**BIO – AT THE DRIVE IN 2017**

The Poincaré recurrence theorem posits certain mathematical systems will resume a state closely resembling their initial state following a finite length of time.

Upholding this theory, it only took 15 years for At The Drive In to return to the studio and record the follow-up to 2000’s seminal *Relationship of Command* and the El Paso, TX-born band’s fourth full-length album, *IN·TER A·LI·A* [Rise Records]. Life’s circular current delivered the quintet—Cedric Bixler [vocals], Omar Rodriguez-Lopez [guitar], Paul Hinojos [bass], Tony Hajjar [drums], and Keeley Davis [guitar]—back to this point with the same sound and fury that indisputably defined a turn-of-century musical movement. Now, the group siphon their signature controlled chaos with tendrils of punk energy and avante garde fearlessness through a clearer lens of wisdom and experience.

“We still get in the room and feel like it’s the first day,” admits Tony. “When we get together, there’s this uneasiness, excitement, and youthful joy. We used everything we learned over the years, but we remembered that this is At The Drive In. When it came to this band, we always likened it to a gang. That’s how we lived. To this day, I still feel that *us against the world* mentality. It works for us in the chemical equation. For all intents and purposes, we started in a garage. We played all of the basements we could, and we moved up to kitchens. We’re still that band in our heads.”

“It was about getting back to that primordial self,” adds Cedric. “We essentially agreed, *‘We need to honor the last record. We need to go forward, be the fucking core of what we are, and ignore everything we learned in our years apart.’* It was a great lesson in communication. We wanted to honor the fan base and the frame of mind of being young. Most of us have children. It’s very easy for me to access that wonder where there really shouldn’t be any rules.”

At The Drive In’s beginnings can be traced back to Omar’s garage where the boys jammed for countless hours in 1993. Moving from D.I.Y. underground El Paso, TX shows to local clubs, they quietly built a loyal following. The band’s debut, *Acrobatic Tenement*, arrived in 1996 followed by 1998’s *In/Casino/Out* and *Vaya*in 1999 each of which saw quantum leaps in the band’s sonic vocabulary and proficiency, amplifying buzz and landing them on tours including an arena run supporting Rage Against the Machine. The creative apex of their first 7 years, *Relationship of Command*, released in 2000, quickly earned the reputation it holds to this day as one of the century’s most incendiary and influential albums. It holds a place on *Spin*’s “The 300 Best Albums of the Past 30 Years (1985-2014)” list, *Kerrang!*’s “50 Greatest Albums of the 21st Century,” *Rock Sound*’s “101 Modern Classics,” *Uncut Magazine*’s “150 Albums of the Decade,” MTV2’s “Greatest Albums Ever,” *Guitar World*’s “100 Greatest Guitar Albums of All-Time,” and many more. Propelled by instant classics “One Armed Scissor” and “Invalid Litter Dept.,” *Relationship of Command*elevated At The Drive In into the *Billboard* Top 200, while the intensity and draw of its live show grew exponentially.

This barreling momentum grounded to a halt with the sudden announcement of a hiatus in 2001 as the band remained dormant for more than a decade. Conversations about “new music” began gestating when the guys made their high-profile comeback as a *Coachella* and *Lollapalooza*2012 headliner. However, it took another three years of conversations, cultivating trust, and honing communication…

“In 2014, we got together and just talked 60% of the time, while we put pieces of music together,” recalls Tony. “We accomplished a lot of moving ground per se and started digging the whole foundation. In October 2015, we decided that hell or high water we were going to do another album. People may have different impressions of what the right way to do this was, but it was *our* right way.”

“It was the sheer will of actually wanting to do it,” says Cedric. “It was a hell of a fucking challenge, but there’s nothing like the sheer will of five people blasting on ten.”

The musicians spent 2016 on their first proper tour since 2001. Their travels took them from a sold out run in North America to explosive appearances everywhere from Denmark’s *Roskilde* and *Splendour in the Grass* down under to *Summer Sonic* in Japan. During a nine-day spell in Seoul, South Korea, they finally hit their stride writing new music in a tiny rented studio.

“There was a disciplinary timeframe in which we could work, because the studio doubled as a house for the guy who owned it,” Cedric continues. “We could only go from 10am until 7pm. We were really forced to go back to the way we used to rehearse. It was the same thing in 1996 at Omar’s garage. We’d meet in the morning and jam for a good chunk of time. It opened up the floodgates.”

Galvanized by the creativity in South Korea, the band landed stateside, took a short break, began preproduction prior to officially entering Sound Factory studio in Hollywood, CA during November 2016 to cut *IN·TER A·LI·A*. Produced by Omar and Rich Costey [Muse, Sigur Rós, Santigold], it marked the first time a band member helmed production for an the At The Drive In album, while Tony would meticulously oversee mixing and mastering. Burning through incendiary takes, recording wrapped in under a month.

“I’ve never personally done a record that a bandmate was producing,” states Tony. “We all have so much trust in each other. We know what we’re good at, and we put our trust into Omar. He stayed focused on the end result. It’s everything we hoped for.”

It’s everything audiences have hoped for as well. The group uncorked the first single “Governed By Contagions” in December 2016, and its ominous delivery, caustic musicality, and claustrophobic intensity enamored fans and tastemakers alike with *New York Times*, *NPR*, *Vulture*, *Spin*, and *Rolling Stone* immediately extolling it. Elsewhere on the record, “Incurably Innocent” pits spacey phaser and thrash-y riffing against a sidewinder hook and siren wail. “It’s a song about sexual abuse and being able to finally speak out,” admits Cedric.

The album commences on the thunderous chant of “No Wolf Like The Present” and twists and turns through a 41-minute whirling wormhole of pure poetic punk catharsis before culminating on the cinematic intensity of closer “Hostage Stamps.” “To me, it’s like walking through the hallway in some war-torn ghetto and reading the writing on the wall,” continues the singer. “Keep your ear to the ground and listen to the heartbeat of young people.”

The album title, Latin for *‘Among other things*,*’* proves utterly apropos. “It’s a snapshot of life right now and the inevitability of where we might be headed,” Cedric explains. “It reminds me of the last scene in *Chinatown* where Jack Nicholson is told, *‘It’s Chinatown*,*’* as an explanation for the fucked-up nature of things. You can’t do shit about it. I don’t think it points a finger at any one source or cause. If anything, it points the finger at the person holding the record and says, *‘What are you going to do*.*’* Maybe we should stop focusing on the funeral march and start focusing on the younger generation. The problem is buried within layers of red tape and small print, but we don’t have to repeat it.”

Thankfully, 16 years later, we have At The Drive In back in the same spot, doing what they do best—rewriting all the rules.

“After all this time, At The Drive In still means brotherhood, that gang mentality, and now more than ever, it means family,” Tony leaves off. “Because we have our own families, we’re older and wiser, and we understand each other a lot more. Recently, Cedric texted me, *‘We conquered a fucking mountain.’* That really resonated with me. I just wrote back in all caps, *‘A FUCKING MOUNTAIN.’* It’s so true. It took a lot of tears, stories, hugs, and hard work to make this record. We were only able to accomplish it because we have the utmost respect for each other’s talents. We’re here.” – *Rick Florino*, February 1, 2017