classical sound. The transition just happened. Look at people like Bruce Dickinson and Halford, they have a very operatic sound," she said agreeing their song 'Legend' gave her a chance to show off her voice.

"I feel like I have a lot of different techniques, I just wanted to show my other side. Hopefully we will write more like that one. I just enjoyed writing it," she continued.

The band started writing songs together and recorded them at a Calgary studio.

"We were just getting together and writing songs for fun. We were told to polish up our music and get a producer and they said Greg Godovitz had just moved to Calgary," she said adding he agreed to produce them and started recording at Metal Blades Studio in Mississauga. He asked Rik Emmett to record a solo for "Ace of Spades." {youtube}hRP1rO0dV80{/youtube}

"He's a really fun character. He got to the studio and he was so pumped up and he's got this really long fingernail. He came in and laid down that solo in one take. He's definitely got some sort of stage presence and he embraces all sorts of music," Paige enthused.

"It was definitely a real honour to have him definitely. We hung out for a bit and talked. He said some real encouraging things," she said adding the band's guitarists listen to everything from Metallica to Pink Floyd and some of her operatic training comes out on 'Legend,' an eight minute epic.

Kobra and the Lotus' metal leans a lot on the more classical metal of Iron Maiden and Judas Priest and more of a rock influence, so it means they don't really fit into the Calgary metal scene.

"There is a lot of thrash metal and death metal and a lot of really deep growling, but there's no power metal and not a lot of people singing. It's definitely different and it has affected how much we stay in Calgary. We don't really play here a lot," Paige observed.

"We've played with some of those bands and they're great, but the groove just doesn't work,"

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she said, adding they have followings in Toronto and in Edmonton where there is more power metal. They have a little following in Calgary though they are looking at touring out to Regina and Saskatchewan.

Their Cd has three different producers.

“The next album will definitely flow a bit better. It is nowhere near where we are now. But it is so exciting to see all of that work come out in the final product,” she said adding she went in and re-recorded all of her vocals in December after returning from their UK tour in November.

“We hadn’t really even been playing in public much before we recorded it. We were still trying to figure out our characters on stage. After recording all of the vocals it is a better representation of us,” she said adding the band enjoyed their UK tour.

“Those people in the UK really know how to rock. They have such energy on stage,” she said adding they are looking forward to playing Lethbridge for the first time.

The show begins at 9:30 p.m., Feb. 27. there is an eight dollar cover.

— *By Richard Amery, L.A. Beat editor*

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