



# Psychotic Waltz

## “The God-Shaped Void”

Ltd. Mediabook CD, Jewelcase CD, 2LP + CD, Digital Album

**Release Date: February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Lauded California-based progressive metallers Psychotic Waltz are back! Not only that but they return—after officially reforming in 2010—with all five members from the group’s first three albums, *A Social Grace* (1990), *Into the Everflow* (1992), and *Mosquito* (1994). That’s right. Appearing on new album *The God-Shaped Void* and stepping in as if they never left are: Dan Rock (guitars/keyboards), Brian McAlpin (guitars/keyboards), Ward Evans (bass), Norm Leggio (drums), and Devon Graves (vocals/flute/keyboard), originally known to fans as Buddy Lackey. Psychotic Waltz got their start in El Cajon (a suburb of San Diego) in 1986. Previously known as Aslan, the band that would become America’s foremost progressive metal outfit—alongside Fates Warning and Watchtower, of course—quietly transitioned into Psychotic Waltz for debut album, *A Social Grace* (Rising Sun Productions). In their home country, the quintet experienced nominal success, but abroad, especially in Europe, the group’s brand of aggressive yet musically clever metal hit home. Over the next six years and three albums, Psychotic Waltz established a formidable and fervent fanbase. The band’s exit from the scene in 1997, not long after the release of *Bleeding* (Bullet Proof Records), was a sad moment for all involved, but now, 23 years later, the high school friends have found each other again under majesty and mystery of Psychotic Waltz.

“We all felt the time was right to get back together and do some European shows back in 2011,” says Psychotic Waltz axeslinger Dan Rock. “We got a great spot on the Power of Metal tour with Nevermore and Symphony X. We had not played live since 1997, and not with all five original members since 1995. The tour was awesome, and the years apart seemed to make us all appreciate it—and each other—that much more. We kept playing live in Europe every year or two after that. Brian had been working on some new stuff prior to that, so we agreed it was time to finally make a new record. We began writing in 2012, and we finished it in 2019, so.... yeah, seven years in the making. Nobody ever accused us of being fast! The songwriting process was similar to back in the old days, but with Devon now living in Europe, we had to e-mail files back and forth, so things took a bit longer than usual. But we think the end result came out great, and we’re all really proud of this album.”

While it’s taken Psychotic Waltz nearly a decade to arrive at *The God-Shaped Void*, the wait was absolutely worth it. Fans and supporters will find elements from the group’s celebrated oeuvre woven into new songs like “Sisters of the Dawn,” “Devils and Angels,” “In the Silence,” and “Pull the String.” To wit, Rock and McAlpin are a duo to be reckoned with, their guitar-slinging acrobatics and acoustic motifs are masterfully employed throughout *The God-Shaped Void*. Indeed, Graves, the fulcrum of Psychotic Waltz, is still in ultra-fine form, his various voices full-bodied and resolute. Rhythmically, Evans and Leggio are the all-important spine. There are fine rhythm sections in progressive metal, but the twosome share and demonstrate a profound understanding of their interconnectedness on *The God-Shaped Void*. Written over the course of many long years by the group, *The God-Shaped Void* is the product of careful and studied perfectionism. In short, it’s pure Psychotic Waltz.

“So, it took seven years [to write *The God-Shaped Void*], and many factors were involved there,” Rock says. “One, we’re not kids anymore like when we started this. We all have jobs and families, and ‘grown up’ stuff to deal with now. Where we used to jam four nights a week, we are lucky now to get one! Then there’s the fact that our singer lives overseas, so we had to work with him via e-mail and uploads, which took a long time due to the time differences... a couple days will go by just to hear something and then reply to an idea. If you’re only seeing each other one day a week, and everything is being sent back and forth, the time can get away from you quickly. The recording process was a lot different now too, obviously. We did a huge amount of pre-production work on our own. In

fact, most of the guitars you hear on the album were recorded in our home studios during the pre-production demos.”

For *The God-Shaped Void*, frontman Devon Graves embarked on a journey similar to but not directly connected to his lyrical work on classic *Psychotic Waltz*. His visual style continues to captivate and impress. Indeed, from “In the Silence” and “All the Bad Men” to “While the Spiders Spin” and “Demystified,” Graves lures the listener in, his word choice and rhythm always perfect for the song at hand. That he’s looking at and commenting on our sick world—caught in the struggle between good and evil—is not only relevant to humanity in the 21st century but defiantly poses as the crux of *The God-Shaped Void*’s theme. To pull the lyrics and music together, *Psychotic Waltz* brought in famed artist Travis Smith to do the cover art yet again.

“Devon has always taken a road less traveled when it comes to his lyrics,” says Rock. “It’s one of the things we’ve always appreciated about him. For the artwork, Travis Smith, our longtime friend and collaborator, is at it again. It truly feels like we picked up right where we left off with him in 1996 on the *Bleeding* album. His imagination and style works really well with our music and lyrics. They properly complement each other.”

*The God-Shaped Void* was recorded at Rarefied Studios in San Diego by Ulrich Wild. Josh Mallit helped Wild as assistant engineer. Grave’s vocals, flute, as well as additional guitars were tracked at Studio D in Austria by the singer himself. *Psychotic Waltz* took the responsibility of recording additional guitars to Rock and Roll Studios, also in San Diego. The recording sessions were helmed by Rock and McAlpin, respectively. To get *The God-Shaped Void* into fighting shape sonically, *Psychotic Waltz* hired on studio whiz Jens Bogren (Leprous, Haken) to mix and master at his renowned Fascination Street Studios in Örebro, Sweden. From day one to the final mix and master, *The God-Shaped Void* took three months to complete. Again, fans and critics alike will find *Psychotic Waltz* true to their prog metal roots while also imparting insightful songwriting tact on tracks like “Stranded,” “All the Bad Men,” and album closer “Demystified,” which features Graves on guitar and flute.

“It felt really weird being in the studio again,” Rock says. “A lot of things changed since last time in 1996 with the *Bleeding* album. For one, people don’t say ‘album’ anymore since it’s rarely an album these days. More like streaming songs and maybe some CDs... but we are actually pressing it on vinyl, so I guess we can legitimately call it an ‘album’ after all! The recording process, technology, software, it has all made quite a jump. But I still think the album came out sounding exactly like *Psychotic Waltz*. Jens was a lucky addition for us because his schedule happened to be open to mix and master the album right when we were getting it done. He’s done many great albums, so we were excited to have him working with us. We wanted an outside set of ears to really get the final mix right. And we think he was the perfect choice.”

*Psychotic Waltz* continue to push forward with distinction on *The God-Shaped Void*. The sub-genre progressive metal still applies to the Californians, but they’re more than the genre they helped establish now. If they transcended musically and lyrically while still active in the Nineties, then what *Psychotic Waltz* are about to unchain in 2020 on *The God-Shaped Void* will likely be (like their labelmate Devin Townsend) without easy or necessary categorization. Songs like “Sisters of the Dawn,” “Devils and Angels,” “Pull the String,” and the hook-laden “In the Silence” will lead the way...

“After the album is out in February, we are hoping to do some more festivals and mini-tours in Europe,” Rock says. “It would be great to play some shows in the states again. We just did ProgPower USA in Atlanta a few months ago, which was our first U.S. gig since 1997, believe it or not, and it would be really cool to play some more shows that don’t require 10 hours of flying! We would really love to jump on a bigger tour as support, like what we did with the Power of Metal tour; that would be ideal. At this point, I think we’re looking at stuff happening after the summer, and maybe into 2021. Then, who knows, if this is received well, maybe we look at continuing to create new music beyond this?”

## PSYCHOTIC WALTZ - THE GOD-SHAPED VOID

### Tracklisting:

1. Devils And Angels (06:29)
2. Stranded (04:49)
3. Back To Black (03:52)
4. All The Bad Men (03:59)
5. The Fallen (05:49)
6. While The Spiders Spin (05:49)
7. Pull The String (04:54)
8. Demystified (05:12)
9. Season Of The Swarm (05:57) \*\*\* Bonus Track
10. Sisters Of The Dawn (06:41)
11. In The Silence (05:16)

**Note:** *The bonus-track "Season Of The Swarm" will be available with the first edition of the album in its edition as Mediabook CD (+ expanded booklet & patch), 2LP on 180gr. vinyl + entire album on CD as bonus as well as Digital Download.*

### Line-Up:

Devon Graves - Vocals  
Dan Rock - Guitars & Keys  
Brian McAlpin - Guitars  
Ward Evans - Bass  
Norman Leggio - Drums

### Psychotic Waltz Discography:

A Social Grace (1990)  
Into The Everflow (1992)  
Mosquito (1994)  
Bleeding (1996)  
The God-Shaped Void (2020)

### Online:

<http://psychoticwaltz.com/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/PsychoticWaltzOfficial/>

