**FEATURE BIO - 2024**

It’s a story like no other – a sound that changed the world. In the nearly 50 years since bassist Steve Harris’ vision was birthed in the humble working-class sprawl of East London Iron Maiden have grown to become nothing less than an institution.

More than tours that have encircled the globe or chart-smashing records that have inspired a fan base that can be found in every time zone, the near mythical status and undeniable cultural impact of Iron Maiden cannot be overstated, but it’s the fact that theirs is a tale which is still unfolding to this day that is truly worthy of note. Maiden, simply, take no prisoners – not then, and not now, and in the decades since they cut their teeth they’ve grown to embody a spirit of fearless creative independence, unswerving dedication to their fans, and a cheerful indifference to their critics that can only be described as legendary.

By 1980 Iron Maiden had already earned themselves a cast-iron reputation for ferocious live-shows and a fiercely loyal following to match. Inspired by heavy rock and tempered by the heat of the burgeoning New Wave of British Heavy Metal, theirs was an upward ascent that would culminate in a landmark self-titled album debut which would immediately elevate them above their peers and serve as the prologue to a truly remarkable story that has captured the imagination of music lovers of every country, colour and creed. Emblazoned with the totemic image of Eddie, a ghoulish yet undeniably handsome and mysterious figure whose tantalizing image would go on to feature on every album and countless t-shirts hence, it was nothing less than a groundbreaking statement of intent. Many more would follow.

The rapturous response to 1981 follow-up Killers would confirm the growing suspicion that this was a band in a class of its own, and ensuing tours of Japan and the States as well as the UK and Europe would affirm both Maiden’s international appeal and their relentless commitment to reach fans wherever, wherever they are.

But it was really the release of their third album – 1982’s incendiary The Number Of The Beast – and a bold line-up change which would see original singer Paul Di’Anno replaced by ex-Samson frontman Bruce Dickinson that would set the scene for the epic chapters to come. A chart-smashing success, it would kick off a decade of now classic releases and dogged touring that would come to epitomise the indefatigable gallop that Maiden are so well known for. That marvellous decade would also yield seven new studio albums, one live album, and seven World Tours.

What makes these qualities even more notable is that they developed almost entirely without the acknowledgement of mainstream media. While celebrity culture and the next big thing occupied the airwaves, Iron Maiden were embarking on the marathon 192-date 1984/5 World Slavery tour, playing at Rock In Rio in 1985, and mounting a command performance at the biggest-ever Monsters Of Rock festival at Donington in 1988 with 107,000 fans in attendance. But it’s really Iron Maiden’s gritty resolve to always push the boundaries that gives their career such astonishing distinction. From historically groundbreaking performances in Poland behind the Iron Curtain in 1984 at the height of the Cold War, around South America in 1991, through the Middle East and India in 2007, and Indonesia in 2011 among many others, Iron Maiden’s relentless forward momentum has left an indelible impression on the globe.

The changing landscape of the ‘90s proved to be a difficult time for heavy metal bands in general, but Iron Maiden pressed ever-forward, notching up yet more success with albums like 1992’s acclaimed Fear Of The Dark and even weathering the departure of Bruce Dickinson in 1993. The band made two strong albums with new singer Blaze Bayley and continued to honour their commitment to intensive touring. However, it was the return of Dickinson and guitarist Adrian Smith (who originally left the band in 1990) in 1999 when Iron Maiden became a six-piece, that established the ultimate Iron Maiden line-up of Bruce Dickinson on vocals, Steve Harris on bass, Nicko McBrain on drums and “the three amigos” – Adrian Smith, Dave Murray and Janick Gers - on guitar, and heralded a new golden age of Maiden and the band’s monumental third act.

It began with the release of Brave New World album in 2000, swiftly followed by 2003’s diverse and ingenious Dance Of Death album and its dark and daring follow-up, 2006’s A Matter Of Life And Death. It proved Maiden could still dazzle fans and critics alike all the while upending the notion that veteran acts should bask in the glow of former glories. Maiden instead opted to never be predictable while remaining predictably brilliant.

There is perhaps no better visual illustration of these triumphs than the band’s decision to charter their own 757 – Ed Force One – which would be flown by none other than Bruce Dickinson himself, by then a qualified airline captain. 2008’s ensuing Somewhere Back In Time Tour took the band 50,000 miles around the world in 45 days, and it also made for an unforgettable image – a band taking to the skies under its own steam both figuratively and literally, and again under the banner of 2010’s The Final Frontier tour in support of the album of the same name. Fittingly, the release of 2016’s The Book Of Souls – a 92-minute masterpiece and the band’s first double-album – saw a corresponding upgrade to a 747 Jumbo Jet but no change to their ongoing determination to always reach new lands, this time playing debut shows in El Salvador, Lithuania, and China.

The Legacy of the Beast tour would follow in 2018 – a stunning summation of the band’s creative output to date and a clever tie-in with Iron Maiden’s mobile game of the same name. Only a global pandemic could halt the momentum of that world-beating tour, but rest is not in Maiden’s vocabulary, and September 3rd, 2021 saw the release of Maiden’s stunning 17th album, Senjutsu – their first record in six years. It would debut at #1 in 27 countries, a colossal achievement only rivaled by the uncompromising artistic vision contained therein: proof positive of Maiden’s trademark ability to summit dizzying heights and keep going.

It would also herald an emotional return to the live stage with a fusion of the classic Legacy Of The Best set-list with thrilling new Senjutsu tracks to sold-out arenas around the world, including an unforgettable return to Rock in Rio.

2023 would see Maiden continuing a Herculean upswing with a triumvirate of history-making headlines. First came the news that the Royal Mail UK were set to immortalise Iron Maiden with their very own set of commemorative stamps. A rare honour, it was an expression of Maiden’s undeniable status as one of the United Kingdom’s greatest exports and their unquestionable influence on world culture. Even Eddie got one. Then came Trooper beer’s tenth anniversary – a Bruce-curated drop named after the seminal single of the same name from 1983’s Piece Of Mind which has now sold a staggering 38 million pints in 68 countries around the world.

And finally, spearheaded by artwork that perfectly encapsulates Maiden’s steadfast ability to chart new territory while remaining true to its roots and ever-growing legacy, the 2023 saw the launch of The Future Past Tour, a stunning visual and sonic blend of new music from Senjutsu and the band’s desire to revisit 1986’s revered Somewhere in Time album, the world tour has continued into 2024 to ecstatic response.

If there’s anything to be learned by now it’s Maiden never sit still for long, and their ability to make the extraordinary seem routine has never wavered. With their 50th anniversary looming, a tour now emerges to fill the skyline and match the gargantuan scale of a truly peerless half century: Run For Your Lives.

Featuring some of the largest venues the band has ever played, it’s a tour designed to fire the imagination and continue Maiden’s lifelong commitment to reach ever-loftier summits with a set list and production designed to delight fans of every generation: a world-spanning celebration of the past, the present, and the eternal living legend that is Iron Maiden.

**Alexander Milas
Eddietor, the official Iron Maiden Fan Club**

**Notes to editors:**

*Founded in 1975 by bassist Steve Harris, Iron Maiden have released 17 studio albums, 13 live albums and 47 singles which have sold in excess of 100 million copies worldwide. They have played almost 2,500 live shows across 64 countries and have been the recipients of a Grammy Award and a Brit Award among others. Trooper Beer has sold in excess of 38 million pints and is distributed in 68 countries including four local variants in USA, Germany, Brazil and Spain. Their latest album Senjutsu went to #1 in 27 countries and was crowned Rolling Stone’s metal album of the year.2024 sees the conclusion of their The Future Past world tour ahead of their newly announced Run For Your Lives tour in 2025/6. It will celebrate the group’s 50th anniversary and will include some of the largest venues the band has ever played.*

**FACTUAL BIO**

*Iron Maiden were founded in the East End of London in 1975 by bassist Steve Harris and swiftly established themselves as a force to be reckoned with in the then-burgeoning New Wave of British Heavy Metal, culminating in the release of their groundbreaking 1980 self-titled debut which also served as the world’s introduction to their iconic mascot, Eddie. Their 1981 follow-up Killers continued that upward ascent, and saw them embarking on their first world tour which would serve as the template for steady recording output and tireless touring that would continue for the years and decades to come.

Killers would also be the band’s final album with singer Paul Di’Anno, who was replaced with Samson singer Bruce Dickinson for the recording of 1982’s chart-smashing The Number Of The Beast, which would reach no. 1 on the UK albums chart, its commercial success foregrounding a decade of relentless touring and album releases, including 1983’s rapturously received Piece of Mind which yielded two anthemic singles, The Trooper and Flight Of Icarus, and 1984’s Powerslave, which set the scene for the band’s marathon World Slavery Tour: 198 shows in 28 countries in 13 months, including four consecutive sold-out shows at Long Beach Arena which would serve as the basis of their iconic Live After Death release as well as their first Rock In Rio headliner. The 80s would also see the release of 1986’s celebrated Somewhere In Time album as well as 1987’s landmark Seventh Son of a Seventh Son, which would round out a decade of triumphs and firmly establish Iron Maiden’s in the annals of global music history.

The 90s would see significant change for the band, with guitarist Adrian Smith leaving in 1990 to be replaced by Janick Gers, as well as Bruce Dickinson’s departure following the release of 1992’s Fear of The Dark. The era would see Blaze Bayley at the helm for two albums before Bruce’s return in 2000, and the change would usher in the band’s ultimate and current lineup, with Steve Harris on bass, Nicko McBrain on drums and “the three amigos” – Adrian Smith, Dave Murray and Janick Gers - on guitar. It would also herald the release of 2001’s Brave New World, which heralded the band’s triumphant third act, a period of incredible forward momentum which continues to this day.

At time of writing, Iron Maiden have released 17 studio albums, 13 live albums and 47 singles which have sold in excess of 100 million copies worldwide. They have played almost 2,500 live shows across 64 countries, and were carried to some of these aboard Ed Force One, a Boeing 757 and then later a 747 piloted by singer Bruce Dickinson. They have been the recipients of a Grammy Award and a Brit Award among many other accolades, most recently joining the Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd with their very own Royal Mail stamp set. Their beer, Trooper Beer, is now in its tenth year and has sold in excess of 38 million pints and is distributed in 68 countries including four local variants in USA, Germany, Brazil and Spain.

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