

= Darren Middleton =

Darren Middleton (born 4 October 1971) is best known as lead guitarist and songwriter for alternative rock band Powderfinger . He was also lead singer / songwriter for Drag , he current solo tour is ' Splinters ' and this is a follow up to his 2013 solo tour ' Translations . ' The ' Splinters ' tour is Darren tour Western Australia and Victoria in August and November 2016 , respectively .

After Powderfinger ' s dissolution in 2010 , Middleton released his first solo LP , ? Translations ? in November 2013 , featuring many guests such as Nic Cester (Jet) , Bernard Fanning (Powderfinger) , Pete Murray , Paul Dempsey (Something for Kate) , Clare Bowditch and Amy Findlay (Stonefield) .

Middleton began guitar in high school , influenced by Twisted Sister and AC / DC , and began playing in clubs around his hometown of Brisbane as part of his first band , Sonic Tapestry . He went on to form another band , Pirate , with high school friends , and met Powderfinger at a Pirate show . He was invited to join the band , and did so . Middleton took part in all of Powderfinger ' s recordings , at the same time writing and releasing an EP and studio album with Drag .

= = Musical career = =

= = = Early work = = =

Middleton was inspired to learn guitar by Twisted Sister and AC / DC , noting the first songs he wanted to learn could have been " I Wanna Rock " and " We 're Not Gonna Take It " , or any song by AC / DC . He did not take guitar lessons , and instead taught himself the instrument . Middleton formed a band named Sonic Tapestry with high school friends , and played around Brisbane ' s " biker @-@ fest circuit " . The band ' s first show was at the Atcherley Hotel , on Wednesday ' s " Heavy Metal Night " , however the band , unaware of the genre , played " 80s glam metal stuff " .

= = = Powderfinger (1989 ? 2010) = = =

Middleton first encountered Powderfinger when it consisted of Bernard Fanning , Ian Haug , John Collins , and Jon Coghill . At the time , Middleton had been playing with Sonic Tapestry , and another band named Pirate . After seeing his band perform , Powderfinger invited Middleton to join them , and he accepted . Middleton described Powderfinger ' s early days as highly influenced by other popular heavy metal bands at the time , especially Pantera . Despite the band ' s members all having come from casual projects , the band ' s meetings were highly serious , according to Middleton , although he admitted they were " confused " in exactly what they wanted to do . Powderfinger generally performed covers of The Rolling Stones , The Doors , Led Zeppelin , and Steppenwolf , as well as Neil Young in their early days , in similar clubs to those in which Middleton had first played .

Powderfinger released two early EPs and a debut album , without success , and considered separating , with Middleton contemplating a return to University . However , after Fanning wrote " Pick You Up " , the band ' s mainstream breakthrough , they decided to stick together . From this point on , the band considered themselves to be making " real money " .

In 2001 , on a tour in the United States , Powderfinger played with Coldplay , in what Middleton described as a highlight . The band also played on the Late Show with David Letterman to promote Odyssey Number Five . After Coldplay cut short the tour , Powderfinger ended up playing numerous US shows themselves , before returning to Australia to play Splendour in the Grass . Middleton ' s partner gave birth to the couple ' s first daughter in September 2001 . Middleton summarised the year with the comment " This year has been a bit of a blur " .

= = = Drag (2000 ? 2006) = = =

While touring with Powderfinger , Middleton also wrote his own works , occasionally fine tuning them in hotels where the band was staying . These would go on to be the songs he sang for Drag . Middleton formed Drag with drummer and Powderfinger engineer Mark McElligott , Brisbane bass guitarist Sean Hartman , and long @-@ time friend Matt Murphy . Drag released an EP , Gas Food Lodging , on 26 October 2003 through Dew Process . The band followed this up with several gigs in Brisbane ; a tour down the East Coast of Australia was canceled when Middleton caught the flu . After completing work on Gas Food Lodging , Powderfinger reunited and went on to record Vulture Street .

Drag reunited in 2005 to produce their debut studio album , The Way Out , which was released on 10 July 2005 . In recording the album , Drag spent three weeks at Byron Bay in March 2005 , collaborating with each other and producer David Nicholas . The album earned Drag some positive reception ; Rave magazine wrote that " Darren Middleton 's creative genius absolutely beguiled me with some extremely mature compositions " , and David Nicholas won an ARIA Award for his role as producer . The album was also nominated for " Engineer of the Year " . Following The Way Out , Drag toured around Australia , playing with UK band Athlete . This culminated with the bands playing at Splendour in the Grass , where it was noted that Middleton needed " to work on his stage presence " . Following the tour , Powderfinger reunited , and Dream Days at the Hotel Existence was released in 2007 .

== = Solo Work (2012 @-@ Current) == =

After Powderfinger called it quits in 2010 , Middleton started working on his first solo LP , ? Translations ? . The album was released in November 2013 , featuring many guests such as Nic Cester (Jet) , Bernard Fanning (Powderfinger) , Pete Murray , Paul Dempsey (Something for Kate) , Clare Bowditch and Amy Findlay (Stonefield) . 2016 sees Darren Middleton return to touring , as he embarks on a four show of Western Australia (three shows) and Victoria (one show) in August and November . This tour is for the his newest solo project ' Splinters ' .

= = Musical style and influences = =

Middleton rarely takes a singer or songwriter 's role for Powderfinger , generally delegating those tasks to Bernard Fanning . However , the song " Over My Head " from Internationalist had Middleton performing vocals . This came about when Middleton did a recording of himself singing the song before Fanning had the chance to do so . Previously , Middleton had written the lyrics to " JC " , which was sung by Fanning . However , Middleton sung JC several times throughout the 2007 Upstairs at the Downstairs tour . Despite Middleton 's minimal songwriting , he has been praised for it by his band mates ; Jon Coghill told a 1999 interview that " Darren (Middleton) and Bernie (Fanning) are extremely good at writing songs . " Middleton agrees with this analysis ; telling Undercover 's Paul Cashmere in 2003 that " We are about writing good music . " He commented that the band used their position at the top of the Australian industry to comment and give people ideas to think about , rather than " trying to say people should take it as gospel " . Middleton has criticised the " boy band " phenomena , pointing out that " A lot of them can sing well , but they have people writing all their lyrics for them . "

Middleton has cited numerous Australian bands , including AC / DC , Crowded House , and Midnight Oil , as ongoing influences in his music , as well as international artists including Neil Young , Led Zeppelin , and Ben Harper . " I went through a bad eighties stage . Bad glam bands . Twisted Sister . Some really bad punk " , Middleton comments on the time in which he learned the guitar . Middleton has used a Les Paul guitar , and was praised by Alphonse Leong of Drop @-@ D , described as playing it " as well as any of the seminal axe @-@ noodlers of the hippie era " .

= = Awards and nominations = =

=== APRA Awards ===

The APRA Awards are presented annually from 1982 by the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA) .

== Discography ==

=== With Powderfinger ===

Parables for Wooden Ears (1994)

Double Allergic (1996)

Internationalist (1998)

Odyssey Number Five (2000)

Vulture Street (2003)

Dream Days at the Hotel Existence (2007)

Golden Rule (2009)

=== With Drag ===

Gas Food Lodging (EP) (2002)

The Way Out (2005)

=== Solo ===

Translations (2013)

Splinters (2015)