

CUSTOMSFORGE'S

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue #21

ABOUT US

CustomsForge is a website created in 2014 by the Rocksmith community to make their own songs, communicate more easily and enjoy the game all together

Currently we have more than 44,000 charts made by the community, and have more than 329,000 members.

We welcome thousands more each month



Rocksmith 2014 Remastered logo

WELCOME

Welcome to CustomsForge's monthly newsletter, where you can find the latest news about CF and Rocksmith 2014 Remastered.

Small metal subgenres

Since I need to keep the pony music list for another issue, here's a list of great metal subgenres!

Metal Subgenres

Alestorm - Tortuga (Pirate Power Folk)
Amaranthe - The Nexus (Melodic Dance Power)
Amon Amarth - Twilight of the Thunder God (Melodic Death Viking)
Amorphis - Amongst Stars (Melodic Death)
Arch Enemy - The Eagle Flies Alone (Melodic Death)
Ayreon - The Day That the World Breaks Down (Progressive Metal/Rock Opera)
Beast in Black - Blind and Frozen (Power)
Blind Guardian - At The Edge of Time (Power, Fantasy Novel Themed)
Bloodbound - War of Dragons (Power)
Brothers of Metal - Hel (Viking Power Folk)
DragonForce - Cosmic Power of the Infinite Shred Machine (Speed/Power)
Eternity's End - Demonblade (Power/Prog)
Frozen Crown - Everwinter (Power)
Gloryhammer - The Fires of Ancient Cosmic Destiny (Power, Time/Dimension traveling Space Knights Themed)
Hammerfall - Stormbreaker (Power)
Kamelot - Phantom Divine (Symphonic Power)
Nanowar of Steel - Valhalleluja (Parody Power)
Orden Ogan - Forlorn and Forsaken (Power)
Twilight Force - Forest of Destiny (Adventure Power, Themed around their own Fantasy world)
Unleash the Archers - Apex (Melodic Power, Latest 2 Albums based on a story of their own creation)
Rhapsody (of Fire) - Emerald Sword (Speed/Power)
Powerwolf - Killers With the Cross (Power, Satirical Catholic Faith/Werewolf Themed)
Sabaton - The Attack of the Dead Men (Power, War Themed)
Sonata Arctica - Fullmoon (Power)
Orphaned Land - Children (Oriental Power Folk, Creates an unique Middle Eastern sound)

Thanks to Teinashu for making this month's song list and thanks to SnowShovel96 for making this interview possible!



Iteration of PrinceWhateverer's avatar

PrinceWhateverer

Interview

There are many subgenres of metal each with their own theme. There's pirate metal, battle metal, Viking metal... today we meet one of the biggest exponents of pony metal: PrinceWhateverer

Hello! **My name is A-J although I'm also known as PrinceWhateverer on the Internet and I make music about ponies.** I'm 27 years old and have been doing this for almost a decade.

You make all your song about My Little Pony (MLP), so just to make sure that our readers are on the same page: Could you please explain MLP and its appeal?

MLP is a show that revolves around a group of ponies and their adventures. There are Generations of ponies and other stuff but that's about it. The first season was regular baby stuff, but **as the show progressed it had better, more serious storylines and adult jokes.** The fact that this is world's most stereotypically girly IP makes it even funnier.

MLP came at the rise of the new wave feminist moment, when boys could like girly stuff and vice versa. I had

“Recognition is a big drive and I think people underestimate it. I like doing this and knowing that other people enjoy it as well is great.”

originally watched the original 80s show when I was a kid and a friend of mine told me that they were doing a new series. It intrigued me, but **nowadays the appeal remains in the fandom.**

People don't join it because of the show anymore because –aside from the miniseries- it's over. **It's rather the fan content and wonderful people that attract newcomers.** Everyone is really creative and supportive of each other –albeit there are the bad apples every fandom has. It's like joining a club where everyone is wholesome. It's also an outlet. A lot of the novelty of it has worn off, though. It is not as out there as it was in 2011, you know?

Why did you choose to make your songs about MLP specifically?

In the beginning I would write lyrics for my band that turned out janky and generic. Then I got into MLP music because of the fandom. I continued to write janky lyrics but I kept improving. One of the reasons was that I discovered the music circle around MLP and I wanted to join. **I also did it because I loved, and still do, the show. In fact, I'd say that MLP improved my life.**

How so?

I used to be a bad kid before MLP. Most TV shows usually have life lessons in the end but they never really stuck with me. It was with MLP when I actually started applying them and became a better person. For example: I used to [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], but now I'm happy to say I don't do those things anymore.

That's some heavy stuff

Yeah

Now that we know why you make your songs about MLP, we need to know: How do you make them so dramatic?

Some parts of the show live up to the drama. Like Luna's story arc: There are two demigods, Celestia (day) and Luna (night). They are the rulers of the kingdom and Luna gets upset because every time she uses her powers to raise the moon and have a beautiful night everyone's asleep and they don't see it. Eventually she turns into her dark form, Nightmare Moon. That's her evil form (Celestia has one as well) and she tries to turn the world into an endless night so no one can ignore her beautiful night. Her sister decides to use the six elements to banish her for a thousand years to the moon and avoid that apocalyptic scenario, after which Nightmare Moon comes back and tries to do it again only to be stopped and transform into princess Luna, her regular form. She feels bad about everything she has done and creates Tantabus, a being that is made of parasitic dark energy which turns her dreams into nightmares so it can punish her for her sins. **Do you see why I don't need to make the story of a demigod horse that essentially auto flagellates mentally more dramatic?**



Iteration of PrinceWhateverer's avatar

Yes

Good. **Sometimes I pick concepts like the robot pony from Friendship is Witchcraft (a fan series) and just have fun with it.** *Destabilize* and *Lost In Data* are two songs based off it and people want a third part so I finish its story. The bad part is that I don't write stories! **Sometimes the drama is not shown directly, since it's a kids show. I embellish stuff like that** because, well, it's the only way to reveal the covered drama.

I remember there used to be a meme that pony musicians would just make regular songs and then slap a picture of a pony for the cover art and that was true, but because **some themes are universal sometimes it overlaps. When the theme of the show relates to**

something personal that puts me in a better position to write lyrics.

Have you got any legal problems with Hasbro or any legal entity? MLP is their IP and it wouldn't be surprising if they went full Disney on you.

The only I've run into is when I've used clips from the show for my videos. YouTube bots flag my video and then nothing happens. It happened with my most popular song, actually. **My content is transformative enough that if I were to be sued by Hasbro they wouldn't have a case** -people don't click on my videos to watch their show. Of course they could try to win by having more lawyers, but unless they own copyright to certain words that I use I'm free. **Most of the ponies I use on my covers are not show originals** (although some of them are) **and I don't think their trademark goes as deep as to say that any stylized cartoon horse with a mark on its bum is considered theirs.** The artwork I use is also made by a third party which means that it isn't theirs, **it just represents their IP.** It's a grey area but it's been ten years and so far so good, so I wouldn't say I'm worried.

You've been doing this for almost a decade. Do you think this has a future in the long run?

I'm not sure. If the cons still exist and people enjoy the new generation (season) of MLP, then **I'd be down for it.** Even they don't, I've learnt so much in the last ten years that **I think I could get a job as a producer in my own studio or as an audio or video editor. One of my dreams is to open my own multi-media company.** Of course, I can't use MLP for that because it's not my IP. I might even join some bands again if I need to. **While I'm sure I'd still be making music, I wouldn't make music for MLP unless there was demand for it.**

I've also got a second channel about short tutorials regarding music and I wanted to create another one for tech reviews regarding audio tech. I would love to do that but it's very expensive and time consuming. Whatever happens, I still love this, I love the challenge and I love the feedback.

Speaking about feedback: What do you think about the reception of your last album?

It was pretty good. **It was better than the one before and I liked that because I always try to make the new record better than the last.** It was a lot of work as well. It took me two years to make it and, from the last year to six months, **I almost burned out.** Then everyone loved it and that made it much better.

Recognition is a big drive and I think people underestimate it. I like doing this and knowing that other people enjoy it as well is great. **It's how jobs work, don't they?** In my old bands I never got the amount of recognition I have now or even when I released my first song.

That first song, *Rainbow Thrash*, was pop punk, but now you make metal from the likes of *Bullet for My Valentine*. Is there a particular reason you changed styles?

BFMV have been a massive influence in my life. They came out when I was in high school and I remember going to the music store in my birthday and buying *self-titled* and *The Poison*. They are the reason I play in Drop C as well. I also listened to *Yellow Card*, *A Day to Remember* and *Green Day*.

It's funny that you mention *Rainbow Thrash* because the character it's based on, Rainbow, is quite punky herself so I decided to make the song similar to her. Then **I changed because I usually listen to emotion driven metal and, in the blink of an eye, I found myself doing that very thing.** As for a more recent example, in the last album there's a lot of heavy, open-string-palm-muting-while-screaming stuff because I listened to a lot of Mick Gordon. **I feel like I do the same genres as I used to, just slightly different.**

You have been consistently releasing a song monthly for quite some time now. Is there a particular reason for that?

I release a song once a month because I don't like rushing them. It's amazing how some people are

able to pump out 3 or 4 songs a month, I don't know how they do it. **When it comes to making videos I like to make sure they are interesting to watch. Your time is finite and I don't want you to feel like you wasted it watching my videos.** It's quite ironic because I don't make most of my money with YouTube, although it's the best window shop out there.

You mentioned in an interview two years ago that you follow a very particular set of steps when making a song, but you never explained them. Could you please do so?

Of course. **First, I write all my melodies in guitar since it's my main instrument. Usually I write the chorus first because it's the main part.** It repeats and it has the best lyrics and impact. While I do this **I'm thinking about what kind of drums I'm going to use and make sure they are in 4/4** since I'm not good at making proggy stuff. **Then the lead guitar comes and,** since I believe it is the focus of the song along with the lyrics, **I make sure the rhythm guitar is simple.**

Then I make pieces that I use as building blocks to find out what sounds best in what order. Not just for changing intros and so on, but also to telegraph to the listener than something is going to change.

When abrupt changes happen they usually take the listener out of the experience, so I think these things are necessary to keep the flow of the song.

I write the lyrics when the instrumental is finished because they are its natural conclusion. I believe that you can't write lyrics without a feeling. The instrumental gives me that feeling so I can make sure they go hand in hand. I have tried making the lyrics first but then they don't fit the instrumental. **This makes real** –as in not just adding a guitar or bass- **collaborating hard, because lyrics and vocals take the most time and if the project is changing then that work can disappear easily.**



PrinceWhateverer playing live



PrinceWhateverer's avatar

Do you mix your songs yourself? If so, how do you do so?

Yes, I do. **It took a very long time to get my mixes how I wanted them to sound.** I used to think I made good ones in my early works and when I look at them now I realize that they are not. **I have an EQ**

Chart which I use for

mixing. Vocals live around 2000 to 3000 Hz and guitars are the same, but they need to be controlled so they don't fight with each other. I also use a lot of mids so the guitar has enough range there, and then **I let the bass have all the lows so you can listen to it.** I make sure the kicks don't interrupt the bass and, in fact, because the lows are only in the bass, my isolated guitars are quite weak.

Most of what I've learned is from a friend I made in college. He used to not be good at mixing, but after we graduated he kept learning and now he's really good.

What did you study in college?

The first college I went to was for media. The music section was terrible. It was all live performances but they made us do some production stuff, which didn't make any sense. **Bad environment, bad teachers, bad instruments... Just bad. The film studies and cinematography part was quite good and in fact it helped me a lot when I got around to making YouTube full time.** My teacher was great but he was a loose cannon so he got fired. It's a shame because he taught a lot of useful information – especially regarding photography.

The second college was exclusively about music. We had regular live performances to track our progress. It consisted of a big room where every meter there was a table with a mac book pro. Then there was a sound proof studio within that room where we could go in and record our tracks to use them in our Macs. **It was great and was the place where I realized this is what I wanted to do with my life.** When I was in bands I didn't know if this was it, but after that college and YouTube I'd say it's pretty clear now.

Did you have any other ideas before that?

Not really, but I had two jobs before YouTube: I was a server at a Japanese for a while. It wasn't well paid and I didn't care for that job. **Then I worked in a greeting card store and it was great. People who went there were already happy** because they were celebrating a birthday, a wedding or something similar, and as such they were almost always nice to the staff. **The worst things we got were grieving cards, and it was okay because they'd be sad, not mean.** The best part was blowing helium balloons for kids. We even got pony balloons! My best friend eventually became the manager and we had a great time. **The main issue I had with it was that the salary was enough to pay my rent and that was it.** But to be honest I didn't mind that much, being happy at the end of the day was much more worth it.

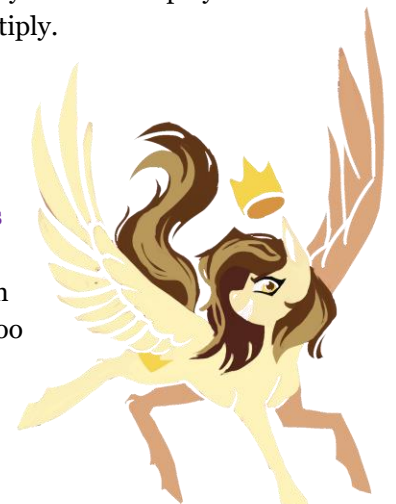
Did you make any money out of playing concerts with your band?

Not really. **When I used to play with local bands we didn't really care because we made enough money to cover the trip and that was about it.** It was also the reason why we played pretty much anywhere if the place was in our country. **That has changed, since now I do mostly conventions.**

Can you elaborate on that?

Most of the time they contact me and explain where and when it is. If they are local enough - they are in my country- then I'll go, but if they are abroad I'll ask them for help regarding accommodation, travel and so on. These things are expensive and when they want me to play with a live band the costs multiply.

Then I'll do some rehearsals because **I never make my songs to be played live, which becomes a problem.** Many of my songs have vocals in the upper register for too long so sometimes I have to let the backing track take the lead for a little bit.



Iteration of PrinceWhateverer's avatar

What gear do you use?

My main guitar is an Ibanez RGAT62 and it's the one I use for recording. My bass is a Sterling Ray34. Both run into a Samson MD2 Pro DI Box and the guitar is sent to an Ibanez Tube Screamer mini. Then to a gate pedal and then to a Joyo Zombie amp head. Finally, it goes out into a Mooer Radar and into a Steinberg UR44 interface.

Most of your songs have charts in CF thanks to a man known as SnowShovel96. I'm aware that you two know each other, so how did you meet him?

He probably joined my Discord server and I imagine he then sent me some Direct Messages (DM) asking me for permission to chart my songs. I love when people do that and especially when he sends me clips of streamers actually playing my songs. He's a really kind guy and **I usually send him the isolated guitar so he has an easier time making the tabs.** I don't make any myself.

Have you played them?

Not really. What was the name of the game?



PrinceWhateverer playing live



PrinceWhateverer's latest album: Reimagine

Rocksmith

Right. I think you need a particular cable to play, don't you?

In the past you need one, but they made it so that you can play without any input. Of course you cannot access many features like your precision score or automatic tone changes, but it's still fun and, in my opinion, the best way to actually hear yourself playing.

That's great. I might try it then.

If you could say something to the whole world, what could it be?

Pay attention, do the things you know you should do and stop doing the things you shouldn't do. I know they are broad statements, but most of the time by looking at people's reactions, the events around you and so on you can greatly improve your life. **And of course we all know** –or at least have a vague idea of- **the steps we should take to make the best of our lives. It's just a matter of taking action or ignoring them for another day.**

Find PrinceWhateverer in:

[Twitch](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#), [Discord](#), [Spotify](#), [Bandcamp](#), [Teespring](#) and [Patreon](#)



CustomsForge's profile picture in all social media accounts.

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Discord: <http://discord.gg/CF>

Donate: <http://customsforge.com/donate>

New merch:

<http://bit.ly/MerchCF>



Charter's tip of the month: "Use audio processing software, such as Audacity, to change the pitch of a song if it isn't at A440 to save players retuning"

– JamesPrestonUK

Website Updates

If you see a dead link, make sure to report it! Please remember that the website depends on donations and any amount helps!

Moderators & Server Admin

We are looking for some moderators and a server admin, if you are suited for these positions then follow the link at the bottom of the page.

CFSongManager

Did you know CustomsForgeSongManager is a tool to (amongst many, many other things) repair older CDLC files and add Dynamic Difficulty to CDLC that may still be missing it?

PATREONS

An extra special shoutout to all of those who supports us with a couple bucks every month. You may not realize it but your kindness helps us more than you can imagine.

Thank you for reading CustomsForge's monthly newsletter. Keep on rockin'!

WANT TO JOIN? APPLY TODAY: <http://bit.ly/applytoCF>