

Mark Menghi is both the guy onstage and the man behind not one but *three* rock n' roll supergroups. An industry veteran, with over 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, Motown "Funk Brother" legend James Jamerson and the late, great Cliff Burton. Mark has played and recorded with a who's who list of musicians; from Joe Satriani to Gary Holt and Mike Portnoy to Kenney Aronoff, the list is long... and impressive.

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 (Dream Theater), Alex Skolnick (Testament), and David Ellefson (ex-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 stylings which is close to his heart with Bobby "Blitz" Ellsworth (Overkill), Phil Demmel (Kerry King), and Portnoy on their 2020 *American Made* debut. If two supergroups were not enough, Mark is the man behind **King Ultramega** which is a passion-driven musical project honoring the life, voice, and genius of Chris Cornell, one of the most gifted artists of our time. It launches in conjunction with Soundgarden's long-overdue induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

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 (Black Sabbath).

"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. 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 Nuclear Blast Records (home to Slayer, 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."

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 April 20, 2018, 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. Demmel is best known for his work in Machine Head and Vio-Lence, as well as his recent role as guitarist in Kerry

King (Slayer) solo band, 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!"

In recent years, Mark has been busy recording with various musicians in many different genres of music while taking on session work & scoring music for film and TV shows while being under contract with various streaming outlets. In addition to scoring, Mark has been "the pinch hitter" for Joe Satriani's touring live band (filling in for the great Bryan Beller) having played Bass with Joe (his old Long Island friend) with a "bucket list" stop at Jones Beach Amphitheater (Long Island, New York).

"Playing Jones Beach with Joe was nuts. Joe and I go back 20+ years... When we did soundcheck prior to the performance, I found myself staring at the seats I used to sit in as a kid and self-reflecting." Says Menghi. "I've seen hundreds of shows there... the stories I have! It was an emotional rollercoaster for me to play that venue being a Long Island native."

The summer of 2025 saw Mark's most recent venture, this time with King Ultramega. This project did not begin with a single, dramatic moment. Instead, it grew quietly and gradually, an organic result of years of conversations, inspiration, and deep reverence for a musician whose impact remains immeasurable.

"There is not a singular moment in time that led to this project," says Mark Menghi "It was a trail of events that led to the formation of King Ultramega and the evolving creation to pay tribute to the voice of a generation."

It started in 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, when Menghi recorded a version of Rusty Cage with friends. What began as a creative release soon became something larger. With every step forward, the project deepened in meaning and purpose. "I kept crossing the mental roadblock of 'you are entering uncharted waters, are you sure you wanna do this?'" Menghi reflects. "Chris is one of those dudes if you cover, you better do it justice."

The decision to continue became clear when Soundgarden guitarist Kim Thayil joined the project and re-recorded one of his own iconic tracks. "Once Kim got involved and re-recorded one of his own songs, I knew something was brewing," Menghi says.

Thayil embraced the project wholeheartedly. "I'm super honored to record alongside all the amazing musicians appearing on the King Ultramega project," he says. "I'm equally proud that it celebrates Soundgarden in this tribute to the songwriting of Chris. Ultra-admirably, everyone's participation is supporting the work of the MusiCares Foundation. Thank you Mark Menghi, Charlie Benante and Reigning Phoenix Music (RPM)."

For Menghi, this project is as personal as it is musical. "I went through some very difficult times in my life. I should not be here right now, but I am," he shares. "I like to think my past trials and tribulations helped me understand Chris just a little, hence the formation of King Ultramega."

Song selection was guided by instinct. "My mood. It's really that simple," Menghi explains. "Rusty Cage was recorded simply because it's one of my favorite songs featured on one of my favorite records." Other songs came to Menghi during moments of reflection and inspiration. "There is a bunch more in the can right now, all with drums fully recorded, which are currently being worked out for future releases."

2025 will see multiple single releases from King Ultramega while 2026 will see much of the same. The result will be a full-length album paying tribute to the late, great Chris Cornell.

Select Discography:

King Ultramega, *Various Single releases (Reigning Phoenix Music) 2025-26*

Charlie Benante, *Silver Linings* (Megaforce) 2021

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