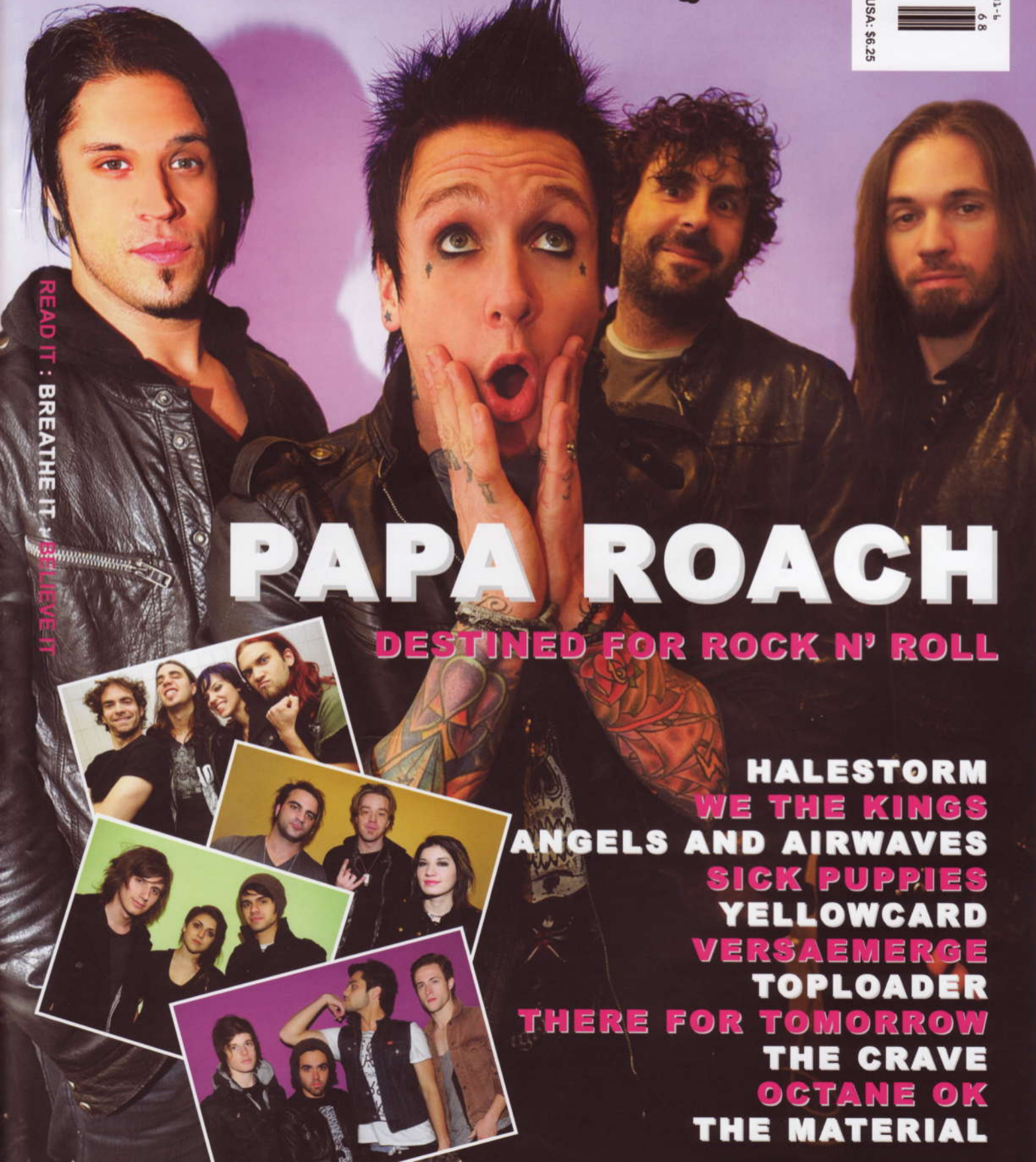
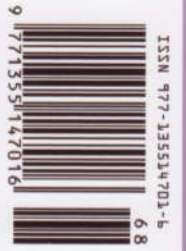


MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE - GOOD CHARLOTTE - ALL TIME LOW - THE MAINE - ORANGE - RJA

# Black Velvet

ISSUE 68 UK: £2.10 USA: \$6.25



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**THE MATERIAL**



## MEMORABLE MATERIAL

**W**ith so many great bands in the world it's often easy to miss some of the amazing ones. Turns out The Material from San Diego are one such band. So far they've not been snapped up by a record label – which is criminal considering the quality of their songs. The band however are fighting hard to get their music out to more and more people – and their album 'What We Are' is something you need to hear.

Vocalist Colleen D'Agostino tells us, "For the past 5 years, The Material has really been everything to me. We finally have a current line-up of members who feel the same way as I do. Our band started in San Diego when we all had jobs and apartments, and now we are full-time nomads playing music together every day. This band is like family, and besides our relationships, there is nothing more important to us than achieving our common goal of making music for a living."

You can tell straight away with her performance of the vocals how much this all means to Colleen. She's a singer who lives and breathes what she does. Every line is sang with passion. "Being passionate about music and life in general is so important if you want your time on earth to be meaningful," she says.

The band have just started being managed by Dave and Matt of Maphia Management. Dave Aguilera was previously in the rock band Bleed The Dream. "It's great to work with people who are coming from the artist side of things," says Colleen. "Dave gets it. He's been there, and he knows what it is like to be in a band trying to work your way up - which is a huge plus. He appreciates the hard work we have put in on our own, without the help of a label or booking agency, and recognizes that we work a lot harder than most bands to make things happen for ourselves. It's nice to get some recognition like that from someone who knows how difficult the industry can be."

Colleen studied classical music and opera while at college. She says this helped her as an artist. "It acts as a foundation for every other musical genre. It really has shaped me in the way that I sing, my vocal technique, my warm-up routines, and the musical knowledge I bring to the table. Singing every night on tour can be pretty harsh on your voice if you don't take the time to learn how to sing properly. I used to regret spending four years in college when I could have been out touring, but now I feel proud to be able to call myself a 'musician' rather than just a 'singer' because of the work I put into getting my music degree."

When asked if she thinks The Material can bring anything to rock music that it's lacking, she replies, "I think our music does a good job of bridging the gap of rock and pop music. We are going in a more edgy direction now but I am happy that we have kept the radio-

friendly catchiness of our songs. Of course I would like to see female-fronted bands be taken more seriously as well... but that is a whole other story."

Despite being unsigned, the band has achieved some great accolades – not least their song 'Moving To Seattle' featured on the video game Rock Band. "To date we have had about 300,000 downloads of that song on Rock Band, so it has definitely been the most helpful promotional tool we have had so far. It's great to show up to a new city and see fans singing the lyrics to that song. As an independent band without label support and promotion, we know we have Rock Band to thank for helping those fans discover The Material."

'What Happens Next' off the album is the official theme song of MTV's Freshwater Blue and the band have had songs appear on The Hills and Sorority Forever. "Freshwater Blue has been a huge blessing in that it is helping our international fan base grow," states Colleen regarding the Australian based series. "I hope that we will have more licensing opportunities with our new album so that even if our music is not on the radio, people are hearing our songs on TV. One song in particular that I would like to see on a show would be 'I'm Alive'. It has a really mysterious mood and an awesome outro. I would love to see it on a TV series with a more serious tone like Grey's Anatomy or CSI. That would be awesome!"

In 'A World Outside' Colleen sings 'I know it's hard to get back up when the world has turned on you'. Lyrics like this have no doubt helped lots of fans – and will continue to help them. The song also helps Colleen herself. "The message of this song is to keep going, and never give up, even when times are tough. This song is not just a reminder to the fans, it is a reminder to myself because sometimes I get really stressed out and I have to remember that time spent worrying about things beyond our control is time wasted. Whenever I sing this song live it helps to melt away any bad energy I have been carrying around that day. I know the song means a lot to our fans because our album had only been out less than a month when we started getting pictures from fans who had gotten tattoos saying 'Keep believing, keep on breathing' which are the pre-chorus lyrics. This has in turn helped me see that what I sing about really does make a difference and it inspires me to keep writing."

The album 'What We Are' took the band almost two years to complete. With the end result now on sale Colleen says, "I can finally say that it captures all the hope, joy, loss, hurt, and struggle that we have been through in the past couple years, and I am really proud of it. Personally, I wrote the bulk of the lyrics when my parents split up last year, and when our band was losing members and making changes. What we went through during that time really shaped a lot of these songs. All in all I think that this album makes the statement that as long as you stay true to yourself, you can do amazing things."

Outside of The Material, Colleen expands her artistic creation in other areas. She has a website, colorandsoundcreative.com, which showcases some of the art that she's produced. "My art work is a medium for me to express feelings on canvas. I am so blessed to have such supportive fans that buy my artwork which helps me pay my bills when I am on the road. As far as the band goes, the merch table is my creation. We have a pretty cool merch set up that I created with suitcases and lights and picture frames." Color and Sound started as a way to escape writer's block. Colleen explains, "There was a point when we were on a deadline to finish some songs and I couldn't for the life of me finish the lyrics. Rather than force something I wasn't inspired to write, I started painting. I don't think I had any real breakthroughs for lyrics while painting - it was more of a way for me to think outside the box."

Colleen rounds things up by telling us what mark she and the band would like to leave on the world. "I want our music to be memorable. I want our name to be relevant for future generations. I want our music to touch lives and inspire creativity. But most of all I want our fans to realize that they are just as much a part of The Material as we are. We owe any success we have had so far to the relationships we have made with friends, fans and music supporters and I want them all to know how truly thankful for that. We have been given the ability to forge our own path and we hope everyone will come along with us!"

If you haven't yet, take a listen to The Material at [www.wearethematerial.com](http://www.wearethematerial.com) – and become a fan and part of The Material too!

Words By Shari Black Velvet

**THE MATERIAL**