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Spike Hellis

Interview by Elizabeth Rhodes

Roll Call

Lainey : Synths, samplers, vox.
Cortland : Guitar, programming, vox.

“I do feel that we’re surrounded by a really positive and genuine group of musicians who truly want to support one another and see each other thrive.”

– Lainey

When did the band get started and what was the original intention of the band?

C : We formed by accident around September 2019 and we played our first show on Halloween 2019.

L : Cortland has always been doing music, but for me it was a way to blow off steam.

Tell us more about your name: how does it communicate the sound or vibe of the band?

L : Spike Hellis is an homage to both Dock Ellis and a former bandmate of Cortland’s.

C : The name has absolutely nothing to do with the music. How would you describe your music to someone who has not yet checked you out?

C : Hard dance, vaguely industrial and shamelessly synth-pop.

What inspires you to create this style of music?

L : Bands who’ve come before us, day-to-day life, needing an outlet, and the current social and cultural climate.

What influences in fashion, literature and culture impact your creativity?

C : My fashion sense has always been lazy. I’ve been wearing combat boots and had a shaved head for the past ten years. After the pandemic hit, I stopped cutting my hair. For this project, primarily other bands—anything new beat, EBM, freestyle, techno etc. Creatively, our music doesn’t stick to one subgenre.

L : While internet culture as it is dampens my creativity now, it shaped my creativity growing up. I’m still living in my own Web 2.0 world of the early aughts—Angelfire hosted websites, message

Photography by
Joey Camello

“I remember driving and thinking to myself, ‘This is what it’s all about.’”

– Cortland

boards and IRC chat rooms.

What other bands are inspiring you right now?

Kris Baha, Crack Cloud, Tzusing, Lower Tar, Shock Doctrine, Riki, Aurat, MVTANT, Panterah, LA PREGUNTA?

How would you describe the current alternative music scene where you live?

L : I’m optimistic about it. There have been some moments of conflict and turmoil during the pandemic, but I do feel that we’re surrounded by a really positive and genuine group of musicians who truly want to support one another and see each other thrive.

C : A lot of our friends in LA are making incredible music. If you’re fortunate enough to also be here and witnessing the same things we are, then you know exactly what I mean.

What are your favorite tour or stage stories? Share ‘em here.

L : We are so brand-new to playing live shows since we just got our start right before COVID. I’m still processing that this is now a thing I do on a regular basis and am just immensely grateful to get to do it.

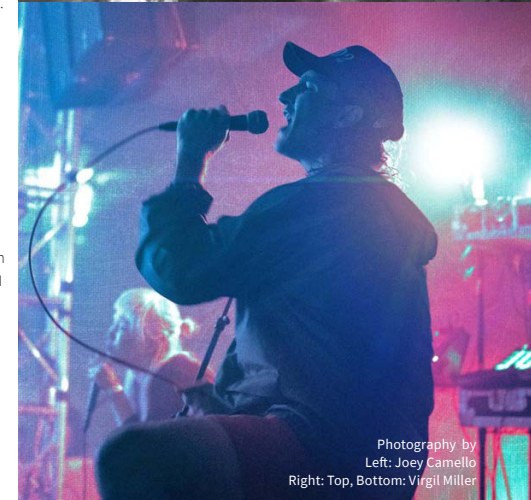
C : In February 2020, we played an afters in LA with NGHTCRWLR that didn’t wrap until 5am. We had to leave at 7am and ride up to Oakland together for another show that night. Everyone riding in the van was dead tired and asleep, but I remember driving and thinking to myself, “This is what it’s all about.”

Tell us about your latest release.

L : Our latest (and only) release is an EP that we wrote right before the pandemic hit. We used a lot of apocalyptic narratives and themes that felt a bit eerie once reality started to hit close to home and we were ultimately stuck at home in lockdown on our release date.

What’s next for your band?

We’ll be finishing up our Fall 2021 US tour and we have another tour coming up in



Photography by
Left: Joey Camello
Right: Top, Bottom: Virgil Miller

Spring 2022 with ADULT and Kontravoid. You can also look forward to a full-length album coming in 2022.

Where can people find out more about your band and any other projects members are involved in?

Spike Hellis is the main focus right now. We use the imprint

“Over-Pop” with all of our releases. Lainey models and you can follow that at www.instagram.com/laineypls. You may also find Cortland popping up in various other musical projects that you know and love. || A

www.spikehellis.com
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