

Vicious Drums:

An Interview with Vicious Rumors' Drummer Larry Howe

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Photo courtesy of Rick Charger

Behold the band transformed...and reunited!

Back in the mid nineties, **Larry Howe** stepped down as the long time drummer of Bay Area heavy metal monsters, **Vicious Rumors**. Amidst some bad blood and the desire to dedicate more time to his family and upcoming birth of his second child, he reluctantly walked away. Having recently lost their singer, **Carl Albert** to a tragic auto accident, and other chaos, such as a multitude of personnel changes, the band was floundering a bit at the time, and change was inevitable.

Well here it is 2005 and Larry is back in the fold. As is usually the case, the passing of time has mended fences and the hatchet has been buried. Larry is back! VR is in the midst of a major resurgence, preparing to start the ball rolling again with the release of a long awaited DVD, recording a new album and launching a metal assault on one of their favorite targets, Europe. What better time, than now, for Larry to add his trademark double bass fury and power to this great band and help them return as one of the dominant bands out of the Bay Area. In addition to **Larry**; on drums, the current line-up includes **Brian O'Conner**; vocals, **Geoff Thorpe**; on guitar, **Ira Black**; on guitar, and **Cornbread**; on bass. Awesome line-up!

I recently had the good fortune of sitting down with Larry and getting his comments and insight on the current state of VR and what their fans might expect, in the near future. Here's how our conversation went:

DT: Well Larry, how have you been? It's great to see you back in the band, again.

LH: Thanks a lot Doug! I'm fine, it's great to be back.

DT: What have you been doing with yourself, the last few years?

LH: Oh you know, working, paying bills, and experiencing the ups and downs of relationships, marriage, and fatherhood, you know, the usual!

DT: I know you did an album with David Chastain. I've listened to it and it sounds great. What are your thoughts on that project and how did you get hooked up with him?

LH: Well, as the first real effort in collaboration with my then wife Kate French- Howe, I worked hard on learning the parts for the songs. It was an interesting project as I had recorded my drum tracks and

never even met the man (David C.) in person until our photo shoot! Of course, working with Dave Starr again was cool!

DT: Posts on the Vicious Rumors website seem to show a lot of support and excitement from the VR faithful at the news of your return. Have you had a chance to read some of them?

LH: Oh yeah actually, it was me who posted them all!!...Har har (LOL)! No really, I'm happy to hear it!

DT: Chemistry plays a big part in bands, and you and Geoff have always had great chemistry playing together. What sort of vibe are you feeling with the current lineup of players? I imagine it's pretty powerful, considering the great players involved?

LH: Well, I don't mean any disrespect to past members of the band, but I will say that this line-up seems to have a fire under its ass lit and burning! Much different than the band I took hiatus from in 1998.

DT: Have you had much chance to work on any of the new material, yet or are you still kind of working your way back in with the older material?

LH: Ha! Are you kidding? That was the first stuff we jammed on when I came back . That material is the soundtrack of my life, there ain't no work to be done there! It felt great to play the classics again, that have never left my world for a minute ! As for the new stuff, there's an interesting mix of the older VR sound. As always, Geoff has some great arena metal riffs and tunes that will put my drumming capabilities to their test once again! And that Ira, he's a wild one and he's also got some great ideas as well.

DT: I've heard bits and pieces of the new stuff and can only imagine what your driving double bass fury brings to the mix.

LH: Drumming for this band has always been the most demanding and rewarding! Plus it's a great way to try to stay in shape at my age!

DT: And we must not forget what your presence and antics on stage, brings to the live show.

LH: Well, the more things change, the more they stay the same!

DT: I know the upcoming DVD release was done before you were back in the fold, so what can we expect in the way of video, in the near future? Does the band have any plans at this time, to do any video to support the new album?

LH: Well, actually I am on this new release as well, since it includes the videos I shot with the band back in '91 thru '94. And as soon as we are able, we'll be shooting a new one I'm sure!

DT: I know the band is scheduled to play a couple of large festivals in Europe this summer, but is any more extensive touring expected to support the DVD?

LH: I think a couple of good large festival appearances as well as a few clubs here and there will wrap that up. I imagine more will come after the release of the new album later this year.

DT: I understand there are a few new tunes on the DVD. Any idea when you may go into the studio to record the new full length album?

- LH:** At this rate, we should be recording by summer.
- DT:** I know Geoff has been slowed down quite a bit as a result of back surgery, so you don't want to rush things, but I understand he is doing much better and is looking forward to getting back in the groove and making noise again on the Bay Area music scene, as well as overseas.
- LH:** I've seen him pull through many drawbacks and difficulties, physical and otherwise, so this shouldn't be too different. There's no stopping that man!
- DT:** Well Larry, unless you have any more to add, I guess we can wrap this little chat up, and let your return to the fold, and playing do the rest of the talking. Again, I think I can speak for all VR fans around the world, when I say "good luck, welcome back, and we can't wait to hear the new album and to see you perform live"! Thanks for your time and make some noise, my man. Good to see you again. SEEEYAAA!!!
- LH:** YOU BETCHA!!!

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