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# Purgatory/Paradise



## Synopsis

Purgatory/Paradise is a revolutionary fusion of music and text from seminal indie rock band Throwing Muses. Kristin Hersh, Throwing Muses's lead singer/songwriter, is one of the most well-respected musicians to emerge from the 1980s indie rock scene. Her work has influenced artists such as Cat Power, Alanis Morissette, Lush, and Sleater-Kinney, as well as Riot Grrrls everywhere. Ten years in the making, Hersh and Throwing Muses's 32-track album Purgatory/Paradise is the centerpiece of this deluxe 64-page book which also contains more than two dozen photographs and artwork by Kristin Hersh and band member Dave Narcizo; lyrics for each song; stories and essays that accompany each track written by Hersh; and instructions for downloads of exclusive content, including demos and outtakes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It's 25 years since Throwing Muses' original line-up blew me away, and a barnstorming gig in June 1989 is still my all-time favourite. (Not that there haven't been great Muses gigs since then!) This beautifully produced CD/Book is a fine and fitting installment in the Throwing Muses catalogue. There are several strong tracks here (e.g. Lazy Eye, Milan, Slippershell) that quickly work their way into your imagination, and several other more subtle or apparently slight pieces that will slow-burn around your brain. Overall, the album rewards repeat listens, revealing new pleasures and characteristics. Most of Kristen Hersh's familiar lyrical tropes are present; she's still an expert at putting a twist on common cliches and delivering dead-pan puns, and it's great to find she can still

surprise after all these years. An exploration of the strangeness and wonder and horror of life as it's lived in 21st century America, I would strongly recommend this to anyone who's enjoyed the Muses in the past, and to anyone who wants their rock music to surprise and provoke them.

I think I would just say this...this album is Kristin's Abbey Road. It is a wonderful flowing piece of continuous music that showcases her at the peak of her creative powers, along with the two out Muses. All the unexpected hooky melodies weave with a narrative that dances between surreal and cerebral leaving you fully satisfied as well as spell bound by Kristin's story telling. One of the best albums of the year by far. As other reviewers have noted your perspective and experiencing will continue to evolve the more this album gets into your rotation, which is the true test of greatness.

Kristin Hersh is a must for anyone with a soul, anyone who feels different and needs inspiration to let it show creatively, anyone with a heart. I love her guitar playing as well as her emotional delivery and amazing, unique voice.

Gave it a listen over the weekend while I was writing - and found it to be a surprisingly engaging album. It has a fresh feel to it, and doesn't sound at all like the TM have lost a step. Really pleased.

Late in 2013 the group released Purgatory/Paradise, an expansive 32 track CD with an detailed and gorgeous book, a 32 track bonus instrumental cd and commentary download regarding the making of the album. Throwing Muses, now made up of composer, guitarist and singer Hersh, David Narcizo on drums and Bernard Georges on bass quickly picked up where they left off after 1997's *Limbo*. Hersh's quirky yet effective vocals are still there, and still perfectly match her lyrics. Their lyrics themselves don't match the music but rub against the melody creating an effective sonic tension. What's Hersh singing about? I'm not sure, even after reading the lyrics in the expansive book. The song "Sunray Venus" is one of my favorites yet I'm not sure of the context of the lyrics "open your mouth you're blessed for the moment kisses all around; sunray Venus crushed underfoot and kisses all around, leaving that is limbo, hell I remember you". Still this is good incentive to read the accompanying book. Throwing Muses continue their effective use of shifting rhythms and tempos too. On the stand out track "Freesia" the melody rocks along then suddenly doesn't with an unexpected and challenging modulation. Bassist Bernard Georges and drummer David Narcizo hold things together

perfectly. On the song "Terra Nova" Hersh sings, "nothing's perfect 'till it's better". Somehow after listening to this perplexing, mystical and perfectly engrossing album, you understand exactly what she means.

As I sit listening to this straight through for the first time (and as a huge TM fan) I cannot get over how amazing this collection of songs is! It is incredibly cohesive, diverse and innovative. I'm challenged to think of another TM album I would recommend more, and that is saying a lot! A must own for any fan, and as good a place to jump into their music as any I would say if it's new to you. This far exceeded my expectations for a new album from them after all this time.

Throwing Muses' first album of new music in ten years, and they did it with such style. An expansive 32-song album accompanied with a beautifully bound hardcover book full of lyrics, essays, photography, etc.. much in the vein of Kristen Hersh's "Crooked" album a few years back. If you're unfamiliar with the music of Kristen Hersh and Throwing Muses, they are an alternapop-folky blend of music, sometimes complex but always catchy. Some tracks here (of the 32) are either short fragments, instrumentals or full-length tracks. All very easy to fall in love with. Let's hope it doesn't take another decade for a Muses release!

K. Hersh is in amazing voice. The performances, the tones of every instrument, the mix, the production is superb. I was pleasantly surprised by the great mix of acoustic guitars, electric guitars, appropriate drumming to fit the songs, some songs have flute, strings: all great players on every instrument on this CD. "Purgatory/Paradise" is K. Hersh at the height of her powers: melodic songs, singing counterpoint with herself on some tunes; and, when occasional vocal effects are used, they enhance the lyric/song perfectly. Repeated listenings are very rewarding: you will hear snatches of songs, melodic motives, incorporated into other songs on this masterpiece. Each time I listen, I get it more and more, and I always hear something new. I like to hear it from start to finish in one sitting (or drive.) So glad I bought it (and the hard cover book is a great bonus! Well worth it getting the CD with the hard cover book.)

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