

Q&A

Sonny Sandoval



Singer with San Diego hard-rock quartet Payable On Death, or P.O.D. as they're known, Sonny Sandoval

(pictured right) has led his band to international rock stardom following the multi-platinum success of 2001's Satellite album. With their eponymous follow-up due next month, the band play an MTV Europe Awards show at the Palace Theatre this Sunday.

Your last album was a massive global success. How did that feel after years of slogging away to small audiences? It was good. But we've been doing this for such a long time it's really been far more of a gradual thing. We always joke about us being a 12-year overnight success.

What do you put your success down to? We've always been a band that work our asses off. We've toured the States in broken-down vans and slept in parking lots, selling T-shirts and CDs out the back of vans. So, when we got signed, we were made up but knew that you've got to work

just as hard. We've just toured our butts off ever since.

As one of the world's biggest Christian rock groups, do you feel a duty to talk about your faith? We just sing about what we know – hope, love and faith. That's just who we are. I'd be the same person if I was a garbage man. I just happen to be in a rock band. We don't want to be categorised as a Christian metal band or anything, but we've never hidden our faith, or denied it.

Do you feel that the media treats you differently because of it?

Definitely. We've been stereotyped since day one, either as a thrash-metal band, nu-metal band or Christian rap-rock band. The press needs to be a little bit more creative with what it writes. I don't even think of us as a metal group. Just a good rock band.

What's been your career highlight to date? Working with Santana last year was a pretty big highlight for us. We did a song on his last record and played the Latin Grammys with him, but man, with this job, every day is a highlight. Just touring the world with people you love being with. It's unbelievable!

Richard Smirke

Sun, Palace Theatre, Oxford Street, Central Manchester, 7.30pm, £12. Tel: 0870 401 3000. www.payableondeath.com

What's the story, fallen glory?

PHOTOGRAPHY Presence Of Absence

In a city with regeneration close to its heart, an exhibition showing urban wastelands is an uncomfortable yet intriguing reminder that, although many areas have been given a thorough facelift, there are still places in disrepair. Drawing this distinction even closer to home, this series of photographs by Dan Dubowitz will be displayed in ten lightboxes along the platform of the Piccadilly Metrolink, providing a daily window for the commuter into a forgotten space.

About to undergo a long-term regeneration, the industrial remains of Ancoats form the subject of the photographs. The disused mills and factories and overgrown warehouses and streets are shown in a form rarely seen in an age of neatly converted city-centre apartments. Once full of busy workers, the deserted scenes are accompanied by a sound piece, providing spoken-word personal stories including a spinner and a mill owner.

Depicting the site in all its eerie,



Reflective: Dan Dubowitz's urban wasteland photographs include Old Yard

fallen glory, these aren't nostalgic snapshots, but a record of how quickly more prosperous times have been forgotten and how little attention has been paid to the area. The disregard for Ancoats' former importance to the city's growth is startlingly apparent.

Providing a rare chance for

engagement with the facelift process, even if it's only as an onlooker, Presence Of Absence provides a reflective pause before the area is irreconcilably hauled into the 21st century.

Tamsin Curry

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