

**Interview: Alex Max Band**

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**Kat: How has this Europe run been for you so far?**

Alex: Good! I was here last month just doing some pre-promo and stuff and radio but this time is being very busy. Lots of radio and the shows, tonight is the last show. Shows have been good and the next days we're gonna do some more tv and radio next week.

**Kat: The Dome and...**

Alex: Yes, the Dome and Viva and I'm back here in September to do my own shows.

**Kat: I know, I'm really excited.**

Alex: Yeah, it should be good. Everything is going very good. And everything is going good in America, too. The song is in the Top 40 on the radio. Same thing, shows, radio, radio...

**Kat: I'm really proud of you and that everything is finally working out.**

Alex: Yeah, it's been 5 years of...crap...too long.

**Kat: What is it like for you now to be the opening act for a German band?**

Alex: It's fine just because it's been 5 years. Now I gotta build it up again, I gotta start from the beginning...kind of. If it was 2005 and I'd be doing this it wouldn't make sense but it's been 5 years and I think that I...I'm starting over. (As a) soloartist  
(opens a Milky Way)

Alex: It doesn't bother me, the shows are fun.

**Kat: And do people recognize you on the streets?**

Alex: I stopped dying my hair. Without the blond hair not as much. Twice so far.

**Kat: But I like it better now.**

Alex: Thanx, me too. Less having to go to the salon.

**Kat: Before it always reminded me of Nick Carter.**

Alex: I was very young. Young and blond. Now I'm old.

**Kat: When people recognize you are they like: `That's Alex Band!` or rather `That's the guy from The Calling`.**

Alex: The guy from The Calling. In America I had a big hit song with Santana and it was Santana featuring Alex Band and a lot of people learned my name from that. But mostly it's the guy from The Calling. People don't know the name of the band that much and also people are confused by my name because my last name is Band. So people sometimes think it's The Alex Band. But that's my name.

**Kat: After the struggle you went through with Geffen I was surprised you have your record promoted by EMI now.**

Alex: What happened is that I made my own label in America, so I have my own label in America and Canada but it's impossible to release the album independently around the world without a record label. I can do it in America but to release it in Europe independently is impossible. I had to sign with a major label. You know I was connected by a friend to this guy Daniel and EMI here in Germany so we started the process here. The record is now being presented and promoted here first and then we'll go out to the rest of the world.

They've been great so far. The difference is when I was with Geffen or even RCA I was creating the music while I was with them and that was the biggest problem cuz then we had a creative conflict. They wanted me to change my sound and they didn't like the song and they didn't like that song. You know, I came to EMI with the finished album being like "Do you want this? Yes or no?" and that's it. And for following albums I will be able to do the same thing. Run the show in America, I make my own music, give it to them and they put it out. So I don't feel that I'm owned by a record label. Just because America is where everything starts I run the label and it all works.

**Kat: Now you work with the label and for the label anymore, right?**

Alex: Absolutely. In fact in America EMI is our distribution so their only purpose in America is to put the record in the store. They make the cd and put it in the store. Whereas here they are the label and they do everything.

**Kat: Do you have any influence on what's going on with your music outside the U.S.?**

Alex: Yeah! So far it's been pretty good with me approving everything and how it's marketed. Plenty of things happening now and...it is what it is. The only good thing is they're getting their photos, content and everything from us in the U.S. so ultimately it's still starting with me but if they wanted to go market me to like 8 year old girls...well, they're not but if they wanted to it'd be difficult to control that.

**Kat: Let's talk a bit about your music. Do you see a difference between your solo stuff and The Calling music?**

Alex: Not too much. It's just that I've grown up. I wrote the songs either way. I mean this new record took so many years I was able to play around more, add more. Maybe a bit electronic stuff. There are some songs that you wouldn't have heard The Calling do. I guess it's like the big anthemic rock music. I think everyone who heard "Tonight" can tell that it was the same writer and singer like on "Wherever You Will Go". I think it's pretty similar. And "Wherever You Will Go" is still playing on the radio, it doesn't really go away that sound, so I think there's no reason to change it which was part of the fight with Geffen. They wanted me to write with Akon and they would have tried to get Timbaland to do my record...

Kat: Oh no, please!

Alex: Yeah, I would have failed. They would have turned it into something bad so I'm glad I escaped.

**Kat: Are you gonna change anything from the record you finished years ago?**

Alex: I didn't really change it...well, there's a few things that I wanted to add but the label wouldn't let me. There's a song called "Love" where I wanted to add like a gospel choir at the end. A big choir in a church singing and they were like "No that's cheesy". As soon as I got out I added it. So there's some things I added to songs but I didn't really touch too much. I did add 3 new songs.

**Kat: Which ones?**

Alex: I don't know if you have them here. In America one of them is called "Leave", "Today is the Day" is a new one and then there's two new ones. One is called "Won't back down" and "Holding On". So there is 3 new songs that are added to the album. In America there are 14 tracks and on the European one there are 12.

**Kat: So your European fans will have to get at least 2 versions of the album.?**

Alex: Yeah and in fact on the American iTunes if you buy the album there I designed it so that when you buy the whole album you get the 14 tracks plus a 15<sup>th</sup> song, you get a 10 minute long making of the album video, you get the music video, you get a full interactive packaging so within iTunes it's called a digital LP. You'll be able to play each song, the lyrics scroll down. You'll be able to look at everything, pictures so it's really cool. It's almost like you bought the real album in iTunes. Just yesterday I approved the final thing. It'll be really cool. I hope they'll do it here, too. We'll see.

**Kat: Should your fans rather purchase the iTunes version or the real cd?**

Alex: Whatever they do, as long as it has to do with buying it, I don't care. Buy it! I've invested all my money on this album personally. I had to buy it from Geffen which cost a fortune and then I brought up the money for the independent release. For me it's really important that the fans support it or else I'm fucked. I need people to support it, so no stealing! I don't have a threat but honestly if they buy it online or get the actual cd. You know, I'm someone if I buy a cd I put it into iTunes and then I throw the cd out. If you're a real fan you wanna own the actual thing, I understand that. These days it's obviously not very common.

**Kat: Are there gonna be songs from your EP on the record, too?**

Alex: There is only one song from the EP called "Only One" that's the one that's on the album. When I made the EP it was just to show the fans. I never put it on iTunes I never sold it anywhere. I didn't know that I'd put any of the songs on the album. But everyone seemed to like "Only One" and now it is on the European record and in America.



**Kat: In what other countries are you gonna release and promote the record?**

Alex: Everywhere. In Europe everywhere, South America, in Asia you really focus on Japan and Australia. With The Calling we were doing Korea and Thailand but these days there is just no reason. Honestly, no one buys CD's there, it's all stolen. I'll probably do Japan, Australia and all the main places in Europe, the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Spain and then South America: Brazil, Mexico and America and Canada, the main zones. Germany is the first and how many places it gets released depends on how well it does here. If it does really well in Germany then EMI is probably more interested to release it in more places. So it's important that it does well here.



**Kat: Why is Germany such a big thing in the music business?**

Alex: It isn't. ...I mean it is, Germany is still a good place to sell records.

That's why EMI's headquarter is still here. I didn't sign an international deal with EMI international department, I signed with Germany and it is spread from there to the international departments. Really it's Germany EMI that is releasing us here, you know, it'll go from them around the world. Really the reason it's being released here first is because it's Germany EMI that signed me. They wanted to work here first.

**Kat: I noticed that you're very open to your fans and you're on Twitter talking about what you do and the struggle. Have you always been so open to your fans?**

Alex: Yeah. I mean the difference is when The Calling started in 2001 there was no Facebook, Twitter or Myspace. People were still sending me mail mail. You know, real mail. I've always had a messageboard and an email. I was trying to keep up but you can only write to so many people. That's the only thing that got me through the 5 years was the fans, they stuck around and they were waiting. I mean I lost a lot of fans for sure and I think they all come back now but you know the core, the hard core fans they waited for me. I don't think they would have if I hadn't been so communicative to them, so that's important.

**Kat: Especially that you talked about the bad stuff that happened, not many artists do that.**

Alex: I had to. Every year that went by they were like 'What are you doing?'. And I didn't want them to think that I'm just on a break. I was going crazy, I wanted to do my job. I wasn't legally allowed to release music, I couldn't play shows, I was just stuck in this crap and I had to let them know kind of. I mean there are a lotta things I legally can't say what was happening.

**Kat: You are so focused on your career, especially now that the record is gonna come out. Do you actually have time for your family or your girlfriend?**

Alex: It's interesting you say that. I went like 5 years of really being home and other than just recently going to Brazil doing a tour, making the DVD, I've been home, making this record or sitting around waiting, learning to fly helicopter and just doing stupid shit. So to go from that back to this crazy life... I mean in the last 4 months I was home for like a total of 8 days. I don't really see my family much when I'm at home we have dinner and I get them all over. Yeah, it's a big contrast but they're used to it and I'm used to it from the past. On the first The Calling record I toured for 2 and a half years, the second record was like a year and a half, a year, so we're used to it. But with my fiancé it's difficult...it sucks, there is no doubt. You spend half of your time in some weird place and I'm working and she's kinda waiting or we're on the phone, that's about it. Big phone bills.

**Kat: But you brought her here, didn't you?**

Alex: Yeah, she was here the first week. It's kinda flip off. She'll come here for a week and then I don't see her for 2 weeks and then she'll come meet me for 5 days. It's kinda going back and forth. It's definitely the hardest part, the travelling, for me it's the travelling, the part that is really tiring and being away. So you gotta hold your iphones, ipads and laptops...

**Kat: You got the ipad?**

Alex: Yeah, it's right there.

**Kat: And how do you like it?**

Alex: It's cool, I got it the day it came out in America. Everything it does is really pretty but there are things it doesn't do so it can't replace a laptop. There are things you need to communicate like plugging a printer, you can't download a file from the internet, it has no flash so if you wanna go to a site like YouTube and watch something you can't. But other than that it's cool.

**Kat: Let's get back to your family. During the 5 years, has there ever been a point where your Dad or someone said get a real job and quit the music?**

Alex: Nooo. They know I've been wanting to this and I've been doing this since I was 2. They know this is all I know. My dad has had an amazing film crew and then he's had years that sucked. So it's the business you go through... And really the last 10 years his business and mine has been a major transition from physical sales to digital. Movies it's the same thing, it's all digital now like Netflix. So no one would ever say that and luckily I wrote those songs for the Calling with The Calling, as The Calling and Wherever You Will Go is the biggest songs of the decade in America and one of the biggest songs in the world. Luckily I never had to get a job. I could keep living now not doing anything and live very nicely. Luckily financially and also luckily financially I was able to put everything into this album. If I wouldn't have been able to afford to buy the album from the label which cost hundreds and hundreds of thousands of Dollars I wouldn't have gotten my album. And it was illegal for me to re-record the songs for 3 years which means I had to wait til 2013 or 2014 even to re-record it.

Kat: Woah...

Alex: Yeah. Evil.

**Kat: I'm noticing your bracelets.**

Alex: I did this mainly cuz it's a new cool way to put music out. In America these are in thousands of stores but also I did this because once I got out of my deal and noticed the record wouldn't come out until the end of 2010 and so it's way people can get some new songs. You can get the whole album if you buy the bracelets. Well, it's expensive but at least I found a way for people to get it. I'm wearing "Tonight" and we're travelling around giving out hundreds of these. I have no idea what these are. I think this one is "Start Over Again". And these two were actually prototypes. I've been wearing these for ten months now and they're not broken. I mean the gold is not golden anymore but they don't break.

**Kat: One last very important question. Do you like cows?**

Alex: Cows? Do I think they're cute?

Kat: Whatever you think..

Alex: I think they are cute but I also eat them. I don't like the image but I like to eat them. They're not my favourite animal, I'm more into cats. ...

