

Vibe

Drummers Making A Difference

ANDREW HURLEY

by
Billy Ramirez

FROM THE GRAVE TO THE CORK TREE

Book reports, gym class, stale lunch, and driver's ed are all still fresh in the memories of the members of Fall Out Boy. The Boy was born just a few years ago while bassist Pete Wentz, vocalist Patrick Stump, and guitarist Joe Trohman were in high school in Chicago. They recruited their buddy Andrew Hurley to man the drums, and the quartet quickly recorded a demo (a joint CD with Project Rocket), and released their first full-length record *Take This To Your Grave* on the Fueled By Ramen label. At their age, it's a good bet Top Ramen is their source of fuel.

Hurley, one of the band's elder statesmen at 24 years old, joined after Fall Out Boy unsuccessfully auditioned a series of drummers. "I was in college, going full-time, and we were playing local shows. That was about the time we started talking to labels, and interest started growing, and it totally took off very fast," Hurley says with an innocent voice that befits his calm, bespectacled face, but belies his tattooed arms and intense playing.

"We were writing and recording *Take This To Your Grave* when I was still in school full time. I'd be going down from Milwaukee, which is an hour and a half away, so I'd be driving there and back everyday to go to school, and then I'd go do pre-production for the record. Right when we were done with the record, I had to take off school because we started touring and we've been touring ever since. We've pretty much been touring straight for two years."

The road quickly became home as the band played over 550 shows in those two years. Sleeping between a bass drum and bass amp is not a glorious life, but Hurley's at an age where glory comes second to experiencing new things and just plain having fun. It would be a little hasty to call Fall Out Boy seasoned road veterans, but they have certainly taken their touring experiences and applied them to their new album *From Under The Cork Tree*.

"It's definitely more mature," he says. "It's been two years since we did that last record. We're definitely different people. Last year, we crashed our van and that was definitely a formative experience for us and it totally changed us. The reasons for doing this became a lot different. It's something we all love, and it's definitely an outlet for us artistically. I think all those things have definitely matured in the two years."

Their debut album was recorded with a budget of \$22,000, which is meaty for an indie label, but they had the fat wallet of Island Records financing

VITALS

BAND: FALL OUT BOY

AGE: 24

BIRTHPLACE: MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

INFLUENCES:

DAVE LOMBARDO, JOHN BONHAM, MAX WEINBERG

CURRENT RELEASE: *FROM UNDER THE CORK TREE*

ALL GEARED UP

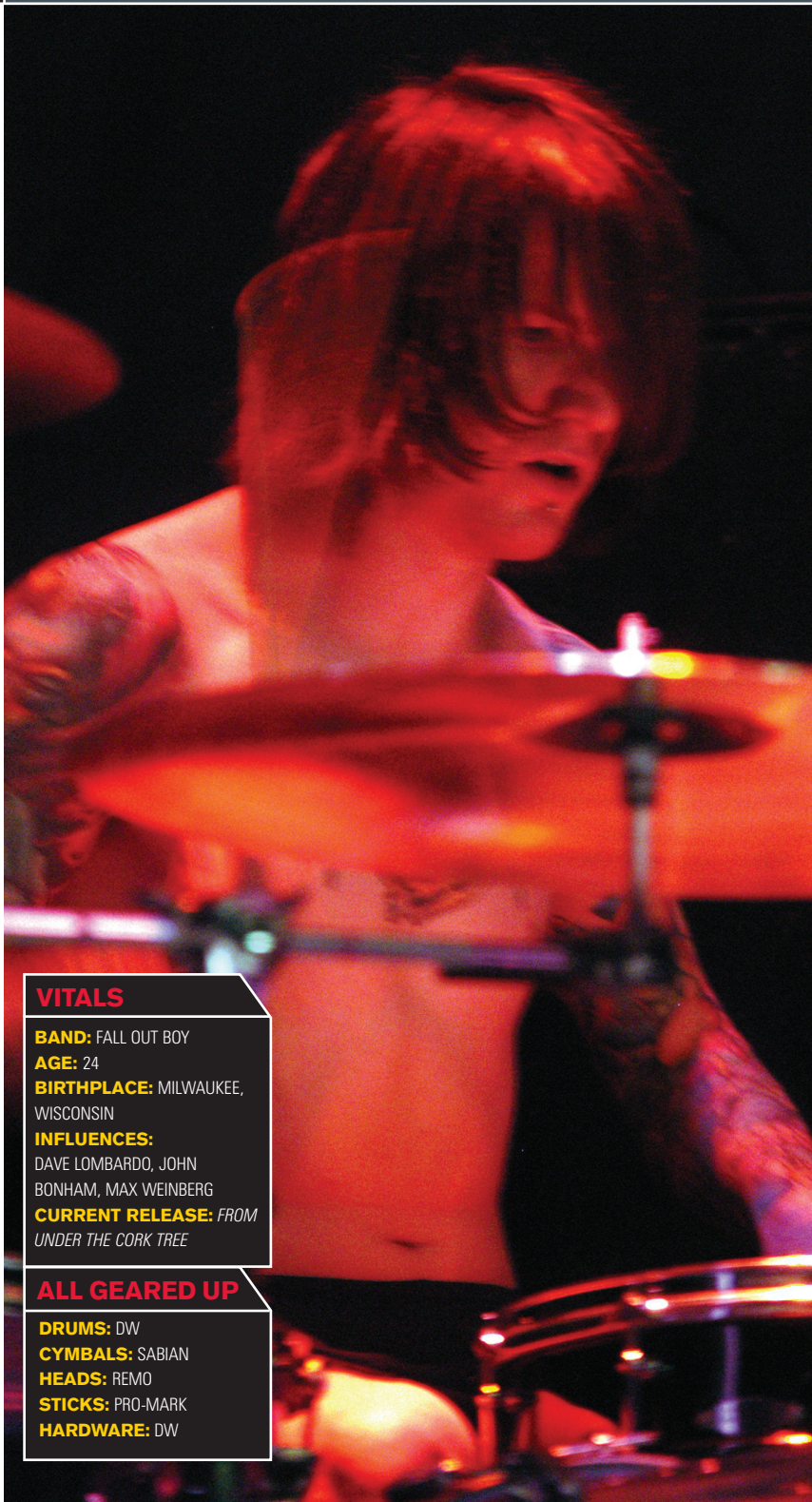
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HURLEY CONTINUED

their new album. "Having a bigger budget means getting to try out more ideas. They may not all work, but we were afforded the two years to write as many songs as we could. We have a lot of songs that we wrote that are really different, and not all of them made it, but we felt we grew musically. We have songs that definitely bridge the gap between the last record and this one, and there are definitely songs that are similar to the last record."

Not only does a major label mean having a major budget, it also gave the band the chance to work with major producer Neal Avron. Hurley admits he and his mates had some trepidation about recording with a stranger who has produced albums for some very popular bands.

"Working with Neal was awesome," he says. "We were really nervous to go to someone we didn't know and who has done huge records for New Found Glory and Yellowcard. We were nervous that he might try to strong-arm a little bit, but he was pretty much the coolest person we've ever worked with. He was totally amazing, totally understood what we were doing, and definitely worked well with us. We did 15 songs. It sounds awesome. It sounds bigger than the last record."

Hurley's drumming on *Take This To Your*

Grave was fueled by youthful vigor and endless energy (and, of course, ramen), but he made an effort to approach his drum parts a bit differently on his major label debut. "On the last record, I had a lot of silly stuff and don't think I was really in the pocket as much as I could've been. I'm definitely proud of that record and totally love it, but I wanted to be more in the pocket and play more for the song [on the new album]. I've always noticed that the hardest hitting songs and the hardest hitting grooves are always stripped down to exactly what needs to be there. It's the foundation of the song. I definitely made an effort to strip away the unnecessary stuff. It definitely still has feel, but it's more tasteful, more in the pocket. I'm really surprised at how well it turned out.

"I hope this next record is successful and people dig it and enjoy it. I really believe in the record and I'm really happy with it. Everything I've wanted to accomplish as a drummer I think I have. As a band, everything we wanted to accomplish, we more than have. The main point for me is to go on tour and support the record. Warped Tour is going to be huge. That's the biggest thing. We're so lucky in pop punk and punk rock and this genre to have Warped Tour because it's such a good way to

get out to people. I want the band to be successful – this is my job, so of course selling more records is better for me. But I just want mainly to connect with the kids. I want them to believe in the record as much as I do, and get from it what I gave into it."

The future looks bright for Fall Out Boy, and success is coming at them from every possible angle. *From Under The Cork Tree* has "winner" written all over it, and the band will join the Warped party after concluding their own headlining tour. Still, they haven't forgotten their roots, and all the kids that packed tiny clubs to see them play a couple of songs around the Windy City.

"I totally miss those shows," Hurley sighs, "and we still try to do them every once and a while. We did a New Year's Day show that we announced the day of, and there were like 80 people there. Those shows are awesome because you're so connected with the kids. It's definitely a communal experience. Our shows are getting a lot bigger now and it's fun and it's cool. As a band, we love energy and we love to go off and go nuts on the stage. It's really nice to have a big stage, but it's still cool to have those punk rock shows that are smaller, where there are only a handful of kids who live and die in those rooms." 🙌

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