

Loud or not loud ?

Contributed by Vinnie Pereira
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Follows an interview done by Vinnie Pereira, a brazilian vocal-coach.

When did you started singing?

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When I was 12. Elvis made me get the idea.

Who influenced you as a singer?

- Elvis Presley big time, also Bono, John Farnham etc.

The unique Metal and Rock vocalists like Bruce Dickinson, Geoff Tate, Robert Hallfort, Ronnie Dio.

You make your own thing out of all your influences after a while. The older you get, the more you become your own style.

Have you ever taken vocal lessons?

- No.Â

Â Has your range changed over the years?

- Not really, but I sound much better in lower and mid ranges these days.

And I don't enjoy it too much anymore, when it gets too high. This very high singing easily become rather "sports" than art.

Â How about high notes? Is there a change in technique you go into the upper part pf your range?

- The voice naturally changes by getting older, so your technique changes a bit too. I think I have a lot more bottom in my voice these days,while on earlier records at the age of 18/19 I sounded thinner. I am also MUCH louder now.

Do you tend to sing loud or at a conversational level?

- People always say that I am loud, but I'm trying not to.Cause if you are too loud, you easily do something wrong.Once I sang a little bit higher in front of Adrian Smith (Iron Maiden) in his house in England to show him that I don't really sing that loud, but he said: Sounds pretty loud to me, my dear!Also the sound engineer from Iron Maiden who also mixed Helloween for a few tours said,that it is a pleasure to mix me, because my voice is so clear that always easily stays on top.I don't think I sing too loud, but I guess the voice carries, if you know what I mean?The voice gets naturally louder, the more you sing, but you should never force it to be loud.Â

Â How do you warm up for a show?

- Elvis tunes from 1970; perfect for warming up.

Â Do you pay any attention to breath support?

- Not enough, I am far too lazy when it comes to practicing; it's a crime!I really should sing much, much more, but I sometimes easily don't sing for a whole year.In the past sometime even for two years!So when I start again, I got to get all condition back first ...Â

Â Do have any personal horror stories about hurting your voice?

- Only on my very first tour I didn't know that I have to warm up before a gig.And when I got the flew, I developed a real problem and couldn't even talk for 6 weeks.But after that I only had an equal problem on the very last tour I did; but that was rather psychological.Â

Â How is the greatest difference singing in Kiske's solo carerr,of singing in a heavy metal band, like Helloween (talking about the vocal technique)?

- In Helloween I had to sing material of other writers too. And they tended to love extreme heights. Nowadays I only write songs not thinking about having to sing high or low and things like that.

I just write a song, and with my own songs I tend to sing more normal keys and use the higher keys more effective while metal tends to over do this.

Â Who's your favorite singer now?

- Bono from U2 and Tom Chaplin from Keane.

Â Â What could you say about the new album?

- It's a free expression and rather melancholy. Singer songwriter-stuff and a pretty round thing in my eyes.
Or do you mean the next one? - My next solo-album (after the acoustic recording of my old H. tunes de-metalized) will be very different again. At least a big portion of it will be quite symphonic, mystical and big

Â Any final advice for aspiring singers?

- Be yourself, work on your spiritual and moral personality and the rest comes naturally. Soul is everything and much more important than any technique or show-circus.
Strong personality always makes the best singers; don't pretend and fake, just be. If you know what you want and what you're doing and if you do have something to say, people will listen.

Â Message to the brazilian Kiske's fans (believe in me, my countryreally loves you) :

- As always: Let's fight for getting back the passion and a deeper understanding of free and true music again; rather than fighting against other styles and dogmatize one music etc.

Michael Kiske