

# House of Heroes

COLD HARD WANT

*"It takes a lot of cold hard want to just persevere and continue believing in rock n' roll. And if it is dead and we're just fools on the sinking ship, that's fine. We're happy to go out that way."* – **Tim Skipper, House of Heroes.**

Pressure is the element that separates the men from the boys in this industry. When it's do or die, sink or swim, the truly special bands are the ones who emerge from the furnace not just intact, but as gold. Conceived in fire, *Cold Hard Want* is House of Heroes' most urgent, most tangible, most undeniable artifact in their marked career.

Hands down.

"At this point, it's vital we transcend everything we have done before. Music is at a desperate place," Skipper explains. "Musicians like ourselves are at a desperate place as well, trying to make a living in a dying economy. We had to do something that would propel us to the next level. Good thing we work best under pressure."

Known for their creativity, House of Heroes has always taken pride in their ability to blend the experimental and the quirky into hooky, classic-rock-influenced anthems. But with *Cold Hard Want*, the band has taken the gloves off. It is as immediate, as candid, and as vulnerable as anything the Switchfoots and Anberlins of the world have released to date.

"Musically, we tried to keep it a little simpler than we have in the past. We wanted to make our points very sharp and easily understood. So we listened to a lot of anthems and tried to hone in on what made them great-- everything from the Clash and U2, to Guns N' Roses and Aerosmith."

The band took a markedly different approach to writing this time around; they wholeheartedly embraced the concept of *the band*. They wrote together, they recorded together, they slept, ate, and went to war together. In the era of technology and virtual community, the concept of being a true band itself is refreshing, if not downright foreign. And you can *feel* it in the music. *Cold Hard Want* is four guys harkening to the heavens collectively, with all their might, moving the speakers in your ear buds, your laptop, your car stereo, as one.

From the moment the Queen-inspired, acappella harmonies of the intro take flight, you know that you are *in*. And when the opening track, "Out My Way," takes hold, it will not relent. You will sing, *If you've got shots you wanna take, better hope it buries me. If I'm going out then so it be, you know I'm going out my way.* Every song has an unavoidable, magnetic chorus. Every moment is desperate. Every track is modern rock, that is hopelessly candid—in the best possible way--complete with bombastic beats, shredding leads, and triumphant riffage.

Make no mistake about one thing, however: House of Heroes has not placed their hopes on the fickle fortunes of rock n' roll. These four realize the fate of their souls cannot be hinged on something so mortal. Faith is—and always has been—the crux of their creation. But, it has always been a mandate

within this band to find a creative way to present belief, and onto this mantra they cling more tightly than ever.

“Some people want us to play the same worship song they've heard hundreds of times already,” states Skipper. “And that's frustrating for us because while I do believe those songs have a place and have something to say, the last thing I want to do is regurgitate the same thing someone else said. It wouldn't be genuine, and I certainly don't want to be disingenuous before the God of the universe. We are creating to honor the Creator. It just makes sense to me to put deeper thought into it.”

AJ Babcock, the band's primary lyricist, is a champion of wit, blending sensitivity with righteous indignation. On “Out My Way,” he reflects on the dismal state of rock music, hoping to incite insurrection: *Because you'll never find out 'till your body's been broken on the canvas...If you belong with the ghosts and the has beens, or if you live on like a little piece of greatness.* On “Remember the Empire” he calls anyone listening to resist the personal forces of darkness which are at play in all spheres of life: *Here they threaten with murder and bribe us with peace, Here they treat us like slaves and convince us we're free. There's no turning back once enough is enough, We can't, but we must, so stand, stand up!* And on “I am a Symbol” he speaks about having courage to go against the status quo: *The first one through is an easy kill, but no one's safe if we all stand still.* This record is ripe with great one-liners and a depth that will leave you not simply rocking, but contemplating.

If you have never experienced the music in a live setting, quite frankly, you are missing one of the most dynamic, well-oiled machines in underground music today. Every note, every harmony, every squeal is placed on record to be replicated in the performance setting. Perhaps that is why HoH has shared the stage with everyone from Silverchair, MxPx and Family Force 5 to Toby Mac and Skillet. And with *Cold Hard Want* lying in wait, perhaps this is the moment the band moves from packing small clubs to overflowing large ones.

Regardless of the outcome, House of Heroes has created something that will last, something they bled for, something that they can hold their heads high knowing they created for years to come. After all, if nothing else, they want to be known as a band that went down swinging.

Skipper proclaims, “All we hear from the higher-ups in the music industry is, ‘Dumb down your music a bit and write some silly pop songs and then maybe we'll talk about working with you.’ What we're saying is that for better or worse, we won't do that. We CAN'T do that. And if we're going out like that, than so be it. But at least we'll know we went out the way we felt right about.”



*Tim Skipper - lead vocals, guitar*

*AJ Babcock - bass, vocals*

*Colin Rigsby - drums, vocals*

*Eric Newcomer - lead guitar, vocals*

**THEHOUSEOFHEROES.COM**

**Gotee.com**

