

Mark Menghi is both the guy onstage and the man behind-the-scenes for not one but *two* rock n' roll supergroups. An industry veteran, with nearly two decades of experience as a musician, visual artist, and marketing/creative director, the Long Island bassist and father of two is a lifelong disciple of the four-string history made by Black Sabbath's Geezer Butler, Iron Maiden's Steve Harris, and the late Cliff Burton.

As founder, songwriter, bassist, and "key master" of Metal Allegiance, Mark became brother and peer to many of the musicians he grew up worshipping. He was even blessed with the chance to play one of Burton's basses onstage, while the late Metallica legend's father looked on. He indulges his love of thrash in the internationally acclaimed Metal Allegiance alongside Mike Portnoy (ex-Dream Theater), Alex Skolnick (Testament), and David Ellefson (Megadeth), which began as a celebration of the genre but evolved to produce a pair of classic slabs of their own.

As both bassist and the "M" in BPMD, he's immersed in the classic rock that's equally close to his heart, faithfully rendering inspired versions of signature tunes by the likes of Aerosmith, ZZ Top, and Lynyrd Skynyrd, with Bobby "Blitz" Ellsworth (Overkill), Phil Demmel (ex-Machine Head), and Portnoy on their 2020 *American Made* debut.

He earned a Bachelor of Technology Degree in Visual Communications, graduating with honors, before embarking on a career as an award-winning art, creative and marketing director. His work has been published in *Guitar World*, *Guitar Player*, *Bass Player*, *People Magazine*, and the *New York Times*, among other publications. He's been quoted in *Billboard*, *Kerrang!*, *Metal Hammer*, *Loudwire*, and *KNAC*, and was a guest on AOL Build, the live series featuring big names in entertainment, tech and business.

Mark cofounded Metal Masters, which grew to become the mighty Metal Allegiance, with the same spirit that first drove him to get together with friends and jam as a kid. Metal Masters shows saw participation from members of Slayer, Pantera, Anthrax, and Exodus, as well as an appearance by one of Menghi's heroes, Geezer Butler.

“Mark is kind of like the Brian Epstein of the band,” Portnoy has said of his friend. “He’s the behind-the-scenes mastermind who put the whole thing together. When we began this as a live cover thing, he was the guy moving the chess pieces. When we decided to make original music, he became a huge creative element as a songwriter.”

Already a cornerstone of organization with a penchant for songwriting and lyrics, Menghi was nudged by his cofounders to step into the spotlight with Metal Allegiance. Drum legend Portnoy’s resume extends beyond his role in creating Dream Theater; he’s also had stints with Avenged Sevenfold, The Winery Dogs, and Sons Of Apollo. Ellefson is the bassist and cofounder of Big 4 icons Megadeth and an entrepreneur in his own right, as CEO of the reactivated Combat Records among other ventures. Skolnick is not only lead guitarist for Testament, but also leads his own jazz fusion group, Alex Skolnick Trio, and has played in Savatage and Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

In addition to his work as founding member, organizer, co-songwriter and co-producer, Menghi served as Executive Producer on the inaugural self-titled Metal Allegiance album, issued by powerhouse label Nuclear Blast (home to Slayer, Meshuggah, and Rob Zombie, among others) in 2015. The liner notes for the album read like a massive chunk of a heavy metal encyclopedia, with contributions from past and present members of Lamb Of God, Exodus, Mastodon, Pantera, Trivium, Kings X, Hatebreed, Sepultura, Machine Head, Lacuna Coil, Death Angel, Judas Priest, Iced Earth, Arch Enemy, The Dillinger Escape Plan, and several more established acts.

“What we’ve tried to do is take all of the subgenres of metal and fuse it into a true community,” says Menghi. “That’s why we’ll invite someone like Gary Holt of Exodus and Slayer and someone like Misha Mansoor of Periphery to participate. It’s an overall collective of musicians coming together for the sake of the genre.”

Fallen Heroes, released in 2016, featured three covers honoring Lemmy Kilmister, David Bowie, and Glenn Frey. Guest vocalists included Troy Sanders of Mastodon on “Iron Fist” (Motörhead), Mark Osegueda of Death Angel on “Suffragette City” (Bowie) and Alissa White-Gluz of Arch Enemy on The Eagles’ “Life in the Fast Lane.”

The band's second album of original material, *Volume II: Power Drunk Majesty*, featured vocalists from Nightwish, Amon Amarth, Black Dahlia Murder, Accept, Soulfly, and Armored Saint, along with Osegueda and of course, Bobby Blitz.

Mark and Metal Allegiance were featured prominently in the documentary film *Murder in the Front Row* from director Adam Dubin, Rick Rubin's old college roommate who was responsible for classic Beastie Boys clips and the exhaustive *A Year and a Half in the Life of Metallica* feature. Based on the book of the same name, *Murder in the Front Row* traces the trajectory of the Bay Area thrash metal scene. Metal Allegiance performed at the movie's 2019 premiere, on 4/20, in San Francisco.

The creative partnership on MA's "Mother of Sin" and general camaraderie between Menghi and Blitz is part of what led to the almost inevitable creation of BPMD, a chance to exercise a shared appreciation for some of the most important rock bands of the 1970s. Demmel is best known for his work in Machine Head and Vio-Lence, as well as his recent stint filling in for Gary Holt in Slayer, but his passion for the material embraced by BPMD is rivaled only by the love of the era from Portnoy, Blitz, and Mark.

Advanced listens of the album earned early praise from radio personality Eddie Trunk, ex-Van Halen bassist Michael Anthony, and even the Nuge himself. "Absolutely fucking brilliant!" Ted proclaimed. "God bless the real music krankers of America!"

Menghi, who coproduced *American Made*, personally selected "Beer Drinkers & Hell Raisers" by ZZ Top and "Saturday Night Special" by Lynyrd Skynyrd for the track listing. Of course, the influence of Iron Maiden and Metallica still peeks through, in the overall attack and aggressive approach to the fun-loving songs. Like *Volume II: Power Drunk Majesty*, the BPMD album was mixed and mastered by Mark Lewis (Trivium, Devildriver).

In early 2020, Metal Allegiance made live renditions of two of their originals, "Can't Kill the Devil" and "Pledge of Allegiance," available for digital download as *Thrashing from the House of Blues Anaheim*, with 100 percent of the proceeds going toward the

salaries of the long-running West Babylon, New York record store, Looney Tunes. It was a full circle moment for Menghi, who spent many of his formative years there.

“The first time I ever met David Ellefson was at a Looney Tunes in-store appearance,” Menghi remembers fondly. “I actually worked at the store through high school and college. I was just hanging around there so much that they eventually gave me a job.”

Select Discography:

BMPD, *American Made* (Napalm) 2020

Metal Allegiance, *Volume II: Power Drunk Majesty* (Nuclear Blast) 2018

Metal Allegiance, *Fallen Heroes* EP (Nuclear Blast) 2016

Metal Allegiance, *Metal Allegiance* (Nuclear Blast) 2015

Endorsements:

Ampeg

D’Addario

IK Multimedia