

Marianas Trench Hits the Road for US Tour

Vancouver band Marianas Trench has made a name for itself in Canada. The pop-punk foursome of bassist Mike Ayley, drummer Ian Casselman, guitarist Matt Webb, and vocalist and frontman Josh Ramsay, all members of Local 145 (Vancouver, BC), demanded attention with its full-length debut album, *Fix Me*, in 2006. In 2009, they released a second album, *Masterpiece Theatre*, which was recently certified platinum.

Their music has played on various television shows and their songs have won and been nominated for numerous awards including a Juno nomination for Best Video of the Year. They have headlined festivals and played at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. Now, the band hopes to take that success to the US. In December they announced a US tour set to begin in February.

Bassist Mike Ayley talks about his role with the band and what he sees for the future of Marianas Trench.

IM: How did you get started in music?

MA: When I was 11 I joined a marching band because I had a crush on a girl in the band. I ended up playing trumpet for a couple of years and the rest is history.

How did you become part of Marianas Trench?

Ian and I were in a band beforehand. It didn't go anywhere, but Ian ended up joining this other band from Vancouver. They were working their way up the scene. I came out to watch the shows to support him and ended up loving the band. One year later they needed a new bass player, so I tried out. Obviously, they weren't paying too much attention during the audition. To this day I have no idea how I got the gig.

Is being a part of Marianas Trench different than previous bands you played in?

The previous bands I played in were always just three-piece bands, so there was more room to be creative with the bass parts. In Marianas Trench there is so much going on musically and vocally that we actually want to keep the parts appropriate to the overall song's form and that usually means less is more. I did sing in projects from my past, but the parts were a bit simpler than they are in MT and there definitely weren't any four-part harmonies. Your ear for tuning really improves in a hurry in this band.

What are some of your career highlights?

The first time we sold out The Commodore in Vancouver was amazing. It's this beautiful concert ballroom that tons of great bands play. Being the band that 1,000 people came out to see was awesome. Also, our latest album was just certified Platinum and that is amazing. It's something you always dream of. After years of grinding it out you realize how difficult it can be to sell that many records, especially these days. Just this last summer we headlined a bunch of festivals in Canada and we finished with one in Vancouver. There were 15,000 to 20,000 people there to see us. There were no other bands playing that day and to think that all those people came to see our band is a bit surreal. I remember when we would handbill every person we worked with, every friend, family member, and strangers who made eye contact with you on the street, just trying to get 100 people to come out to see us.

Have you had any really unusual gigs?

Every gig is a life all its own. Some of them are different because you're dodging lightning bolts. Some are different because people in the crowd will do unusual things, from yelling nonsense, to wearing crazy things, to making noises no human being should be able to make.

What do you see for the future of Marianas Trench?

I would love to recapture whatever it is we got a hold of in Canada and recreate the magic in the US. It already feels like something is happening. We've played some acoustic shows and had hundreds more people showed up than what we expected.

How has being a member of the AFM helped you and the band?

We've received a lot of assistance with our work visas. Being Canadian and wanting to go play the US is not as easy as loading your gear in the van and hitting the road. There are lots of steps that need to be followed, and having spent so much time focusing on our music and careers, none of us really ever had time to learn what it was going to take to get into the US to introduce our music to the people there.

Does MT have any new projects coming out this year?

We are working on a new album. We're hoping to get the US album release date in line with the Canadian release date. It will make the touring a lot easier and more efficient.



Mike Ayley of Local 145 (Vancouver, BC) plays bass for Marianas Trench.



Vancouver band Marianas Trench, (L to R) Mike Ayley, Josh Ramsay, Ian Casselman, and Matt Webb, are all members of Local 145 (Vancouver, BC). The band is preparing for its first US tour.