

Reading Time: 11 minutes

One of the many things I seems to suffer with is seasonal emotive depression, even though that seems to cover all four seasons for some reason these days.

Last year and the year before, I was in a mental health hospital around this time of the year. This year I've been lucky not to, in particular because of a friend who keeps me going in ways that they will never truly understand. It's been a rough and hard few months moving into my new place, setting everything up, and even dealing with finding a way to watch College Football this year (1st World Problems, but EE made it a nightmare in terms of me getting TV to watch the big boys play by misspelling me then lying to me, so CFB is all I have).

Somehow, the last three years, three of my favourite bands have decided to bring out albums to help me through the 'Pumpkin' Spiced Latte / Pintrest season, into the dark nights of winter. First Green Day, then Linkin Park, and now twenty one pilots. I thought it would be nice to stop shouting about flags, nationalism and democracy for a bit, and have a nice look back at memory lane at three albums that came out at just the right time to keep me going, as a reminder of just how powerful and beautiful music can be.

Green Day - The American Dream Is Killing Me

For once, Billie Joe Armstrong leaned into that whole social media universe shouting at him to wake up on the 1st October. Wake Me Up When September Ends is actually about his dad, and he's been pissed off over the years about people not actually caring about the song, but that's a whole other thing for a whole other time. This time however, he decided to put out the following:

It's October 1st, WAKE UP ☐ now go hit snooze on <https://t.co/8sgEStWYFVpic.twitter.com/ioKFcrVbst>

— Green Day (@GreenDay)

[October 1, 2023](#)

This ultimately led to the track 'The American Dream is Killing Me', from the album to be known as Saviours. In many ways this album was a cliché saviour for me, both in the timing of it's release, and the fact that once I was unceremoniously booted out of the mental health hospital I was in because of a cock-up, I at least had something to 'look forward to'. This has always been something which has been important to me for some reason, especially when I'm at my lowest. Having something to look forward to. From a LostProphets concert back in 2006, to multiple Indianapolis 500s, to various other trips around the world, having something to look forward to makes you less likely to... Do something stupid / as the professionals would say something that could permanently alter your life.

In my opinion this was one of the best Green Day albums since 21st Century Breakdown, and had a mixture of angst, anger and realism. Of course for myself, the track 'Dilemma' stuck with me, especially lyrics such as 'Sit around in rehab, feeling like a lab rat'. Whilst I've never been in rehab specifically, mental health hospitals are just a step away with the enclosed space, lack of real activities, having to beg to go and get your haircut / get some smokes, and so on. Being in a mental health facility is a lot of sitting around, and with the observations which so often can be copied / pasted, you do often feel just like a lab rat. The rest of the album has some bangers like 'Look Ma, No Brains!', 'Strange Days Are Here To Say' 'Coma City' and 'Bobby Sox', though I would say that it's an album that needs to be listened to as an album, like so much of Green Day's latter work.

As a part of this, there was a tour, which I was hoping to go to with a friend. Ironically, I was back in a mental health hospital at the time of the show, and even though I was told that I could attend (The person I was going with was a nurse, which may have helped), but I decided not to. Then decided to be an idiot and tell the person I was due to go with about the feelings I still had for them. If you want some advice, sometimes shut your mouth, write it down and forget about it. Rekindling old emotions never works. There was also a gig in the Marquis Pub in London which I know exactly how to get to, and used to drink at from time to time, but alas, I was back in hospital. Strange Days were really here to stay for me at this point.

P.S: Can people PLEASE learn how to hold a phone when recording a 50 minute gig? It's horizontal, not vertical unless it's a Short.

Linkin Park - From Zero

I have written so much about this already that I don't want to be re-writing for the sake of, but this was one of the biggest 'Holy Fucking Shit' moments I've experienced in music. It was almost accepted that Linkin Park the band would never really return, and in fact the entire band didn't actually return. Rob Bourdon on drums didn't return at all, whereas Brad Delson would only work in the studio, and not on stage. Whilst everyone mentions Emily Armstrong, Colin Brittain joined both on drums and production, which is a bigger thing than it sounds. Colin had worked with bands such as A Day to Remember, Papa Roach and Dashboard Confessional, three bands whose music I love.

Of course, it started with a concert. A concert where they re-recorded certain bits in order to make for a better overall video package for on demand, but the thing was streamed live. At this point, most people either thought that Mike Shinoda would take on the majority of singing duties (He has a much better singing voice than people realise / he gives himself credit for, a bit like Corey Taylor), or there would be revolving door of guest singers, or Chester's lyrics brought back by hologram / Joe Hahn's magic. 90% of people were not expecting new music, let alone a new singer. We all know the rest of the story at this point.

In terms of the 'something to look forward to', I looked for tickets, and honestly, they were both highly overpriced, and also there was no accessible seating left. I sometimes end up with neuropathy so bad that I can barely walk from the bed to the toilet, so standing up for 2 hours+ support acts is a complete no for me. There's times when I'm down to a wheelchair, and whilst I have an access card which helps with part of the process (Queuing, toilets and the like), there are only so many accessible seats, and after looking through, it would have been cheaper to fly to Germany than go back to Wembley Stadium. They don't do a home town discount sadly.

The album itself I rank up there as their 4th best album ever, after Reanimation, Meteora, and Minutes to Midnight (In that order). The album has a proper flow to it, introducing Emily at the start, going through the different styles and vocabulary of the band, to the scream in Heavy is the Crown which I'm sure is deliberately one second shorter than that in Given Up off of Minutes to Midnight, followed up by some great post-album tracks in 'Up From the Bottom' and 'Unshatter' in particular. Was I pissed that I couldn't see the band live? A bit, yeah. But I'm 37, and I'm glad that there's a new audience being introduced to Linkin Park for the first time, and the band as ever try to make as much of their content as possible available on platforms like YouTube. They used to do live mixes off of every show that you could download 3ish days later if you attended, but there was a group who kinda ruined it for everyone (Fuck you Mark / Hahnninator), and YouTube is far more accessible to fans as a whole. Do you know how to upload an album to your iTunes / Spotify library in 2025? Precisely.

This album has seen the band open the League of Legends World Finals, the Champions League Final and more. Realistically, the only thing left is the Super Bowl for the band. It would be a once in a lifetime opportunity to celebrate the two core eras of the band (It'll be too niche to consider the world before Chester with Mark Wakefield), but with the way the half time shows have been booked as of late, there's a chance, but an outside chance perhaps next year when it's on ABC / ESPN. NBC's probably wrapped up Dua Lipa by now.

Twenty one pilots - Breach

I'm still going through the motions of this album, but I just love it. There were a couple of tracks released in August 2025, followed by the album Breach in September. It rounds off a 5 album long 'journey' of the likes of BlurryFace, bringing to a close perhaps a part and segment of the band's career. Fun fact, their COVID-19 show which ended up in cinemas is the last movie I've seen in a cinema that I didn't walk out of. To be fair, there's only one other movie I've seen since, and it was the Gran Turismo movie where I couldn't get past the realism in equipment and driving on the sim rigs. Yeah, I'm that anal when it comes to detail. Don't ever watch a TV series / documentary with me.

I only found out about the album because of Apple Music. I have a twenty one pilots playlist on Apple Music, and my appreciation of the band came not through a show, or a specific track, but College Gameday of all things, when there was this kid from Oh-lo doing the guest picking who was not just knowledgeable, but funny and engaging. One search and a few years later and here I am; one of my favourite bands. I've never really listened to the albums in full from a concept album anthology point of view, but it's certainly on my list. I think I have about half their songs on my master playlist anyway.

In terms of the album? It's just 47 minutes of pure joy to listen to, and it's everything you'd expect from the band plus a bit more. I already have a dad-style dance for 'Robot Voices' that I do if I'm ever just tidying up, and Drum Show is one of those tracks that if given the opportunity, I would belt out live because it just becomes more and more intense with every uttering of the lines within the chorus. I've had the album on loop for a few days to get a further grip of it, and interestingly, unless I'm playing close attention, you can't really tell where the album ends and begins again; that's the mark of a great concept / circular album, and that stuff is always right up my street.

Unless I want to goto a festival in Germany, there's currently no tour dates for the band outside of North America. That makes me sad. Twenty one pilots are one of those bands who I would love to see live, just because of the range of instruments there are, and I think Tyler Joseph has one of the best voices in music over the past 10+ years. So once again, there's no real 'hook' to provide me something to look forward to, but at least for this year, there's something on the cards which means that worrying about the next gig / event / trip is irrelevant. (I'm sworn to secrecy on this one, so no pointers I'm afraid). I'm glad that this band became a part of my life though, as being able to belt out a song by a band that takes mental health and makes an entire universe around it deserves to be recognised.

A shout out also has to go to the videography that goes with this DEMA universe. It's up there with old school 30 Seconds to Mars Videos, and as they show at the end of the City Walls video, being watching music videos, you're able to keep great people in great jobs. I admit that I don't spend much time watching music videos on YouTube unless they're live, but when I do watch decent bands do decent videos, it always hits.

Which One Helped Me The Most?

This one's hard to say. I still was in a really fucked up place when Saviours came out, and it was more of a sticking plaster to me than anything. I think that at the time, anything from Green Day would

Three Fucking Years, Three Fucking Amazing Albums

have done, and there's a small part of me which thinks that I was looking through the album with rose tinted glasses. I actually have more live versions of tracks off of the album than the album itself on my playlist, especially from the Howard Stern Show, where Howard really doesn't know the difference between a deep track or whatever and a deeper cut of a track being played live. The album **is good** and it did come out at an important time for me, but the way my life got screwed over that Christmas as is partially means some of those memories are in the archive boxes at the back of my brain.

I remember where I was the second I heard Emily Armstrong's voice on the Livestream of Linkin Park in California, and I lost my shit. This is one of those that transcended Linkin Park fans to music as a whole. I think there was actually an article on the BBC News entertainment vertical, which says a lot.

I'm still going through the motions with Breach, but it is one hell of an album, and even more of an album if you're going through what I've been through the past few years. Without screaming down your face (figuratively, Tyler does still scream), it grabs you by the hand and takes you on an adventure, which is what I've always loved about twenty one pilots' albums. I need to understand this DEMA universe, as I only realised it existed when reading up on Breach itself, but to keep a concept going for that long with that much imagination is insane. Ironically, it sums up a lot about the fact that mental health struggles don't disappear after a year or so, and they are constantly changing and manifesting. It really is some good food for thought for me to investigate further.

With Green Day, I was just happy to have something new in my life which resonated to me at the time but didn't really follow along with me, which is weird because Green Day are one of my all time favourite bands. Linkin Park made me realise that anything really is possible if you have the balls, the drive and the determination, and it's an album I can happily chuck on and never hit the skip button. Yes, there's the same nostalgia as with Saviours, but for so many reasons the album hits harder, and still stays with me now.

And twenty one pilots are making me think, which right now is a good thing, as the lyrics are emotive and thought provoking, meaning I have to put my emotions partially to one side to delve in, then pick them up in the haversack I leave at the surface. That, and going back through the DEMA universe is gonna be a load of fun, so even though it's easy to say as it's the 'newest', it doesn't have the immediate star power gravitas of the other two albums mentioned, but provides the most room for future entertainment, so twenty one pilots win this one.

Any thoughts, opinions, contradictions / conclusions? Let me know. I'm always happy to read and reply to comments. Leave them below should you so choose.

Peace, Rage And Love xx

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