

= Repentless =

Repentless is the twelfth studio album by American thrash metal band Slayer . It was released on September 11 , 2015 , and is the first Slayer album to feature guitarist Gary Holt of Exodus and the first to feature drummer Paul Bostaph since 2001 's God Hates Us All . Repentless is also Slayer 's first album following the death of founding member Jeff Hanneman in 2013 , and the band 's first album to be released on Nuclear Blast .

Five singles were released from the album , " Implode " , " When the Stillness Comes " , " Repentless " , " Cast The First Stone " and " You Against You " . The album debuted at number four on the Billboard 200 , the highest charting debut from the band in their native country . It also topped the chart in Germany and featured in the top ten of almost twenty charts around the world . It received mixed to positive reviews from critics .

= = Background = =

When asked in May 2011 if Slayer was going to make a follow @-@ up to World Painted Blood , then @-@ Slayer drummer Dave Lombardo replied that although nothing had been written yet , there were " definitely plans " . In early 2011 , guitarist Jeff Hanneman contracted necrotizing fasciitis . Reports linked this illness with a spider bite he claimed to have received while in a friend 's hot tub . When asked about a new record , bassist Tom Araya stated that any work would have to wait until Hanneman had recovered .

On February 20 , 2013 , it was announced that Lombardo would not take part in Slayer 's Australia tour due to contractual disputes , and his place would be taken by former drummer Jon Dette . Being interviewed in late February by Soundwave TV , guitarist Kerry King elaborated more on the personnel status for the album . He expressed doubt as to who might produce the album , saying that Metallica had producer Greg Fidelman " monopolized " . Additionally , the continued absence of Hanneman further contributed to the uncertainty . Lombardo 's permanent replacement was later announced to be Paul Bostaph , who was previously the band 's drummer from 1992 ? 2001 , appearing on several albums .

On May 2 , 2013 , Jeff Hanneman died of liver failure in a Los Angeles hospital . A week later , the official cause of death was announced as alcohol @-@ related cirrhosis . Hanneman and his family had apparently been unaware of the extent of condition until shortly before his death . King has announced his desire for the band to continue , but Araya was more uncertain , stating , " After 30 years , it would literally be like starting over , " and expressing doubts that Slayer 's fanbase would approve of such a change . In March 2015 , Araya revealed that the band had recorded one song prior to Hanneman 's passing , and that the song will appear on the album .

= = Writing and production = =

The album 's writing process started in November 2011 , announced by Lombardo through Twitter . King later said that he and Lombardo had been working on music prior to the holidays and that they had completed three songs , in addition to three outtakes from the previous record . It was initially hoped that the album would be ready for release by summer of 2012 , but this did not come to fruition . Frontman Tom Araya later said that the album would be pushed back to a 2013 release , but this idea fell through .

In addition , King had noted that two of the new songs had been fully recorded and that there was a possibility that they might be released as an EP , but the idea was later dismissed . King announced the songs ' titles as " Chasing Death " and " Implode . " Araya announced that the band would start writing the new album upon completion of the 2012 Mayhem Festival , which ended in August of that year . Since their recorded songs still needed to be mixed , King announced in a late August 2012 interview that there had been a twelve @-@ day window where the band had been able to " hijack Greg Fidelman from Metallica " for further production on the album . By then , the band had two songs that were missing lead guitar parts and vocals and had recorded six demos . In addition ,

King said that the band had yet to record three more demos .

In February 2013 during an interview with Eddie Trunk , King declared that , while Hanneman still had not been involved with the album , the band was waiting for label issues to be resolved before recording . King stated that he and Lombardo had eight songs that they were working on , as well . When asked about whether or not Exodus guitarist Gary Holt , who had been filling in for Hanneman during live shows , would play on the record , King denied it , saying that he would handle all guitars except for Hanneman 's lead parts . King also said that Hanneman had yet to offer up any material for the album . Araya later contradicted King 's statement about Hanneman and stated that Hanneman had been working on material for the album . Shortly after Hanneman 's death , Araya revealed that Hanneman had gone so far as to send Araya music that he had been working on , and Araya later said that some of this material ? including an outtake from World Painted Blood ? may make it onto the album .

Even prior to Hanneman 's death , King had expressed doubt as to who would even play on the album . He stated that if work on the album could be done in June 2013 , then it was hoped that the album could be out by the following September or October . After Hanneman 's passing , Holt was asked if he will be featured on the album , to which he replied that he would probably be playing some solos on the album , but that the rest of the guitar work would all be King . King later confirmed this sentiment , but explained that Holt would not be participating in any of the writing , noting : " fans aren 't ready for it . "

According to Holt , recording for the album was expected to commence at the end of 2013 . King later stated that there were plans to begin recording in January 2014 . King further revealed that he and drummer Paul Bostaph have recorded 11 songs on a demo , while also working on some additional tracks , seven of which had complete lyrics . On April 24 , 2014 , Slayer offered a free download of " Implode " , their first song in five years as well as their first recording to feature Holt on guitar . Additionally , it is the first recording to feature Bostaph on drums since 2001 's God Hates Us All . On the same day , it was announced that Slayer had signed to Nuclear Blast , and would release their eleventh studio album in early 2015 .

= = Music and lyrics = =

In an interview , King described " Chasing Death " as being about alcoholism : " it 's like people who drink too much . They don 't help themselves out so they 're chasing death . " He explained " Implode " as being about the end of the world . The album could feature material written by Hanneman prior to his passing . Araya has explained that Hanneman had two songs that he submitted to the rest of the band . One song was an outtake from World Painted Blood , which Araya said that he and Hanneman had been working on melody and lyrics for . Additionally , Araya has said that he plans to go through Hanneman 's personal audio files , and that some of that material could also find its way onto the new album in one form or another . One song , mentioned by King in an interview , is " Piano Wire " , an unfinished track that Hanneman had been working on for the previous album . King also mentioned that there were two other songs that Hanneman had been holding onto for the last 15 to 20 years that will be released .

In October 2014 , the band revealed plans to release a new song , entitled " When the Stillness Comes " , via Scion AV , an " in @-@ house record label and lifestyle marketing division " of Toyota 's Scion brand . The song was released for Record Store Day on April 18 , 2015 . On June 19 , 2015 , Slayer made the title track available for streaming on YouTube . On August 31 , 2015 , Slayer released " Cast the First Stone " , another track on the album , via the Adult Swim singles program . On September 3 , 2015 , a behind the scenes look at the making of the music video for the album 's title track was released .

= = Reception = =

In April 2014 , the band released " Implode " for free . Rolling Stone said the song " plays out like classic Slayer " , although the lyrics were described as " expect [ed] " subject matter . Alex Young

of Consequences of Sound called the song a " pummeling assault of metal music " . In January 2015 , the album , yet to be titled at the time , was mentioned by Loudwire as one of the " 30 Most Anticipated Rock + Metal Albums of 2015 " , alongside expected albums by bands like Black Sabbath , Iron Maiden , Anthrax , Megadeth , Testament , Metallica and Tool . Repentless sold 49 @, @ 000 copies in its first week and debuted number four on the US Billboard 200 , the band 's highest position in its native country . The album fell to number 34 on the Billboard 200 in its second week , selling 11 @, @ 000 copies . Seven weeks after being released , Repentless sold over 80 @, @ 000 copies in the US .

Repentless has received mixed to positive reviews from critics . Writing for Exclaim ! , Greg Pratt said that Repentless " isn 't going to be one of the classic Slayer albums , but there 's still plenty of good thrash to be found . " Journalist J.C. Maçek III of Spectrum Culture wrote " The truth is that it might be easy to dismiss Slayer after almost 35 years as a nostalgic metal act . This would be a travesty and a mistake . Slayer not only has something new to say on Repentless , but a new way to say it . " AllMusic writer Thom Jurek gave the album three out of five stars , calling Repentless " a retro , workmanlike effort from a band determined to soldier on , and that 's fine . There are hardcore devotees who never want their favorite bands to change ; this is for them . But again , given all that 's transpired since 2009 , Slayer get points for even pulling this off . " The Guardian stated that " Slayer have always been a model of consistency and a band that fans of vicious , vein @-@ bursting heavy metal can rely on . " Kim Kelly , writing in Spin was less enthusiastic , calling the album " middling " and stating that it " mostly falls flat . "

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Kerry King , except where noted .

= = Personnel = =

Credits are adapted from the album 's liner notes .

= = = Slayer = = =

Tom Araya ? bass , vocals

Kerry King ? guitars

Gary Holt ? guitars

Paul Bostaph ? drums

= = = Production = = =

Terry Date ? production , engineering , mixing

Peter Mack ? additional engineering

Derrick Stockwell ? assistant engineering

Howie Weinberg ? mastering

= = Charts = =