



Hi, guys, how are you? Thank you for your availability for this interview. Almanix is a very innovative project. When did this idea appear for the first time and with whom?



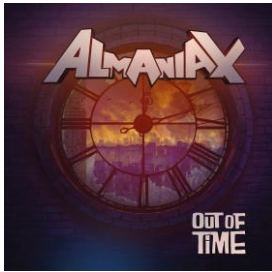
VALENTINE POTTEN (VP): Hello Pedro and thank you for your interest in our project. It's fantastic for us to cross the borders of our little country. We're doing well, we're doing very well! What's happening around the band and the record is fantastic, it's a great adventure that is starting for us.

SÉBASTIEN ROMBOUT (SR): I think the adventure started like most musical projects, out of passion. I've always listened to music because I was born into a family where my father was a great music lover. But nobody played an instrument at home. Then, as a teenager in the early 2000s, several bands fascinated me to the point where I wanted to stop just listening to music and start making music. The release of Linkin Park's first album, Hybrid Theory, and then the discovery of Muse made me want to create my

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music, and that's how I started, all alone in my room, playing and composing music. And to be honest, at first, it wasn't very good. But I began to experiment with composing, playing in a band, and making productions. This musical project, born of this passion, slowly evolved and matured, and around 2014, after several unstable line-ups, the band crystallized around a solid family core. I'm joined by Fiona, my little sister, on keyboards, backing vocals, and co-composition.

FIONA ROMBOUT (FR): I remember the audition I made to join the band even though it was a long time ago! For a while, I only played the keyboard. It is recent for me to do the backing vocals and to sing but I couldn't love it more.

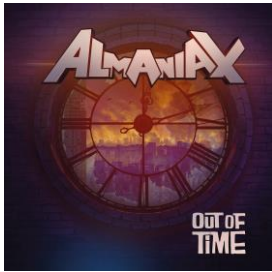
SR: Then by Valentine, my wife, on drums and co-writing.

VP: I had absolutely no plans to become a drummer. Originally, I was more interested in singing and playing the piano, but over the years I realized that it wasn't really my cup of tea. When I tried the drums, it just felt right. After a few years of practice, I joined the band when they needed a new drummer.

SR: Then Julien joined us on bass guitar.

JULIEN FIERENS (JF): In 2013, I wanted to take up the bass. I could barely play it, but I was dying to give it my all. I needed some motivation. So I saw that the band Almanix was looking for a new bassist and I immediately liked what they were doing. I sent them a message saying I'd like to join them, but that I didn't have the level. I think that's when they realized who they were dealing with.

SR: Also during several years, Benjamin Delcourt and Faruk Coban (two very dear friends) took over as the project's second guitarists. It was at this point, and thanks to the contribution of all these personalities, that Almanix really began its artistic journey.

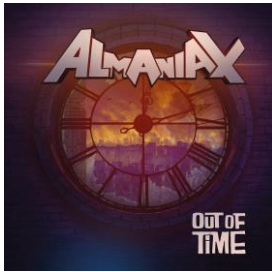


What were your main objectives for this project? What innovations did you try to input?

SR: The main objective is not to be pigeonholed. The notion of transmedia very quickly became an obvious one. We wanted to develop a universe around our music, and that also meant creating ambitious video clips and working meticulously on the lyrics and visuals. We're a band that takes a lot of time to do things, because we do a lot of things ourselves, and we're looking for an elaborate level of production.

VP: And what's really important for us is to tell a story. Music isn't just to fill the silence, it's a medium through which artists can express opinions, emotions, and questions. That's how we try to approach what we do. The question is to define what we're saying, in what way, and why. For example, in the music video we made for Hopes & Dreams (the 1st single from the album), we wanted to tell the story of a man who learns he only has a few months to live. We decided to turn it into a short SciFi film, in which the band members take on the role of the crew of a spaceship going to Saturn. They're looking for ways to repair their ship after an accident, but they can't. Their death is inevitable. We haven't told the story of those who succeed, we've told the story of a crew that fails. What we're trying to convey here is not to give up, but to do what matters to us while there's still time. If we keep putting things off, we may one day run out of time to do what really matters.

FR: Sébastien and Valentine are a great duet to work with. The first says something and the second outbids him by far. And that's how you get up filming a sci-fi video clip with a huge spaceship set constructed in the middle of their living room. Have we mentioned that everything was made of wood yet and that we spent months creating all of it? (Laugh)



Why an apocalyptic rock band? Why did you choose this definition?

FR: As Seb said, we don't do music to get in predefined boxes. We do music to narrate how we feel about certain subjects of society. And for us, society is changing too fast in a way it becomes more difficult for everyone to fit in. The idea of Almanix as an apocalyptic rock band came at the end of the creation of the album when we were figuring out how to define ourselves.

SR: We wanted a strong concept that summed up our world.

VP: I also think that a band's style isn't just about sound and composition. Style is also about the subject matter of the songs. The themes of our album are death and time, but it seemed to us that the apocalypse was the backdrop to everything we said. The album can be seen as an exploration of the apocalypse in different forms, at different scales of size and heaviness.

SR: Our sound is rock and our lyrics are very dark, even apocalyptic. That's why we decided to define ourselves as "apocalyptic rock".

Out Of Time is your first full-length album and deals with Death and Time. How are those two aspects crossed in your album where the space issue is very present?

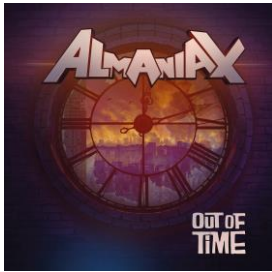
SR: The album is really about the feeling of time passing and the inevitable death at the end of the road. But it's not a macabre vision, it's more a questioning of humanity, of how to make our time on earth meaningful. How to learn from the mistakes of the past to live on and make the world a better place. But it's also a bitter look at the horrible things we're capable of as human beings.

VP: For me, the 2 themes are linked. Everything that lives, everything that exists, is bound to die and disappear over time. That's the rule. It's terrible, but it's a fact we have to learn to accept. Space and time are also linked. Space is present in the video clip for Hopes & Dreams and represents fatality, and therefore death.

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FR: I think the space issue came after the death and time themes. Even if they complement each other perfectly. We were looking for a way to tell the story of Hopes and Dreams visually for the video clip that wasn't just a guy who learns he has an incurable illness and only has 3 months left to live. We wanted something more and a sci-fi story came easily to Sébastien's mind. It became obvious it was what we had to do.

The first release, the 2015 EP L'Ombre du Minotaure deals with some difficulties in your own words. Are those difficulties outdated?

SR: Indeed, the first EP deals with the difficulties of finding one's place in society. I don't think this theme is outdated, far from it. I even think that with the imminent upheavals in the world of work, with the massive arrival of artificial intelligence, this question of finding one's place in society will be even more central than it was when we released this record in 2015. Our new album "Out Of Time" is a direct extension of the first record. The big difference is that on the new album, the questioning is much more personal, whereas on the first it was more dealt with from a more global point of view.

Your lyrics are sometimes inspired by literature, sometimes by inner struggles or in society. What prevails in Out Of Time?

SR: Each song has a different point of view on the subject of the passage of time and the link between life and death. 802,701 AD, the first track on the album, takes the point of view of the time traveler imagined by HG Wells. He experiences a personal tragedy and realizes that humans make the same mistakes over and over again and that wars and violence are present in every era. Hopes & Dreams is the story of a man about to die, struggling to find meaning in his life. Apocalypse is an exploration of the



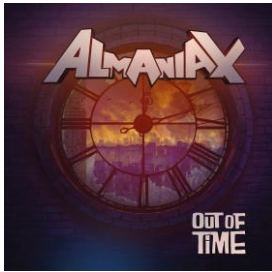
Chornobyl disaster. Wings of Change is about a character trapped in a toxic relationship who needs to escape to live his own life. Time is about not wanting to change what you've failed at, but using failure to evolve. The World's Collapsing is an observation of the environmental upheaval men are capable of. With an exploration of the era of the Industrial Revolution. It's Darker On The Inside is an exploration of the darker side of each of us. A Man's Legacy revolves around a quote made by George Orwell (author of the novel "1984") shortly before his death. He delivers a pessimistic vision of the world and a warning to future generations. Misfits' Anthem speaks of a changing world that we no longer recognize and of the feeling of being outside the society of which we should be a part. Le Vieil Arbre, La Mort Et Le Temps (The Old Tree, Death and Time) is about suicide, experienced through the eyes of the tree on whose branch a person has just taken his own life. Lost Ones is about the loss of loved ones and the feeling of powerlessness in the face of fate.

VP: I think we draw our inspiration from everything that surrounds us, from what we love from other artists, from what we experience on a day-to-day basis, from what we observe around us. And what comes out is a blend of all that experience.

FR: It has always been easier for me to be creative from my fears, regrets, or pain. When I start to compose, things come naturally and it always tends to be about my own experiences or feelings.

How did the studio work for this album go?

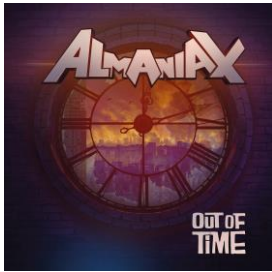
SR: For this record, we didn't really go into the studio. We recorded everything at home in our home studio. I did all the production, recording, and mixing. It was quite a long process. It took six years from concept to release. We really worked down to the last detail to get as close as possible to our artistic vision. We couldn't have achieved the result we did if we'd only been in the studio for a few days.



VP: The process is not the same for all songs, and the steps are not necessarily done in the same order. When it comes to recording the drums, for example, if you compare the 802,701 AD session with the Lost Ones session, it is really different. For 802,701 AD, I wrote the drum riff during a jam we did with Benjamin (our 1st guitarist). I adapted the fills and details as I went along, but the basis of the song was very clear in my head by the time we recorded it. I knew what I wanted to do, and it all follows linearly. It never stops. But for Lost Ones, we experimented with a lot of different things at the same time we were recording. Seb had built up a skeleton and together we looked for what sounded best. We recorded different layers separately to create something dense and powerful. It's a song that is both pure and complex.

FR: As a keyboardist, the recordings of the keys were pretty easy and didn't need a lot of skills or preparation. I just had to work my parts on my side and then play them with a metronome (usually in midi). I could even record it from home. The more challenging and interesting parts for me were the backing and lead vocals. Especially when we were still looking for melodies that hadn't been written yet. When I play the piano, I can press the wrong keys, but I can't be out of tune. You really have to take a step back to sing in front of other people. It is not easy to accept making singing mistakes. When you are looking for new melodies, it is normal to sound completely out of tune sometimes and it is a risk you have to take. That's why it's important to feel confident around each other and that's how I felt during the entire production of the album thanks to my brother and my mates.

JF: I recorded fewer tracks than the others on this album. As my children were young at the time, I decided to take a musical break. That's why I recorded the songs that were already written at the time and then disappeared for 3 years, only to return to the band once my children had grown up. But that doesn't change the experience. Recording an album is always an incredible experience.



There will be any chance of taking this project to a stage and playing live? What have you scheduled for those purposes?

SR: Almanix has always been a live band. We've been active in our region for many years. We've just started our first live performances to present our album. So far, the planned events are only in Belgium. But we dream of being able to travel with the project. All we need to do now is build up a solid international fan base so we can go abroad.

FR: During the first years of Almanix, when it was hard to have a strong and steady lineup, Sébastien was not just the leader; he was Almanix. The other members and I were just live musicians who gave life to his project on stage. But now, things have changed and we are more and more involved. I started to compose, sing, make suggestions, and be a real asset to the band. I had my strengths and my limits and so did everyone. Today We are Almanix and all of us matter. However, live sessions are still in our DNA, and we try to perform as much as possible.

Thank you, guys, once again, it was an honor. Would you like to send any messages to our readers?

FR: Thank you so much for your questions and your deep interest in us.

SR: It's also thanks to interviews like the one you've allowed us to do on this site, that we can hope to reach a new audience, so thank you for that. And we hope to be able to meet the public in Portugal shortly.

FR: I'd definitely love to meet your rock readers next time I go to Peniche.

SR: I invite you to listen to our new album, which we created with a lot of heart, and I hope you'll enjoy listening to it as much as we enjoyed making it.



FR: Out of Time came in five different formats: CDs, vinyl records, USB Digipack, Audio tapes and VHS to be played in every era of modern music! Available on our Bandcamp: <https://almaniAx.bandcamp.com/>. You can also find us on Deezer, Spotify, Tidal, YouTube, Apple Music, iTunes, Amazon Music and Napster.