



FASHIONELA

Sananda Maitreya: The challenges I faced were mainly the high standards and expectation I set for myself

6th January 2019

There is still an ongoing debate whether **Sananda Maitreya**, the artist formerly known as TTD, is the most purely talented pop-rock star of all time. Genius?! Yep, obviously. He is a magnificent and powerful vocalist who has been compared to **Al Green, Smokey Robinson, and Marvin Gaye**. Before you continue to read this, go and listen to the greatest acapella performance ever – “**As Yet Untitled**” for just a minute or two. A talented songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, **Maitreya** is also a superb stage performer. His debut album “**Introducing the Hardline According To Terence Trent D’Arby**” (1987) sold over a million copies in its first three days of release and over **12 million** copies worldwide, and won him a **Grammy Award in 1988**, for **Best Male R&B Vocal Performance**. He released three more albums as D’Arby – experimental and mostly misunderstood “**Neither Fish nor Flesh**” in **1989**, critically acclaimed “**Symphony Or Damn**” in **1993** and progressive “**Vibrator**” in **1995**; he officially changed his name in 2001 and has issued seven more. These include “**Wild Card**” in **2001**, two volumes of “**Angels & Vampires**” in **2005-06**, **2009**’s “**Nigor Mortis**”, “**Return To Zooathlon**” (2013), double album “**The Rise Of The Zugebrian Time Lords**” (2015). A one-man band, **Sananda Maitreya** is back with a new album, “**Prometheus & Pandora**”, the eighth opus under his current name. It is a three-volume epic centered around Greek mythology and its two protagonists. His fiercely intelligent lyrics are bursting with a playfulness that will catch you off guard, make you smile, deepen and amplify your feelings, make you move and make you wonder... He is a rebel, he doesn’t play safe and isn’t afraid to experiment following his muses who will take him to Greek mythology, powerful rock, Beatlesque pop, psychedelic funk, reggae, country, soul and gospel.



Superstar, where did you go where did you go where did you go? Why did you leave why did you leave why did you leave?

WHERE DID I GO? I WENT THROUGH HELL! WHY DID I LEAVE? To Undergo The TRANSFORMATION Necessary For Me To Become What I AM NOW. I would NOT Have survived otherwise. I Saw The Future & WENT FOR IT Before the Past Got To Me & Ate Me Alive.



Photo credit: Fabio Oriani

FAME IS THE GREATEST ADDICTION IN THE WORLD! So the TRUTH is that I am not ALWAYS comfortable working with the ‘addiction’ because it is a kind of DISEASE, & once you have it, somehow you will



always have it. Like ANY OTHER LIFELONG AFFLICTION, it has its days. Some days are useful, but most are a pain in the ass. So we learn over time to use FAME for what VALUE it can achieve in getting things done, for which we are very grateful. But on the downside, just in the past 5 years alone, FAME and its aftermath & the HUMAN TOLL it takes, has taken over half a dozen friends of mine to very early graves. So fuck fame at the same time. The point is that either way FAME IS A HEAVY CROSS TO BEAR.

You made a splash in the music world because you stood out from the general crowd of singers – the way you sang, the way you dressed, the way your hair was, the way you moved... How your style has evolved?

MY STYLE HAS EVOLVED because I do not put LIMITATIONS ON EVOLUTION. And, I do not see myself as having a 'Style' really, a 'Label' maybe, but not a style. A STYLE INVITES Limitation & Stagnation over time. I just listen to the WIND & Follow the WAVES! Because as a 'Piscean' (March 15), I Follow the Waves! And I do not believe in 'COMPETITION', each warrior has been given their assignments & their fields. I pay attention to what is growing ON MY FARM & leave OTHER FARMERS to their OWN Yields.

Can you remember the first time you wrote a song?

I must have been about 5 or 6 when I remember WRITING MY FIRST SONG. I have a Cousin who says that when I was getting chased around the house to be chastised & disciplined by an Uncle, I used to Compose A Song on the spot as I ran begging my Uncle NOT TO SPANK Me. I can never really recall a time where I wasn't either composing songs in my head OR REARRANGING THE SONGS Of Others. I was awakened by the MUSES Very Early in life, at around the age of 2.

How long was PROMETHEUS&PANDORA in the making?

PROMETHEUS & PANDORA took altogether about 6 months from start to finish, but with only about 4 1/2 months worth of studio work. I spent about 6 Weeks Brooding & Mourning over the DEATH of a few of my close associates & beloved friends. Masters **Prince, Bowie, George Michael** to name a few, ALL LEFT THE EARTH during the time I was making the project & putting it together, so I needed

some time to get really fucked up Stoned, Drunk, Food Binges, & lots of tears & anger. **"SO, OTHERWISE MRS. LINCOLN HOW DID YOU ENJOY THE PLAY?"** Having said ALL OF THAT, it was a very inspiring experience making 'P & P', as well as an almost LITERAL MOUNTAIN that I don't think I'll ever have to climb again. It was a MASSIVE UNDERTAKING, but if I were going to EVER DO IT, I picked the right time to do it. I am very proud of the project and just as proud that so many people like it.

What were the challenges you faced when putting together this new album?

The CHALLENGES I FACED were mainly the HIGH STANDARDS & EXPECTATION I set for myself. Once I know what a project is going to be about, I understand that I must give myself FULLY to it or I will always undermine the goals I set to achieve. No matter the CHALLENGES, which are GOOD TO HAVE, it is always a good idea to remember that "IT'S ONLY ROCK & ROLL BUT I LIKE IT." We are blessed to have an opportunity to MAKE A PROFESSIONAL LIVING Making Music! And we never forget that despite any challenges that may arise.

Do you find mixing seemingly unrelated ideas together really inspiring?

NO, rather what I enjoy is exposing the idea, the illusion that ALL THINGS ARE NOT ALREADY Related. What might SEEM Unrelated on the FIRST LEVEL Of Perception can be more easily seen as VERY RELATED on the SECOND LEVEL of Perception. AND, if I expose TOO EARLY & EASILY those Related Ideas, YOU'D GET BORED. An Intelligent Mind needs to be given credit AND RESPECT for its intelligence and NEED TO FEED on a few conundrums & puzzles. The more WE LOOK, THE MORE WE SEE.

Do you see yourself as a provocateur?

Oh My GOD YES! WHO IS AN ARTIST MUST BE An 'Agent PROVOCATEUR'. The WHOLE POINT OF THE EXERCISE IS TO Move ENERGY. **"BUT THE MOST DANGEROUS AMONG US IS HE WHO LOVES PEOPLE."** So the MAIN PURPOSE of 'Anarchy' is NOT TO DESTROY THE OLD MODEL OR SYSTEMS, But to RAISE THEM TO THEIR NEXT LEVEL. NOT to CHANGE SYSTEMS, but to CHALLENGE SYSTEMS



Photo credit: Michela Zizzari

to remember that they are there for the **'Evolution Of The PEOPLE.'** BECAUSE IF WE ARE NOT EVOLVING THE PEOPLE, WHAT THE FUCK ARE WE DOING? Our Beloved JESUS reminded us that "THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN & NOT MAN FOR THE SABBATH." And like good RELIGION, The Higher Purpose of ART is to GIVE PEOPLE BACK TO THEMSELVES.

Salvador Dali was an influential surrealist painter; Jean Cocteau was a master of surrealist film. Do you consider yourself a bit the surrealist?

LIFE IS THE SURREALIST, WE ARTISTS Are Only Her Interpreters. One cannot be a REALIST unless one is FIRST Able to see how life in the margins, is VERY SURREAL.

Do you think that the pressure of success makes it difficult to create good music?

What Creates the Pressure to Make Great Music most, is

THE PRESSURE TO MAKE GREAT MUSIC. This is a GOOD PRESSURE to have. The WORST kind of pressure is the kind attached to OTHER PEOPLE'S Expectations. Sometimes we move on before the crowd does, but we must ALWAYS be faithful to following first & foremost the TEMPO OF THE MUSES.

Do you think that the music of today became too calculated?

Where PROFIT GOES, CALCULATION FOLLOWS. The much greater point dear boy is that THERE IS NEVER ENOUGH **BEETHOVEN's** TO GO AROUND. And since they are not really LOOKING for any, we get CALCULATORS MAKING CALCULATIONS. They are not looking to raise PEOPLE or COMMUNITIES, But PROFITS. And if they can achieve THAT without raising anything ELSE, all the better.

How do you deal with the weight of your own achievements and expectations?

ALL ARTISTS HAVE THEIR CROSS TO BEAR. I was once blessed to know a very wise old German gentleman who told me in my spotless youth, "**DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR LIFE, BECAUSE WHATEVER YOU DO, YOU WILL LIVE TO REGRET IT.**" And he was very, VERY right! It doesn't matter what we feel we've achieved or not, we will STILL have to MEDITATE ON IT. Or as we Christians have been taught, "**GIVE US THIS DAY OUR Daily BREAD.**"

Many stars of the eighties are not with us anymore. How did you manage to survive the pressure of the show business?

BY CHANGING MY NAME & SURRENDERING TO TRANSFORMATION, I SURVIVED! "**Unless A Man Be Born Again, He Shall Not See The Kingdom Of Heaven**". The great master **QUINCY JONES** once said, "**EVERYBODY WANTS TO GO TO HEAVEN, BUT NOBODY WANTS TO DIE.**" So I DIED & Like The **PHOENIX**, Like **PROMETHEUS**, surrendered my life to the Stars!

You said many times that your heroes are The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, The Rolling Stones, The Who, Sam Cooke, Rod Stewart, the Beach



Boys... Do you think it's important to have role models in life?

THE GODS OF MOUNT OLYMPUS (where **Prometheus & Pandora** come from) ARE REAL. And so they take their places in our daily lives AS OUR HEROES. YES, I BELIEVE IN GODS & I believe in Heroes, AND THE NEED FOR THE HEROIC to inspire Human Evolution. WE NEED OUR HEROES & Our Heroes Need To Be Loved! I am more than grateful for my heroes. Otherwise, we would not be communicating with one another. Our heroes inspire us to be more.

What's your first memory of hearing or seeing John Lennon perform?

I was 2 YEARS OLD WHEN I FIRST SAW THE BEATLES ON TV. MY WORLD BECAME VERY CLEAR AFTER SEEING THEM. I knew that somehow I Was A Beatle Too.

Mick Jagger once said that he doesn't listen to Rolling Stones albums. You also stated that once you make an album, you never listen to it again. How come?

Once I spend the time it takes to contemplate, write, arrange, produce, mix & master an album, I AM EXHAUSTED OF IT. BASTA, NEXT PROJECT PLEASE! I am not by nature a person who returns to THE SCENE OF THE CRIME. Once I've committed the crime, I MOVE ON TO THE NEXT ONE. I love making music, living music, breathing music. Then after the BIRTH, we release it to the world and let it go.

Do you listen to music a lot? What did you listen to last?

Almost daily without fail, I listen to **MOZART & BEETHOVEN**. Among ALL OF MY GREAT HEROES, it is their music to which I must return for my spiritual sustenance & gravy. Their music speaks the language of the stars. When I wake MY SONS up in the morning for school, I play **JAMES BROWN** or **THE RAMONES**.

So, what excites you these days?

What excites me most is watching my 2 precocious sons grow up in a way that MY Father was never able to experience with me. I am very excited to see that my life was preserved so that I could realize that the greatest use of



Photo credit: Mitsuya T-Max Sada

my fame was being able to provide them with a beautiful mother and a safe beautiful home.

Many musicians like Keith Richards, Miles Davis, Rod Stewart, James Brown among many wrote their autobiography. Would you ever publish one?

TIMING is the most important issue with my AUTOBIOGRAPHY. The TRUTH is that my story is SO INCREDIBLE & SO UNBELIEVABLE that an 'Autobiography' might appear TOO FANTASTICAL & therefore lack credibility. I AM FLATTERED that people give a shit one way or the other. I DO Expect to succumb to writing one while I am still alive enough to 'Auto' my 'Biography'!

Talk about the decision to finally play "Sign your name." Did you do that in response to the fans that have been asking for so long?

In Hard Cold Truth, TIMING IS EVERYTHING & after the DEATH OF MANY OF MY CLOSE ALLIES, naturally one begins to question ones views about things again.



The death of those we love is a good time to LET GO OF OLD THINGS. I was finally ready to surrender some of my old positions because IT NO LONGER FELT NECESSARY to continue holding on to things which were not as important as they HAD BEEN. It was TIME TO INTEGRATE THE 2 LIVES INTO 1. So we did.

What has Italy given you?

ITALY HAS GIVEN ME AN ULCER. THAT is what Italy has given me! (laughs) AND a wonderful wife & family as well as always a great place to make great art & great love. **Italy** helps one to stay grounded in what is REAL ABOUT LIFE & not JUST the artificial glamorous Parts of life that exhaust us as we chase them. We NEED A LITTLE ARTIFICE, because a LITTLE BIT OF ARTIFICE MAKES IT ALL RIGHT! But TOO MUCH fucks with your head.

Do you think you'll tour the States again soon?

As far as **TOURING The STATES AGAIN**, We Will See what the future holds. Now that I am an **ITALIAN CITIZEN**, maybe NOW is NOT THE BEST TIME with all of the Immigration Issues currently distracting the country. But even if not, WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE OUR MEMORIES of an easier, better more optimistic time in **America**.

What is the craziest thing that's happened on tour so far?

Now that I am a Happily Married Man of over **15** years, I PREFER NOT to tell you the **CRAZIEST THING THAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME ON TOUR**, you naughty persons you! Naturally as would most **SANE PERSONS**, I must now represent myself to my sons as were my past a perfect picture of pristine Sainly Virtue & Courtly Manners! "EVERYTHING IS NOW A LIE"!

You refer to your musical style as a Post Millennium Rock. Are you still looking for the sound of the future these days?

POST MILLENNIUM ROCK is allowed to continue to write itself. The greatest, most proven way to **KNOW THE FUTURE**, Is To **WAIT FOR IT TO HAPPEN**. I am in no rush, nor competition with the future because dear ones, **THE**



FUTURE IS WHAT 'WE' SAY IT IS! No pressures, no anxieties, just relax and let the future come when IT IS READY, just in case we don't feel like pushing it around. **LIFE IS A BITCH!** For sure, but that is no reason why she cannot become **YOUR Bitch!** ■

New Spotify Playlist: [This is Sananda Maitreya!](#)

Sananda's Official Website: www.sanandamaitreya.com

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