



JUDAS PRIEST BIOGRAPHY

There are few heavy metal bands that have managed to scale the heights that Judas Priest have during their nearly 50-year career. Their presence and influence remains at an all-time high as evidenced by 2014's 'Redeemer of Souls' being the highest charting album of their career, a 2010 Grammy Award win for 'Best Metal Performance', being a 2006 VH1 Rock Honors recipient, a 2017 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame nomination, and they will soon release their 18th studio album, 'Firepower', through Epic Records.

Judas Priest originally formed in 1969 in Birmingham, England (an area that many feel birthed heavy metal). Rob Halford, Glenn Tipton, K.K. Downing and Ian Hill would be the nucleus of musicians (along with several different drummers over the years) that would go on to change the face of heavy metal. After a 'feeling out' period of a couple of albums, 1974's 'Rocka Rolla' and 1976's 'Sad Wings of Destiny' this line-up truly hit their stride. The result was a quartet of albums that separated Priest from the rest of the hard rock pack - 1977's 'Sin After Sin', 1978's 'Stained Class' and 'Hell Bent for Leather', and 1979's 'Unleashed in the East', which spawned such metal anthems as 'Sinner', 'Diamonds and Rust', 'Hell Bent for Leather', and 'The Green Manalishi (With the Two-Pronged Crown)'. Also, Priest were one of the first metal bands to exclusively wear leather and studs – a look that began during this era and would eventually be embraced by metal heads throughout the world.

It could be said that Priest simply owned the '80s as they were second to none as far as pure metal goes, releasing such all-time classic albums as 1980's 'British Steel', 1981's 'Point of Entry', 1982's 'Screaming for Vengeance', and 1984's 'Defenders of the Faith'. Once more, these titles spawned countless enduring metal anthems including 'Breaking the Law', 'Living After Midnight', 'Heading Out to the Highway', and 'You've Got Another Thing Coming'. The '80s were also a decade where Priest became a global arena headliner, offering show-stopping sets at some of the world's biggest festivals, including the first-ever Monsters of Rock Festival at Donington Park (1980) in the United Kingdom, the US Festival (1983) in the United States and Live Aid (1985) in the United States.

The remainder of the '80s saw Priest embrace more melodic hard rock sounds on 1986's 'Turbo' and 1988's 'Ram it Down' (in addition to their second live set, 1987's 'Priest...Live!') before releasing arguably the heaviest release of their entire career, 1990's 'Painkiller' (which saw the arrival of Scott Travis on drums). Judas Priest were special guests on the 2004 Ozzfest, appearing alongside Black Sabbath, before issuing 'Angel of Retribution' a year later.

2008 saw the release of the double disc concept album, 'Nostradamus', which peaked at #11 on the Billboard 200, and a year later 'A Touch of Evil: Live' was issued (which led to the group's aforementioned Grammy Award win due to a killer rendition of the classic, 'Dissident Aggressor').

In 2009, Priest began a celebration of the 30-year anniversary of the release of their classic 'British Steel' album, which included a tour that saw the group perform the album in its entirety, and was followed up by an expanded double disc version of 'British Steel' in 2010, plus a DVD of their live show.

By 2011, Downing announced that he was exiting the band. With a still burning desire to continue flying the flag of metal, Judas Priest decided to continue on, by enlisting newcomer Richie Faulkner on guitar. The move seemed to have reinvigorated the band, as evidenced by a show-stealing performance on the 'American Idol' TV program, that also served as Faulkner's debut performance with the band (also in 2011, as was the release of a new compilation 'The Chosen Few', which included Priest classics selected by some of metal's biggest names) and the 'Epitaph' concert DVD in 2013.

Priest's next studio effort would arrive in 2014, 'Redeemer of Souls', which resulted in the highest chart placement of Priest's entire career in the U.S., when it scaled the charts to #6, and was supported by another strong tour.

In 2017, Priest received a nomination for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and the following year, issuing their latest studio album, *Firepower*. Co-produced by Tom Allom and Andy Sneap, the 14-track album has become one of the most successful of the band's entire career - landing in the top-5 of 17 countries (including their highest chart placement ever in the U.S.), and scoring their highest charting commercial rock radio single in decades with "Lightning Strike." After wrapping up a highly successful winter/spring tour of North America in 2018, Judas Priest will be scorching across North America with some true heavy metal *Firepower* in the summer and fall - on tour with fellow rock legends Deep Purple.

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