

Phil Bozeman - Vocals
Alex Wade - Guitar
Ben Savage - Guitar
Zach Householder - Guitar
Gabe Crisp - Bass
Kevin Lane - Drums

As the death metal genre continues to explode, Knoxville's Whitechapel stand bloody head and bruised shoulders above the pack. With a ruthlessly brutal aural assault built upon merciless blastbeats and spine-destroying breakdowns, their three guitarists deliver immense riffs and monstrous leads while vocalist Phil Bozeman vomits out lyrics that avoid clichés and give fans something to think about as they scream them back. Basically stated, this is as shit-your-pants exhilarating as modern metal gets.

Formed in 2006, it did not take local metal fans long to realize that they had something very special going on in their midst. "We went from fifty of our friends coming to our shows to two hundred people coming out inside of six months," guitarist Alex Wade states. "We've always held ourselves to a certain level of professionalism, we worked our asses off, and I think we definitely offered something that a lot of bands in the scene did not."

Building such momentum, it is unsurprising that the sextet – rounded out by guitarists Ben Savage and Zach Householder, bassist Gabe Crisp, and drummer Kevin Lane – soon found themselves courted by record labels, signing to the UK's Siege Of Amida, for their 2007 debut, *The Somatic Defilement* (with Candlelight handling the US release). Hitting the road hard, both their profile and army of fans grew rapidly. Inside of a year, they were signed by Metal Blade following an intense bidding war between eight labels hungry to add the Tennessee wrecking crew to their roster, and the band immediately set about working on their second album, the titanic *This Is Exile*.

A quantum leap forward in terms of song writing and focused vitriol, *This Is Exile* threw a gauntlet down to all others trying to crowd into the genre alongside them. Admitting that the lyrical content on *The Somatic Defilement* was limited to "typical brutal death metal stuff – songs about evil ways to kill people and that kind of thing", Bozeman approached *This Is Exile* in a far more cerebral manner, uniting the songs through a core concept. "The record was a lot more about the kind of evil that actually exists in the world," the vocalist states. "It was about three specific people who hunger after power, which leads them to starting a diabolical war that ends the world. I was really proud of it, because it had a lot more feeling and maturity about it, and it gave people something a little different."

Having sold 6000 copies of *This Is Exile* in its first week, the band once again toured relentlessly, playing shows in the US, Canada, and Europe, and sharing the stage with such luminaries as Cannibal Corpse, Slayer, Killswitch Engage, Unearth, Behemoth, and Chimaira, in the process shifting more than 55,000 units. Not a bad feat for a band that most likely cause rock radio programmers to hide quaking beneath their desks.

Following up such a punishing album would be an unenviable task for most, but Whitechapel are just getting started, and *A New Era Of Corruption*, which was produced by Jason Suecof (*The Black Dahlia Murder*, *Job For A Cowboy*) and features guest appearances by Deftones' Chino Moreno and Vincent of *The Acacia Strain*, showcases a group who are imposingly focused and determined to write the heaviest, most intense and dynamic music possible. "We didn't want to put out 'This Is Exile: Part Two', and this is definitely a real progression from that record – but, at the same time we wanted it to sound like Whitechapel," Wade asserts. "Having played with bands like Slayer and Cannibal Corpse, you realize that one of the reasons they've been around so long is because they've created a certain sound and they've stuck to that. Fans want to hear their favorite band sounding like their favorite band, and while we'll always grow, that's something I think we'll strive for on every record from now on."

Bozeman expands on this, stating that "The first two records are just riff after riff after riff, but this time we have more of a verse-chorus approach, and I think that makes the songs more memorable. Everything is still just as brutal and just as intense, it's just a little more structured, and that makes for better songs." And as the band has progressed sonically, so have Bozeman's lyrics, who this time has jettisoned a concept-based approach but remains just as focused, unleashing a surge of apocalyptic wrath as he covers issues such as the devolution of society into violent, hateful human beings ("Devolver"), the increasing corruption and violence of the post

9/11 world ("Breeding Violence"), and the circumstances surrounding the tragic death of his own mother ("Murder Sermon").

Primed to take A New Era Of Corruption to hungry audiences around the globe, Whitechapel are continually proving themselves an indomitable force, and their fan base is primed to grow and grow as more people are exposed to their unique brand of sonic violence. Prepare to be corrupted.

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