

Vypëria

Vypëria is a Nepleslian hard rock band hailing from Prime City on [Nepleslia Prime](#). They were relatively unknown until their breakthrough hit song “Neuromancy” received mainstream broadcast attention, skyrocketing them to nearly overnight success, putting them on the charts next to huge names like [Blynded](#) and [Aethersperm](#).

Musical Style

In stark contrast to the loud, jarring “wall of sound” that Aethersperm is widely known and lauded for, Vypëria describes their music as “retro-style power metal,” relying on steady, driving beats, soaring dual-guitar solos, heavy use of effects, and rich and powerfully melodic vocal delivery, backed by ample use of ambient, atmospheric keyboard fills and chords. Their songs, while relatively simple in structure, are very evocative, vibrant, and uplifting, charged with high energy and theatrical flamboyance.

Members of Vypëria

Andrea Whitsman, 24

Nepleslian, Frontwoman/Lead Vocals

Andrea's vocals alternates between hauntingly beautiful melodies and an edgy “fry” that delivers a sizzling punch when she belts out choruses and accentuated sections. On stage she typically sports platinum-blond hair that is shaved to the scalp on the sides, but from the top of her head it flows down to her shoulders and is usually worn loose, punctuating her theatrics while headbanging during guitar solos. She is fairly pale in complexion, which makes the heavy eyeliner and light pink blush and lipstick she wears make her intense, sharp features “pop,” giving her an almost intimidating and yet fiercely lovely appearance, especially when coupled with her narrow, angled electric blue eyes.

She is the primary lyrical visionary of the band, and her lyrics typically draw themes from ancient mythologies and grandiose cosmic motifs. “The music these guys write is just so epic, I can't imagine writing about dumb stuff like ex-boyfriends or whatever. Everybody's heard that crap before. I also don't like to write stuff just for shock value, you know? I got some big shoes to fill here, and I wanna be remembered for something other than showing off my t*ts and spraying ram's blood on the audience. (laughs)”

Interestingly enough, however, several of her lyrical contributions do in fact seem to be intensely personal in nature, such as the songs “Streetwise” and “Down My Angel.”

On stage, she commands attention both from her looks and her impossible-to-ignore voice, practically radiating an aura of control and an ability to direct the audience's energy. While young male fans tend to

be instantly smitten by her edgy sex appeal, her powerful vocal prowess and in-your-face stage presence, as well as her preference for skin-tight leather pants and low-cut, midriff-baring shirts worn beneath leather jackets, have garnered her a great deal of respect as the embodiment of the strength of Nepleslian women.

Interestingly enough, while not performing, Andrea is relatively easy to miss in a crowd, and is described by her bandmates as “the sweetest, most gentle person they've ever met.”

Daniel "Dez" Hammond, 26

Nepleslian, Lead Guitar

Dez is the skinny, brown-dreadlocked lead guitarist of the band, known for his exotic and wildly variable stage costumes, flamboyant performance antics, and borderline clinical pyromania. He is the second-smallest member of the band, standing only a few inches taller than Kimiko, and has ruddy pale skin. On his face he sports a chest-length goatee which he keeps in two parallel braids.

He is a trained pyrotechnician and typically is in charge of coordinating fire effects during their performances. Before the band had its big break, many of his effects were unsanctioned by the hosting venue, and on more than one occasion caused the manager to pull the plug on their show prematurely while the effects were shut down. Now that their stage budget has been exponentially expanded, he has been able to see more of his visions become reality.

While he is not soloing, he is mostly shadowing the band's vocalist, assisting her in getting the audience whipped into a frenzy and showboating by playing his complementary rhythm licks behind his back, while hanging from his knees from a rafter, and in some cases jumping down into the crowd. Among his unique choices of costumes are Star Army surplus bodysuits (fitted for Nekovalkyrja), beanie propeller caps with jet black swimming trunks, and costumes made entirely out of thin-link chains.

His guitar playing skills are more than impressive, and his lead sound is thick with high-gain distortion and a copious use of effects, which complement his lightning-quick fingers that rake out searing arpeggios and fast double-tapping melodies. He frequently incorporates the other guitarist Jarric into his melodies during live shows, although he records all melodies and harmonies on their albums. During one show in an underground venue, Andrea commented, “I thought for a second we were going to have to stop and call an ambulance. I swore Dez was having a seizure from the strobe lights while he was belting out one of his licks during 'Facing The Madman.' His eyes were all rolled back in his head and he was spazzing out all over the place, but he just kept playing. It was so surreal I almost forgot to start singing again. (laughs)”

Jarric Fawley, 25

Nepleslian, Guitars/Backup Vocals

Dubbed as “his other metronome” by drummer Tony, Jarric's uncanny sense of tempo and rhythm make

him something of the band's backup timekeeper. He is the primary songwriter for the band, and arranges most of the parts, leaving solos and lyrics to what he calls "the showmen," referring to Andrea and Dez. Regardless of this semi-modest outlook, he is also known for a commanding stage presence, although his antics come nowhere close to matching Dez in intensity or insanity.

He is of average height and a sturdy build, sporting a head of long, wavy black hair and a clean-shaven face, with deep brown eyes and a low brow. He also supports Andrea's vocals, especially during choruses, in order to enrich the most emotionally intense parts of her vocal delivery with a fuller range. When singing, he almost exclusively uses a powerful melodic shout.

While not an inherently violent person, Jarric has had a number of run-ins with the law in the past, mostly for drunk and disorderly conduct, and is quick to throw down the gauntlet when he feels that one of his band mates has been threatened or insulted. Drummer Tony once said about Jarric: "Heh. Andrea don't hardly need no bodyguards with him around. Saw him break some dude's arm and throw him across a pool table when he helped himself to a handful of her ass once. Course, he had some buddies with him, so we all had a good ol' fashioned bar brawl that day. It's a good thing sometimes, but I kinda wish the guy would chill out sometimes. He's gonna bite off more'n he can chew one day."

Thomas "Thunder" Tondaro, 29

Nepleslian, Bass Guitar/Backup Vocals

Despite his nickname and imposing seven-foot frame, bassist Thunder's backup vocals not only consist of deep roars but also soar to high-pitched wails that make the overtones in Andrea's already impressive voice truly shine in the strongest moments. His long black hair extends nearly to the middle of his back, completed with a chinstrap beard that frames his big jaw.

On stage, Thunder is surprisingly animated for a "bass-playing Sasquatch," as Dez refers to him, and frequently wears costumes that do not include a shirt. He is the most popular band member with many female fans due to his impressive physique and high-energy performances, and he brags that he can keep his hair whipping in a circle at faster speeds and for longer duration than any other band member without getting dizzy or falling over. His most striking feature, however, is his long-toothed and pearly white smile.

In private, Thunder has a very dry sense of humor, which as many people find grating and unpleasant as do find it riotously funny. "But he makes fun of himself as much as he makes fun of everyone else, see," Dez commented with regards to his sarcasm. "Dude doesn't take prisoners, if he thinks it's stupid, he's gonna say so. So you may not always like it, but hey, they guy's fair. Can't fault him for that."

Kimiko, 18

Geshrin, Keyboards/Synths

A diminutive young Geshrin lady who keeps her head shaved to the skin, Kimiko's distinctive Yamataian

features and soft, feminine beauty set her apart from the rest of the band's more grungy appearance, but the aloof, almost vacant stare in her green eyes gives her an unnerving, almost non-human appearance. She often utilizes copious amounts of vibrantly-colored cosmetics, and wears dark-colored jumpsuits that cover her from neck to toe, but cling firmly to her frame. On stage she rarely ever smiles or shows any sort of emotion, and has admitted to making a game of staring down audience members who lock eyes with her during live performances until they look away.

She is the youngest and newest member of the band, content with her role of augmenting their sound with sweeping, almost orchestral synthesizer fills and ambience. While she rarely steps directly into the spotlight, the other band members are fully aware that if she were to disappear, their songs would be missing a vital element in their definitive sound.

Guitarist Jarric had this to say about Kimiko: "She's cool, you know? You just have to get past that weird androgynous 'thing' she's got going for her. She don't say a lot when we're practicing or out drinking or whatever, but I'll say this, that girl keeps us on track. She don't never complain, just does what she's asked, and anytime we start gettin' off-track, she's always there to herd us back. And sometimes we kinda need that."

Antonio "Tony" DiVargo, 30

Nepleslian, Drums

The heaviest member of the band, Tony is the only person aside from Kimiko who does not have long hair. He keeps it cropped short and neatly combed to one side, and has a thick, masculine red beard covering his wide face and neck. On stage he conceals his slightly portly appearance behind his impressive drum kit, as well as behind heavy black sleeveless jackets. He and Jarric could be considered the most dedicated members of the band, as the two of them usually spend extra time before and after rehearsals going over existing song arrangements, as well as bouncing ideas for new ones off of one another.

During performances, Tony remains mostly focused on being the foundation of their music, using unspoken visual and audio cues to make sure everyone knows where they are and subtly making corrections to any deviations that arise. He usually sits on his elevated platform as the centerpiece of their set. Off stage, he is quiet and reserved, but well liked and friendly.

Notable Songs

"Neuromancy"

Whitsman: "That one's kinda what gave us our big break, as if you didn't know that. (laughs) It's pretty self-explanatory, really, and kinda surprising that this is the one so many people like. I wrote the lyrics in like a day. It's pretty much just raising the philosophical question about all the cybernetics and genetic augments we subject ourselves to all the time. Not really putting it down, you know, but just kinda being

introspective about what we really are, and how it's changed how we think about life, not *living*, but life itself, ever since we started messing around with our bodies and stuff."

Kimiko: "I like that one because it's kind of tricky for me to play live, and I like a challenge. I have a million things all going on at the same time, what with all the techno-esque effects and synth tracks I have to juggle, not to mention digitizing Jarric's voice a couple of times. It's fun. I also think that's why everyone likes that one, because it's almost cross-genre. It appeals to a lot of different tastes."

"Come And Conquer"

Whitsman: "Hoo boy, I love doing that one. I get to *really* lay the "tough girl" act on thick, get all up in the audience's face and stuff, even the ones in the back of the room. I guess you could call it a kind of anthem, a big call to arms of sorts, mostly appealing to individuality and Nepleslian resilience through all the sh*t we've been through in our history. Kind of a big "bring it on" dare, I guess. (laughs)"

Fawley: "Andrea really gets into that one. It's kinda hot, but in a scary way, if that makes any sense. (laughs) We spent a lot of time getting the music right, and Dez really gets to cut loose and show off his chops in his solo. Actually, we kind of dumbed it down from the original version, since it was like almost ten minutes long, and we realized we were trying to do too much. So I was like 'okay guys, let's dial it back a bit, get back to the roots. Keep it simple, none of this grand sweeping story arc crap.' So there you go."

"Shieldmaiden"

Hammond: "Oh, that one, yeah. It's cool. It's about some old story about a chick that goes nuts or something, thinks God is sending her on some kinda divine quest and gets killed 'cause of it. I dunno where she [Andrea] gets some of her material. (snorting chuckle) Damn fun song to play though, lots of syncopated rhythms and some really kick-ass guitar harmonies. Jarric really outdid himself puttin' that one together, and Andrea and I really get some awesome chemistry on stage performing it."

DiVargo: "That one wears me out. They have me doing this straight double kick at almost two hundred beats per minute during every single chorus, but I think the fans kinda get off on it. Really gets the energy going."

"Below The Clouds"

Fawley: "We wrote that one as much as for a break during a set as for a change of pace. It's a bit slower tempo than a lot of our other stuff, but I think it's perfect. Even though it's more at a kind of walking speed, it still has all the oomph and energy of the faster stuff, and there's not much more satisfying than looking out into a crowd and seeing everyone's heads all bobbing up and down, hammering the air with their fists all in total unison. It's epic. Of course, Dez has to go bat-sh*t for a few seconds while he's ripping out that solo of his, but it's not too long and it fits just fine, so I don't complain. It works pretty well, actually. (laughs) I really gotta hand it to Andrea, though, she's what really makes that song shine."

Hammond: "Oh my god, now I ain't usually one for the slower stuff, but holy sh*t, does Andrea sound f***ing *amazing* in that one. I ain't never heard a voice sound so gorgeous as when she's lilting out those pretty little verses. And when she hammers down on those pounding choruses, wow. I mean wow. Lookit me, I'm getting all shaky just *thinking* about it."

OOC Notes

This page was originally created on 2015/01/21 04:39 by [Floodwaters](#).

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Last update: **2023/12/20 18:20**

