

= Shannon Leto =

Shannon Leto ( / lʔtoʔ / ; born March 9 , 1970 ) is an American musician and songwriter best known as the drummer of rock band Thirty Seconds to Mars . He co @-@ founded the group in 1998 in Los Angeles , California , with his younger brother Jared . Their debut album , 30 Seconds to Mars ( 2002 ) , was released to positive reviews but only to limited success . The band achieved worldwide fame with the release of their second album A Beautiful Lie ( 2005 ) . Their following releases , This Is War ( 2009 ) and Love , Lust , Faith and Dreams ( 2013 ) , received further critical and commercial success . As of September 2014 , the band has sold over 15 million albums worldwide .

Leto has worked on several side projects during his career , including a collaboration with Antoine Becks , a recording with the short @-@ lived supergroup The Wondergirls , and performing on occasional dates with Street Drum Corps . His creative contribution to music has received praise from musicians and critics . He is noted for his dynamic drumming style and his energetic live performances .

= = Early life = =

Shannon Leto was born in Bossier City , Louisiana , to Constance Leto ( née Metrejon ) . His mother has Cajun ancestry . " Leto " is a stepfather 's surname . His parents divorced when he was a child , and he and his younger brother Jared lived with their mother and their maternal grandparents William Lee Metrejon and Ruby Russell . His father remarried and committed suicide when Shannon was ten . Leto moved frequently with his family from his native Louisiana to different cities around the country . He has two younger half @-@ brothers from his father 's second marriage .

Constance joined the hippie movement and encouraged her sons to get involved in the arts . Leto became interested in percussions from the moment he and his brother started playing music together at early age , and his models were artists of many different mediums . " I come from a pretty artistic family , " he explained , " There were canvases and paint everywhere , instruments , and all sorts of stuff . It just kind of made sense . I started playing on pots and pans at a very early age , so I just kind of flowed into it . It was just a natural progression . " He received his first drum kit when he was ten years old and began teaching himself , developing his own style .

Leto has described his adolescence as a troubled time , in which he used drugs and dropped out of school . He said , " I was in a mess , I felt I didn 't belong anywhere " , calling himself as an " outsider " who hated conformity and rules , and " took any opportunity to break them . " Ultimately , Jared helped him recover from drugs .

= = Music career = =

Leto formed the rock band Thirty Seconds to Mars in 1998 in Los Angeles , California with his brother Jared . Their debut album had been in the works for a couple of years and was recorded in rural Wyoming during 2001 and early 2002 . Their work led to a number of record labels being interested in signing Thirty Seconds to Mars , which eventually signed to Immortal Records . The band worked with producers Bob Ezrin and Brian Virtue on their debut album 30 Seconds to Mars , which was released on August 27 , 2002 in the United States through Immortal and Virgin . It reached number 107 on the US Billboard 200 and number one on the US Top Heatseekers . Upon its release , 30 Seconds to Mars was met with mostly positive reviews ; music critic Megan O 'Toole felt that the band has " managed to carve out a unique niche for themselves in the rock realm . " The album was a slow @-@ burning success , and eventually sold two million copies worldwide as of March 2011 .

It took two years to record their next release A Beautiful Lie , with the band traveling to four different continents to accommodate Jared Leto 's acting career . A Beautiful Lie was released on August 30 , 2005 in the United States . It has since been certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America ( RIAA ) , and has reached platinum and gold status in several countries ,

with a sales total of over four million . The band heavily toured in support of the album and played at several major festivals , including Roskilde , Pinkpop , Rock am Ring , and Download .

In August 2008 , during the recording process of the band 's third studio album , Thirty Seconds to Mars attempted to sign with a new label , prompting EMI ( the parent label of Virgin ) , to file a \$ 30 million breach of contract lawsuit . After nearly a year of legal battles , the band announced on April 28 , 2009 , that the suit had been settled following a defence based on the De Havilland Law . Thirty Seconds to Mars then signed a new contract with EMI and released their third album This Is War in December 2009 to critical acclaim .

This Is War reached the top ten of several national album charts and earned numerous music awards . The band began their Into the Wild Tour in February 2010 and was among the hardest @-@ working touring artists of the year . In December 2011 , they entered the Guinness World Records for most live shows during a single album cycle , with 300 shows . In September 2012 , Leto released a remixed version of " Night of the Hunter " , a track featured on This Is War . The musician explained that he wanted to " reinvent " the song , to " shed a different light on it by bringing a dance element to it . "

Thirty Seconds to Mars released their fourth album , Love , Lust , Faith and Dreams , in May 2013 through Universal . It received generally positive reviews and reached the top ten in more than fifteen countries , including the United Kingdom and the United States . The band promoted the album by embarking on their Love , Lust , Faith and Dreams Tour and the Carnivores Tour , co @-@ headlining with Linkin Park . In April 2014 , Thirty Seconds to Mars announced that they have parted from Virgin Records after tumultuous years with the label .

= = Artistry = =

Leto is known for his energetic live performances and his ability to blend traditional and experimental drum techniques . During the production of Thirty Seconds to Mars first studio album , he played almost exclusively electronic drums and drew influence from bands such as Pink Floyd , The Cure , Led Zeppelin , and The Who , which he considers " mostly big conceptional bands ; bands that had depth ; bands that were dynamic . " Bob Ezrin , producer of the album , felt that Leto is " one of the most inventive drummers I 've worked with . He isn 't satisfied with simply adding a beat ; his drum parts are an integral part of the orchestration of the record . He 's also a great live drummer who is lots of fun to watch , with a presence and energy level that are mesmerizing . "

Leto switched to a mostly acoustic set @-@ up on the band 's next release A Beautiful Lie . His equipment consists of a hybrid kit that combines both acoustic and electric elements . His drum technician Joseph Ciccone , better known as Kentucky , stated that Leto 's " sound is his technique . He 's an animal behind that kit , so I love giving him tons of things to beat up . " During the production of This Is War , Leto widened his style with an abundance of electronic sounds and synth textures created by himself . He wrote the instrumental track " L490 " and played every instrument on it , including all guitars and a singing bowl . He experimented with different instruments and drew influences from a varied range of styles in Love , Lust , Faith and Dreams . Steve Lillywhite , who co @-@ produced two band 's albums , felt that Leto treats drumming " unlike most drummers do in rock bands . His cross rhythms explode in a guttural way ... very musical , extremely unique . "

Leto was largely an autodidact on drums ; " I 've always wanted to find my way of doing things , " he explained , " Discovering what I can contribute with my own voice . There were so many styles that I was into at a young age . I didn 't want to get locked into just one thing . " During his youth , Leto had been a devoted fan of progressive rock and blues music , listening to artists such as Fleetwood Mac , Janis Joplin , Jimi Hendrix , Pink Floyd , Led Zeppelin , and Boz Scaggs . He is inspired by electronic music , including Depeche Mode and The Cure . His major influences also include jazz band Steely Dan , as well as heavy metal groups Mountain , Iron Maiden and Kiss . According to Leto , these artists were commercially viable but also respected for their statements and contributions . He explained that he " never focused on the drummers , " saying that he felt more connected to music than a particular drummer .

When Thirty Seconds to Mars first started , the Leto brothers experimented to try and create a

specific sound , whose process was described as " very organic " . They were attempting to produce a " feeling " rather than a sound , in order to recreate the sense of community that marked their childhood . Leto also stated that the band 's concerts are a direct reflection of that period of his early life .

Journalist Kelly King , a long @-@ time contributor with Drumhead magazine , opined that Leto is " energy and grace behind the drums , stoking the fire that drives his band . " He commented that the musician is both confident and aggressive on his kit , and felt that " his drive to push himself to the limit , to create and explore his own artistic capabilities is paramount . " Ryan Jones , writing for Alternative Addiction , described Leto as one of rock 's most dynamic drummers of present day . He received the Indie Drummer Award at the 2012 Drummies Awards . He was also nominated for Alternative Drummer in 2009 and 2011 .

= = Other work = =

In 1994 , Leto found a minor role on the television series My So @-@ Called Life , in which his brother starred . He later appeared in the films Prefontaine ( 1997 ) , Sol Goode ( 2001 ) , and Highway ( 2002 ) . Leto recorded the songs " Drop That Baby " and " Let 's Go All the Way " with the short @-@ lived supergroup The Wondergirls in 1999 , which members included Scott Weiland , Mark McGrath , and Ian Astbury , among others . Since 2007 , Leto has performed on occasional dates with American percussion band Street Drum Corps . In June 2008 , he joined Habitat for Humanity to work with Thirty Seconds to Mars on a home being repaired and renovated through the Greater Los Angeles Area 's " A Brush With Kindness " programme . Leto began producing American electronic band CB7 after meeting musician Antoine Becks in 2009 . CB7 later supported Thirty Seconds to Mars on the North American leg of their Into the Wild Tour in 2011 . The same year , Leto created a side project with Becks and toured worldwide with him until the summer of 2012 , when the duo split . In 2014 , Leto launched Black Fuel Trading Company , a lifestyle brand primarily focusing on responsibly sourced , direct @-@ trade coffee .

= = Discography = =

Thirty Seconds to Mars studio albums

30 Seconds to Mars ( 2002 )

A Beautiful Lie ( 2005 )

This Is War ( 2009 )

Love , Lust , Faith and Dreams ( 2013 )