

= Megadeth =

Megadeth is an American thrash metal band from Los Angeles , California . The group was formed in 1983 by guitarist Dave Mustaine and bassist David Ellefson , shortly after Mustaine 's dismissal from Metallica . A pioneer of the American thrash metal scene , the band is credited as one of the genre 's " big four " with Anthrax , Metallica and Slayer , responsible for thrash metal 's development and popularization . Megadeth plays in a technical style , featuring fast rhythm sections and complex arrangements . Themes of death , war , politics and religion are prominent in the group 's lyrics .

In 1985 , the band released its debut album on the independent label Combat Records . The album 's moderate commercial success caught the attention of bigger labels , which led to Megadeth signing with Capitol Records . Their first major @-@ label album , Peace Sells ... but Who 's Buying ? , was released in 1986 and influenced the underground metal scene . Despite its prominence in thrash metal , frequent disputes between its members and substance abuse issues brought Megadeth negative publicity during this period .

After the lineup stabilized , the band released a number of platinum @-@ selling albums , including Rust in Peace ( 1990 ) and Countdown to Extinction ( 1992 ) . These albums , along with touring worldwide , helped bring public recognition to Megadeth . The band temporarily disbanded in 2002 when Mustaine suffered an arm injury and re @-@ established in 2004 without bassist Ellefson , who had taken legal action against Mustaine . Ellefson settled with Mustaine out of court and rejoined the group in 2010 . Megadeth has hosted its own music festival , Gigantour , several times since mid @-@ 2005 .

As of 2014 , Megadeth has sold 50 million records worldwide , earned platinum certification in the United States for five of its fifteen studio albums , and received eleven Grammy nominations . The band 's mascot , Vic Rattlehead , regularly appears on album artwork and , since 2010 , in live shows . The group has experienced controversy over its musical approach and lyrics , including canceled concerts and album bans . MTV has refused to play two of the band 's videos that the network considered to condone suicide .

= = History = =

= = = 1983 ? 84 : Formation = = =

Dave Mustaine was the lead guitarist for Metallica when the band formed in 1981 . He was a member for nearly a year and helped compose some of the group 's early songs . However , before Metallica began recording its debut album , Mustaine was expelled over substance abuse and conflicts with James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich . Two months later , Mustaine and bassist David Ellefson formed Megadeth in Los Angeles . Mustaine wanted the new band to play faster and heavier music than Metallica . According to Mustaine , the name " Megadeth " represents the annihilation of power . It is a misspelling of the term megadeath , meaning one million deaths by nuclear explosion . The name came from a pamphlet by California senator Alan Cranston that Mustaine found on the floor of a bus after being fired from Metallica . It read : " The arsenal of megadeath can 't be rid no matter what the peace treaties come to . "

Despite his enthusiasm , Mustaine had trouble finding other members to fill out the lineup . He and Ellefson examined about 15 drummers , hoping to find one who understood meter changes in music . In the meantime , Kerry King from Slayer filled in on rhythm guitar . They eventually selected Lee Rausch as drummer , and settled on Mustaine as lead vocalist after six months of searching . Mustaine was also the band 's primary songwriter , lead , and rhythm guitarist . In 1984 , Megadeth recorded a three @-@ song demo tape featuring Mustaine , Ellefson , and Rausch . The demo featured early versions of " Last Rites / Loved to Death " , " The Skull Beneath the Skin " , and " Mechanix " , all of which appeared on the band 's debut album . After several performances in 1984 , Megadeth replaced Rausch with jazz fusion drummer Gar Samuelson . Guitarist Chris Poland joined the group that December . After considering several labels , Mustaine signed the band to

Combat Records , a New York @-@ based Independent record label that offered Megadeth the highest budget to record and tour .

= = = 1985 : Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good ! = = =

In 1985 , Combat Records gave the band \$ 8 @,@ 000 to record and produce its debut album . After spending \$ 4 @,@ 000 of the budget on drugs , alcohol , and food , the band fired the original producer and finished the recording themselves . Despite its low fidelity sound , Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good ! was relatively successful in underground metal circles on its release that summer and attracted major @-@ label interest . Music writer Joel McIver praised its " blistering technicality " and stated that the album " raised the bar for the whole thrash metal scene , with guitarists forced to perform even more accurately and powerfully " . The front cover marked the debut of band mascot Vic Rattlehead , who regularly appeared on subsequent album artwork .

Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good ! features " Mechanix , " a song Mustaine wrote during his time with Metallica . Though Mustaine told the band after his dismissal not to use the music he had written , Metallica recorded a different version of the song entitled " The Four Horsemen " , with a slower tempo and a melodic middle section . The album also included a cover of Nancy Sinatra 's " These Boots Are Made for Walkin ' , " at a faster tempo and with altered lyrics . Megadeth 's version generated controversy during the 1990s , when its writer , Lee Hazlewood , called Mustaine 's changes " vile and offensive " . Under threat of legal action , the song was removed from pressings released from 1995 to 2001 . In mid @-@ 1985 , on a bill with Exciter , Megadeth played its first North American tour : the Killing for a Living Tour . Poland was in the band as the tour began , but abruptly left and was replaced by touring guitarist Mike Albert . Poland rejoined Megadeth in October , shortly before the group began its second album for Combat .

= = = 1986 ? 87 : Peace Sells ... but Who 's Buying ? = = =

According to Mustaine , the band was under pressure to deliver another successful album : " That sophomore offering is the ' be @-@ all or end @-@ all ' of any band . You either go to the next level , or it 's the beginning of the nadir . " The songs were developed relatively quickly in an old warehouse south of Los Angeles before recording began . Mustaine composed the music , with the other members adding arrangement ideas . Megadeth 's second album was produced on a \$ 25 @,@ 000 budget from Combat Records . Dissatisfied with its financial limitations , the band left Combat and signed with Capitol Records . Capitol bought the rights to the upcoming album , and hired producer Paul Lani to remix the earlier recordings . Released in late 1986 , Peace Sells ... but Who 's Buying ? has clearer production and more sophisticated songwriting . Mustaine wanted to write socially conscious lyrics , unlike mainstream heavy metal bands who sang about " hedonistic pleasures " . The album was noted for its political commentary and helped Megadeth expand its fanbase . The title track was the album 's lead single and was accompanied by a music video that received regular airplay on MTV .

In February 1987 , Megadeth was the opening act on Alice Cooper 's Constrictor tour , and the following month the band began its first headlining world tour in the United Kingdom . The 72 @-@ week tour was supported by Overkill and Necros , and continued in the United States . During the tour , Mustaine and Ellefson considered firing Samuelson for his drug abuse . According to Mustaine , Samuelson had become too much to handle when intoxicated . Drummer Chuck Behler traveled with Megadeth for the last dates of the tour as the other band members feared Samuelson would not be able to continue touring . Poland occasionally quarreled with Mustaine , and was accused of selling band equipment to buy heroin . As a result , Samuelson and Poland were asked to leave Megadeth in 1987 . That year , 16 @-@ year @-@ old guitarist Jeff Loomis of Sanctuary auditioned for the band . Mustaine complimented Loomis ' playing but considered him too young to join . Poland was initially replaced by Jay Reynolds of Malice , but as the band began working on its next record , Reynolds was replaced by his guitar teacher , Jeff Young , when Megadeth was six weeks into the recording of its third album .

= = = 1988 ? 89 : So Far , So Good ... So What ! = = =

With a major @-@ label budget , the Paul Lani @-@ produced So Far , So Good ... So What ! took over five months to record . The album was plagued with problems during production , partially due to Mustaine 's struggle with drug addiction . Mustaine later said : " The production of So Far , So Good ... So What ! was horrible , mostly due to substances and the priorities we had or didn 't have at the time . " Mustaine clashed with Lani on several occasions , beginning with Lani 's insistence that the drums be recorded separately from the cymbals , an unheard @-@ of process for rock drummers . Mustaine and Lani became estranged during the album 's mixing , and Lani was replaced by Michael Wagener , who remixed the album .

So Far , So Good ... So What ! was released in January 1988 and was well received by fans and critics . The album featured a cover version of the Sex Pistols ' " Anarchy in the U.K. " ; Mustaine changed the song 's lyrics , later saying that he had simply heard them incorrectly . To support the album , Megadeth embarked on a world tour , opening for Dio in Europe and then joining Iron Maiden 's Seventh Tour of a Seventh Tour in the United States . In August , the band appeared at the Monsters of Rock festival at Castle Donington in the United Kingdom , performing to an audience of more than 100 @,@ 000 . One show featured a guest appearance by Metallica drummer ( and Mustaine 's former bandmate ) Lars Ulrich . The band was added to the Monsters of Rock European tour , but left after the first show due to Ellefson 's drug problems , for which he was treated immediately .

Shortly after the Monsters of Rock appearance , Mustaine fired Behler and Young and canceled Megadeth 's scheduled Australian tour . " On the road , things escalated from a small border skirmish into a full @-@ on raging war " , Mustaine later recalled . " I think a lot of us were inconsistent [ on the 1988 tour ] because of the guy we were waiting for after the show . " During the tour , Mustaine noticed problems developing with Behler and brought in drummer Nick Menza as Behler 's drum technician . As with Samuelson , Menza was expected to take over if Behler could not continue the tour . Menza replaced Behler in 1989 . Young 's dismissal resulted from Mustaine 's suspicions that he was having an affair with Mustaine 's girlfriend , an allegation Young denied .

The band was unable to quickly find a suitable replacement for Young . At this time , Megadeth recorded a cover version of Alice Cooper 's " No More Mr. Nice Guy " which appeared on the soundtrack to the Wes Craven horror movie Shocker . The video was directed by Penelope Spheeris , who recalled the filming as a " Herculean task " as Mustaine was unable to play guitar because of his drug addiction . In June 1988 , Megadeth appeared in Spheeris ' documentary The Decline of Western Civilization Part II : The Metal Years . The documentary chronicled the Los Angeles heavy metal scene of the late 1980s with a focus on glam metal . Mustaine remembered the film as a disappointment , as it aligned Megadeth with " a bunch of shit bands " . During the March 1989 auditions for a new lead guitarist , Mustaine was arrested for driving under the influence and possession of narcotics after crashing into a parked vehicle occupied by an off @-@ duty police officer . Mustaine entered court @-@ ordered drug rehabilitation shortly afterwards , and became drug @-@ free for the first time in ten years .

= = = 1990 ? 91 : Rust in Peace = = =

With Mustaine sober , Megadeth continued searching for a new lead guitarist . Among those who auditioned were Lee Altus of Heathen and Eric Meyer of Dark Angel . Meyer was invited to join the band after Poland 's departure , but chose to remain with Dark Angel . Guns N ' Roses guitarist Slash had been jamming with Mustaine and Ellefson , and although it seemed that he might join Megadeth , he remained with Guns N ' Roses . Dimebag Darrell of Pantera was offered the job , but refused to join without his brother , Pantera drummer Vinnie Paul . As Megadeth had already hired Menza , Darrell declined to join the band .

Marty Friedman filled the guitarist position at the recommendation of Ron Laffitte , a member of Capitol management . Laffitte had heard Dragon 's Kiss , a solo recording by Friedman when he

was in Cacophony . Mustaine and Ellefson were satisfied with Friedman 's style and thought he understood Megadeth 's music . With Friedman in the group , the band completed what fans consider the definitive Megadeth lineup . The revitalized band entered Rumbo Studios in March 1990 with co @-@ producer Mike Clink to begin Megadeth 's most critically acclaimed album to date , Rust in Peace . For the first time the band 's members remained sober in the studio , alleviating many problems which plagued previous albums . Clink was the first producer to complete a Megadeth album without being fired . Its recording was documented in Rusted Pieces , a home video released in 1991 with six music videos and an interview with the band .

Released in September 1990 , Rust in Peace debuted at number 23 in the United States and number eight in the United Kingdom . Mustaine had developed a writing style with a rhythmically complex , progressive edge , and the songs had longer guitar solos and frequent tempo changes . Described as a genre @-@ defining work by Decibel , the album solidified Megadeth 's reputation in the music industry . It features the singles " Holy Wars ... The Punishment Due " and " Hangar 18 " , both of which were accompanied by music videos and became live staples . Rust in Peace received a Grammy nomination in 1991 for Best Metal Performance , and was the group 's third album to go platinum when certified in December 1994 .

Early in 1990 , Slayer proposed a major tour featuring American thrash metal bands . Megadeth accepted , joining Slayer , Testament , and Suicidal Tendencies for the successful European Clash of the Titans tour . An American leg began the following year featuring Megadeth , Slayer , and Anthrax , with Alice in Chains as a supporting act . The tour was considered a multi @-@ headliner , as the three main bands alternated time slots . In addition to the Clash of the Titans tour , Megadeth played with Judas Priest in North America late in 1990 and appeared at the second Rock in Rio festival in January 1991 .

= = = 1992 ? 93 : Countdown to Extinction = = =

The recording sessions for Megadeth 's fifth studio album began in January 1992 at Enterprise Studios in Burbank , California . Max Norman was chosen to produce the album , as the band was pleased with his mixing of Rust in Peace . Megadeth spent nearly four months in the studio with Norman , writing and recording what became the band 's most commercially successful effort , Countdown to Extinction . The album , whose title was suggested by Menza , features songwriting contributions from each band member . Ellefson explained that the band changed its approach to songwriting for this album , beginning to write more melodic songs .

Released in July 1992 , Countdown to Extinction entered the Billboard 200 chart at number two and was certified double platinum in the United States . The album 's overseas success helped the band to develop a larger following outside the US . It received a nomination for Best Metal Performance at the 1993 Grammy Awards , and its title track won a Genesis Award from the Humane Society in 1993 for raising awareness for animal rights issues . Ellefson later said that he and Friedman were disappointed that Megadeth did not win the Grammy : " It was such a bizarre moment , because it was as if the amount of work it had taken to ramp up to that hopeful night was literally gone in a second . "

A world tour in support of the album was launched in late 1992 , with Pantera and White Zombie as supporting acts . The tour included a North American leg in early 1993 , with Stone Temple Pilots as the opening act . One month into the leg , the remaining shows , including dates in Japan , were canceled when Mustaine returned to substance abuse , ending up in a hospital emergency room . After seven weeks in rehab , Mustaine emerged sober again and the band returned to the studio to record " Angry Again " . The song featured the soundtrack of the 1993 film Last Action Hero and received a Grammy nomination in 1994 .

During mid @-@ 1993 , Megadeth performed at a number of shows with Metallica in Europe . The first was at Milton Keynes Bowl in England , and included Diamond Head . In July , Megadeth was added as the opening act for Aerosmith 's Get a Grip Tour , but was removed from the bill after three shows . Aerosmith said that Megadeth was " dumped " because of Mustaine 's erratic behavior , while Capitol Records said it was due to " artistic restrictions " . After the canceled US tour ,

Megadeth returned to the studio to record " 99 Ways to Die " , which appeared on The Beavis and Butt @-@ head Experience , a compilation album released in November featuring songs interspersed with commentary by the main characters of the animated series Beavis and Butt @-@ head . The song was nominated for Best Metal Performance at the 1995 Grammy Awards . During these sessions , Megadeth recorded a cover version of Black Sabbath 's " Paranoid " , which appeared on the Black Sabbath tribute album Nativity in Black ; it was nominated for a Grammy the following year .

= = = 1994 ? 95 : Youthanasia = = =

In early 1994 , Megadeth reunited with producer Max Norman for the follow @-@ up to Countdown to Extinction . With three band members living in Arizona , initial work began at Phase Four Studios in Phoenix . A few days into pre @-@ production , problems with Phase Four 's equipment forced the band to look for another studio . Mustaine insisted on recording in Arizona , but no suitable recording facility could be found . At Norman 's request , the band built its own recording studio in Phoenix in a rented warehouse , later called " Fat Planet in Hangar 18 " . During the studio 's construction , much of the pre @-@ production songwriting and arrangements were done at Vintage Recorders in Phoenix . At Norman 's suggestion , the tracks on Youthanasia had a slower tempo than previous albums , at about 120 beats per minute . The band abandoned the progressive approach from its previous albums and focused on stronger vocal melodies and more accessible , radio @-@ friendly arrangements . For the first time , Megadeth wrote and arranged the entire album in the studio , including basic tracks recorded live by the entire band . The album 's recording was video recorded and released as Evolver : The Making of Youthanasia in 1995 .

After eight months of studio work , Youthanasia was released in November 1994 . It debuted at number four on the Billboard 200 and charted in several European countries . The album was certified gold in Canada the day it was released , and was certified platinum in the US two months later . Megadeth hired fashion photographer Richard Avedon to enhance the band 's image . Avedon had the band members exchange their jeans and T @-@ shirts for a more conscious appearance . To promote Youthanasia , the band played a Halloween show in New York City called " Night of the Living Megadeth " , which was broadcast live on MTV . In November , the band performed twice on the Late Show with David Letterman , playing " Train of Consequences " on the first appearance and " À Tout le Monde " on the second .

An eleven @-@ month tour began in South America in November 1994 . In 1995 , Megadeth played in Europe and North America with several opening acts , including Corrosion of Conformity , Korn and Fear Factory . The tour culminated with an appearance at the Monsters of Rock festival in Brazil , co @-@ headlining with Alice Cooper and Ozzy Osbourne . In January 1995 , Megadeth appeared on the soundtrack of the horror movie Demon Knight with the song " Diadems " . In July , Megadeth released Hidden Treasures , an extended play featuring songs which originally appeared on movie soundtracks and tribute albums .

= = = 1996 ? 98 : Cryptic Writings = = =

After the extensive world tour in support of Youthanasia , Megadeth took time off late in 1995 . Mustaine began work on MD.45 , a side project with vocalist Lee Ving of Fear . The duo hired drummer Jimmy DeGrasso , who had played with Alice Cooper on the South American Monsters of Rock tour earlier that year . Marty Friedman built a studio in his new home in Phoenix and completed his fourth solo album , released in April 1996 . In September 1996 , Megadeth went to London to work on songs for the next album . The songwriting was closely supervised by new manager Bud Prager , who contributed musical ideas and lyrics ; many lyrics and song titles were changed at his request . Regarding Prager 's influence , Mustaine later wrote : " I figured maybe this guy [ Prager ] could help me get that intangible number one record I so badly wanted . " The album , recorded in Nashville , was Megadeth 's first collaboration with country pop producer Dann Huff , who had met Mustaine in 1990 .

Cryptic Writings was released in June 1997 . The album peaked at number ten on the Billboard 200 , and was eventually certified gold in the United States . Its lead single , " Trust " , became Megadeth 's highest charting song on the Mainstream Rock Tracks at number five , and was nominated for Best Metal Performance at the 1998 Grammy Awards . Although all four singles from the album entered the top 20 on Billboard 's Mainstream Rock Tracks chart , press response to the album was mixed . The album featured a diverse set of songs which the Los Angeles Times described as a " rousing balance " between older material and experimental songs . Asked about the album 's eclecticism , Mustaine said that Cryptic Writings was divided into thirds . One part was based around faster , more aggressive material , another was " radio @-@ orientated music like Youthanasia " , and the final third was more melodic .

After more than a year since the band 's last concert , Megadeth returned as a live act in June 1997 , beginning a world tour with the Misfits and touring in the United States with Life of Agony and Coal Chamber . In July , the band participated in Ozzfest ' 98 but , halfway through the tour , Menza reportedly discovered a tumor on his knee and left to undergo surgery . Jimmy DeGrasso , who had collaborated with Mustaine in MD.45 , was hired to replace Menza for the remainder of the tour . Though initially meant to be a temporary replacement , DeGrasso joined the band permanently after the tour . Mustaine later said that he dismissed Menza from the band because he believed the drummer had lied about having cancer .

== = 1999 ? 2000 : Risk == =

Following the band 's mainstream radio success with Cryptic Writings , Megadeth again worked with Dann Huff on its eighth studio album . The band began writing in January 1999 , supervised by manager Bud Prager , who was credited with co @-@ writing five of the album 's twelve songs . With high expectations following the chart success of " Trust " , Prager convinced Mustaine to grant Huff even more control over the album 's recording , a decision Mustaine later regretted .

Risk , released in August 1999 , was a critical and commercial failure and led to backlash from many longtime fans . Although its two predecessors incorporated rock elements alongside a more traditional heavy metal sound , Risk was virtually devoid of metal . About the band 's musical direction , Dave Mustaine said : " We hit the nadir of our career with Risk , and I vowed after that we were going to get back to our roots . It took a little bit of time to do that . " Despite this , Risk was certified gold in the United States . The album 's lead single , " Crush ' Em " , appeared on the soundtrack for Universal Soldier : The Return and was used as an entrance theme for NHL hockey games and professional wrestling events .

On July 22 , 1999 , former drummer Gar Samuelson died of liver failure at age 41 in Orange City , Florida . Three days later , during Megadeth 's performance at Woodstock 1999 , Mustaine dedicated " Peace Sells " to Samuelson 's memory . That month , Megadeth also recorded a cover version of the Black Sabbath 's " Never Say Die " for the second Nativity in Black tribute album . The band began a world tour in support of Risk in September , playing with Iron Maiden during the European leg . Three months into the tour , Friedman announced his resignation from Megadeth , citing musical differences . Mustaine later said : " I told [ Marty ] after Risk that we had to go back to our roots and play metal , and he quit . " In January 2000 , guitarist Al Pitrelli , formerly of Savatage and the Trans @-@ Siberian Orchestra , became Friedman 's replacement .

In April , Megadeth returned to the studio to work on its ninth studio album . A month into production , the band received an offer to join the Maximum Rock tour with Anthrax and Mötley Crüe . Megadeth put the recording on hold and toured North America during the second quarter of 2000 . Early in the tour , Anthrax was removed from the bill , allowing Megadeth to play an extended co @-@ headlining set . The tour , however , had poor ticket sales .

== = 2000 ? 01 : The World Needs a Hero == =

After 15 years with Capitol Records , Megadeth left the label in July 2000 . According to Mustaine , the departure was due to ongoing tensions with Capitol management . Capitol returned the band 's

newest recordings and released a greatest hits album , Capitol Punishment : The Megadeth Years , with two new tracks : " Kill the King " and " Dread and the Fugitive Mind " . In November , Megadeth signed with Sanctuary Records . The band returned to the studio in October to finish its next album , The World Needs a Hero , which was near completion when Megadeth joined the Maximum Rock tour six months earlier . Following the negative response to Risk , Mustaine fired Bud Prager and produced the album himself . The songs were written by Mustaine alone , except for " Promises " , which had contributions from Pitrelli . Two days before the release of The World Needs a Hero , Megadeth appeared in an episode of VH1 's Behind the Music showcasing Mustaine , Ellefson , several past members , and Mustaine 's old Metallica bandmates James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich .

The World Needs a Hero was released in May 2001 , and debuted at number sixteen on the Billboard 200 . It was banned in Malaysia when the national government determined that the album 's artwork was " unsuitable for the nation 's youth " . Consequently , the band canceled its August 2 concert in Kuala Lumpur . The album marked Megadeth 's return to a more aggressive sound after the stylistic variations of its previous two albums , but critics felt it fell short of expectations . Mustaine compared the album to a huge ship at sea , turning and trying to right itself to get back on course . Its lead single , " Moto Psycho " , reached number 22 on the Billboard Mainstream Rock chart .

A European tour with AC / DC in support of The World Needs a Hero began in mid @-@ 2001 , followed by an American tour with Iced Earth and Endo in September . Mustaine allowed fans to choose the setlist in each American city . However , the tour was cut short following the September 11 attacks ; all dates were canceled , including a DVD shoot in Argentina . The band instead played two shows in Arizona on November 16 and 17 , which were filmed and released as Megadeth 's first live release , Rude Awakening . That year , Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good ! was remixed and remastered ; the reissue featured modified artwork and several bonus tracks .

= = = 2002 ? 03 : Breakup = = =

In January 2002 , Mustaine was hospitalized for the removal of a kidney stone and was administered pain medication that triggered a relapse of his drug addiction . Following his stay , Mustaine checked himself into a treatment center in Texas , where he suffered a peculiar injury causing severe nerve damage to his left arm . The injury , induced by falling asleep with his left arm over the back of a chair , caused compression of the radial nerve . He was diagnosed with radial neuropathy , which left him unable to grasp or even make a fist with his left hand .

On April 3 , Mustaine announced in a press release that he was disbanding Megadeth as his arm injury rendered him unable to play guitar . For the next four months , he had physical therapy five days a week , and slowly began to " re @-@ teach " his left hand . To fulfill contract obligations to Sanctuary , Megadeth released the compilation album Still Alive ... and Well ? The first half of the album contains live tracks recorded at the Web Theatre in Phoenix , and the second half has studio recordings from The World Needs a Hero .

Following nearly a year of recovery , including physical and electroshock therapy , Mustaine began work on what was to have been his first solo album . The new material was recorded with session musicians Vinnie Colaiuta and Jimmie Lee Sloas in October 2003 . The project was put on hold when Mustaine agreed to remix and remaster Megadeth 's eight @-@ album back catalog on Capitol Records , re @-@ recording portions that were missing or altered without his knowledge in the original mixing .

= = = 2004 : The System Has Failed = = =

In May 2004 , Mustaine returned to his solo project . Contractual obligations to the band 's European label , EMI , resulted in the recording 's release as a Megadeth album . Mustaine reformed the band and contacted the fan @-@ favorite Rust in Peace lineup to re @-@ record backing tracks . While drummer Nick Menza agreed to return , both Marty Friedman and David Ellefson were unable to come to an agreement with Mustaine . Menza was sent home shortly after

rehearsals began , a few days before the start of a tour supporting Megadeth 's upcoming album . Mustaine said Menza was insufficiently prepared for the physical demands of a US tour , and " it just didn 't work out " . This was the first album without Ellefson . Chris Poland , who played lead guitar on Megadeth 's first two albums , was hired to contribute guitar solos to the new album , working with Mustaine for the first time since the 1980s . Poland opted to serve only as a session musician , wanting to remain focused on his jazz fusion project OHM .

The System Has Failed was released in September 2004 . Critics heralded it as a return to form ; Revolver gave the album a favorable review , calling it " Megadeth 's most vengeful , poignant and musically complex offering since 1992 's Countdown to Extinction " . The album marked a shift toward the band 's earlier sound ; journalist Amy Sciarretto of CMJ New Music Report wrote that the album contained " neo @-@ thrash riffing with biting , politically charged lyrics " . The System Has Failed debuted at number eighteen on the Billboard 200 and was led by " Die Dead Enough " , which reached number 21 on the US Mainstream Rock chart . Mustaine announced that the album would be the band 's last and would be followed by a farewell tour , after which he would focus on a solo career .

Megadeth began the Blackmail the Universe world tour in October , enlisting touring bassist James MacDonough of Iced Earth and guitarist Glen Drover of Eidolon and King Diamond . Five days before the first show , Menza was replaced by Shawn Drover , who remained with the band as a regular member . The band toured the US with Exodus and Europe with Diamond Head and Dungeon . In June 2005 , Capitol released a greatest @-@ hits compilation , Greatest Hits : Back to the Start , featuring remixed and remastered versions of songs chosen by fans from Megadeth 's Capitol albums .

== = 2005 ? 06 : Gigantour == =

In mid @-@ 2005 , Mustaine organized an annual heavy metal festival tour , Gigantour . Megadeth headlined the inaugural tour with acts such as Dream Theater , Nevermore , Anthrax , and Fear Factory . Performances at the Montreal and Vancouver shows were filmed and recorded for a live DVD @-@ and @-@ CD set released in the second quarter of 2006 . On October 9 , following the successes of The System Has Failed and the Blackmail the Universe world tour , Mustaine announced to a sold @-@ out crowd at the Pepsi Music Rock Festival in Argentina that Megadeth would continue to record and tour . The concert , held at Obras Sanitarias stadium in Buenos Aires in front of 25 @,@ 000 fans , was filmed and released on DVD as That One Night : Live in Buenos Aires in 2007 .

In February 2006 , bassist James MacDonough left the band over " personal differences " . He was replaced by James LoMenzo , who had worked with David Lee Roth , White Lion and Black Label Society . The new Megadeth lineup made its live debut headlining the Dubai Desert Rock Festival in the United Arab Emirates with Testament . In March , Capitol released a two @-@ disc DVD , Arsenal of Megadeth , which included archive footage , interviews , live shows , and many of the band 's music videos . Due to licensing issues , soundtrack and non @-@ Capitol videos were not included . The second Gigantour began during the third quarter of 2006 ; Megadeth again headlined , this time with Lamb of God , Opeth , Arch Enemy and Overkill . The 2006 tour included three dates in Australia , supported by Soulfly , Arch Enemy and Caliban .

== = 2007 ? 08 : United Abominations == =

In May 2006 , Megadeth announced that its eleventh studio album , United Abominations , was near completion . Originally scheduled for release in October , Mustaine said that the band was " putting the finishing touches on it " and postponed its release to May of the following year . He commented on the release : " Metal needs a really good old @-@ school record again . I believe I have delivered . " United Abominations was the band 's first album to feature Glen Drover , Shawn Drover , and James Lomenzo . It also has a newer version of " À Tout le Monde " entitled " À Tout le Monde ( Set Me Free ) " . The 2007 version is a duet with Cristina Scabbia of Lacuna Coil ; it was



recorded at a slightly faster tempo than the original and contains an extended solo .

Released in May 2007 , United Abominations debuted at number eight on the Billboard 200 , selling 54 @, @ 000 copies in the first week . In March , Megadeth began a North American tour opening for the newly reformed Heaven & Hell . The band played with Down for Canadian shows and with Machine Head for the US dates . A European summer festival tour followed . Late in the year , Megadeth returned to the United States to headline its Tour of Duty . In November , the band brought Gigantour to Australia with a lineup including Static @-@ X , DevilDriver and Lacuna Coil .

In January 2008 , Glen Drover quit Megadeth , stating that he was tired of the frequent touring and wanted to spend more time with his family . He also cited personal issues with other band members . Drover was replaced by Chris Broderick , formerly of Nevermore and Jag Panzer . Broderick was initially asked by Mustaine 's management company at the end of 2007 if he would be interested in auditioning for Megadeth . After an informal meeting at Mustaine 's house , Broderick was introduced as the band 's new guitarist . Mustaine complimented Broderick 's playing skills and called him " the best guitarist Megadeth has ever had " . Broderick 's former Nevermore bandmate , Van Williams , congratulated Megadeth on " getting one hell of a good player , more importantly they 're getting a great guy to hang out with and a true friend " .

The new lineup made its live debut at the Helsinki Ice Hall on February 4 . The 2008 Gigantour , with 29 North American dates , began shortly afterwards . Mustaine wanted a shorter lineup , allowing each band a chance to perform well . The third tour featured In Flames , Children of Bodom , Job for a Cowboy and High on Fire . Megadeth continued the Tour of Duty in South America and Mexico in May and June . A compilation album , Anthology : Set the World Afire , was released in September 2008 .

= = = 2009 ? 10 : Endgame = = =

In February 2009 , Megadeth and Testament were scheduled on the European " Priest Feast " tour , with Judas Priest as headliners . At this time , Metallica , who had been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame , invited Mustaine to attend the ceremony . Mustaine was informed that he would not be inducted to the Hall of Fame because such honors were granted only to those members who received recording credit on a Metallica album . Mustaine congratulated the group respectfully , and honored his commitment to the European tour with Judas Priest . In April , Megadeth and Slayer co @-@ headlined the Canadian Carnage . This was the first time they had performed together in more than 15 years . Machine Head and Suicide Silence opened for the four shows that occurred later in June .

In May , Megadeth finished recording its twelfth album , Endgame . According to Mustaine , the name paid homage to Alex Jones ' 2007 film of the same name . The release date for Endgame was announced on the Megadeth official website , and Metal Hammer was the first to review the album track @-@ by @-@ track . Megadeth began its Endgame tour in October , and finished it in December . The tour featured a number of supporting acts , including Machine Head , Suicide Silence , and Warbringer . In January 2010 , Megadeth was set to embark on the American Carnage tour with Slayer and Testament , but the tour was postponed due to Tom Araya 's back surgery . Several weeks later , Megadeth 's " Head Crusher " was nominated for Best Metal Performance at the 2010 Grammy Awards , the band 's eighth Grammy nomination in 19 years .

In March , Megadeth embarked on the Rust in Peace 20th Anniversary Tour , which took place in North America and had support from Testament and Exodus . During the tour , Megadeth played Rust in Peace in its entirety . Prior to the start of the tour , original bassist Ellefson rejoined Megadeth after eight years . In an interview for Classic Rock , he stated that Shawn Drover contacted him , informing him that bassist LoMenzo was leaving the band , saying " if ever there was a time for you and Dave [ Mustaine ] to talk , now is it " .

= = = 2010 ? 12 : Thirteen = = =

Megadeth , along with Metallica , Slayer , and Anthrax , collectively known as the " big four " of

thrash metal , agreed to perform on the same bill during mid @-@ 2010 . These performances were part of the Sonisphere Festival and were held in a number of European countries . One such performance in Sofia , Bulgaria , was filmed and released as a video album entitled The Big Four : Live from Sofia , Bulgaria . These shows continued the following year in the United States . The first took place in Indio , California , and was the only scheduled show in the United States at the time , although a second American production was held at Yankee Stadium in New York City shortly afterwards .

In July 2010 , after the European " big four " shows , Megadeth and Slayer commenced the first leg of the American Carnage Tour , where Megadeth played Rust in Peace in its entirety , while Slayer performed its album Seasons in the Abyss , both of which were released in 1990 . From these shows onward , Vic Rattlehead started making sustained onstage appearances , to improve the visual facet of Megadeth 's live performances . Shortly afterward , the two bands united with Anthrax for the Jägermeister Music Tour in late 2010 . During the final show of the tour , Kerry King joined Megadeth on stage at the Gibson Amphitheatre in Hollywood to perform Megadeth 's " Rattlehead " . It was the first time that King had performed onstage with Megadeth as the latter 's early shows in 1984 . Megadeth and Slayer again shared the stage for the European Carnage Tour in March and April 2011 . Megadeth also headlined the fourth annual Rockstar Mayhem Festival in July and August the same year .

In September , the band released the DVD album Rust in Peace Live , recorded at the Hollywood Palladium in Los Angeles . Later that month , Megadeth released " Sudden Death " for the video game Guitar Hero : Warriors of Rock . The song was commissioned by the publishers of the Guitar Hero franchise , who wanted the track to feature dark lyrics and multiple guitar solos . It was nominated for Best Metal Performance at the 2011 Grammy ceremony .

Megadeth returned to its own Vic 's Garage studio to record its thirteenth album , to be produced by Johnny K , because Andy Sneap , the producer of Megadeth 's previous two albums , was unavailable . The album was titled Thirteen and featured previously released tracks such as " Sudden Death " and " Never Dead " . The album was released in November 2011 , and charted at number eleven on the Billboard 200 ; its lead single " Public Enemy No. 1 " received a Grammy nomination for Best Hard Rock / Metal Performance , but did not win . Shortly after the album was released , Dave Mustaine stated that , after a four @-@ year hiatus , there would be a new Gigantour tour in early 2012 . The lineup consisted of Motörhead , Volbeat , and Lacuna Coil alongside Megadeth . After the conclusion of Gigantour , Rob Zombie and Megadeth announced a nine @-@ date co @-@ headlining US tour scheduled for May 2012 .

= = = 2012 ? 14 : Super Collider = = =

In September 2012 , it was announced that the band would re @-@ release Countdown to Extinction in honor of the album 's 20th anniversary . To mark the occasion , Megadeth launched a tour in which the band performed the album live in its entirety . One such performance , filmed at the Pomona Fox Theater , was released as a live album called Countdown to Extinction : Live the following year . Additionally , another track from Thirteen , " Whose Life ( Is It Anyways ? ) " , was nominated for Best Hard Rock / Metal Performance at the 2013 Grammy Awards , but lost to Halestorm 's " Love Bites ( So Do I ) " .

In August , the band announced the recording of its fourteenth album with producer Johnny K. At the start of 2013 , Megadeth left Roadrunner Records for Mustaine 's newly founded label , Tradecraft , distributed through Universal Music Group . The album , Super Collider , was released in June and debuted at number six on the Billboard 200 , the band 's highest chart position since 1994 's Youthanasia . Critical reaction to the album , however , was largely negative . Shortly after the release of Super Collider , Mustaine stated that he had already started thinking about a fifteenth Megadeth album . He said this had been spurred by the death of Slayer guitarist Jeff Hanneman , which gave him a sense of mortality . Mustaine elaborated : " You know , time is short . Nobody knows how long they 're gonna live . You see what happened with Jeff Hanneman , so I wanna write as much as I can while I can . "

The 2013 edition of Gigantour featured Black Label Society , Hellyeah , Device , and Newsted as opening bands . At the final show , Jason Newsted , Metallica 's former bassist , joined Megadeth onstage to perform " Phantom Lord " , a song Mustaine had co @-@ written during his stint with Metallica . Early in 2014 , Megadeth was slated to play the Soundwave festival in Australia , but pulled out over a disagreement with tour promoter A. J. Maddah concerning the band 's sideshows with Newsted . Icon , an eleven @-@ song compilation of Megadeth 's Capitol @-@ era material , was released as part of Universal Music 's Icon series in February .

= = = 2014 ? present : Dystopia = = =

The band encountered several setbacks through the second half of 2014 . The August concert in Tel Aviv was canceled due to an armed conflict between Israel and Gaza . Megadeth was scheduled to appear on Motörhead 's Motörboat cruise in late September , but withdrew because of Mustaine 's complications following his cervical spine surgery . In late November , Drover quit the band after ten years , wanting to pursue his own musical interests . This was quickly followed by the departure of Broderick , due to artistic and musical differences . Ellefson denied rumors that Megadeth would disband , and said he and Mustaine would continue working on new music . Lamb of God drummer Chris Adler and guitarist Kiko Loureiro of Angra performed on Megadeth 's fifteenth studio album . Mustaine said that one of the reasons for Broderick 's and Drover 's departure was the frustration caused by Megadeth 's fan base demanding a reunion with Friedman and Menza .

In October 2015 , Megadeth streamed " Fatal Illusion " off the album Dystopia , which was released in January 2016 . In support of Dystopia , Megadeth embarked on a North American tour in February and March with Suicidal Tendencies , Children of Bodom and Havok . Menza died from a heart attack in May while performing with OHM at a jazz club in Los Angeles . Mustaine announced that Adler , who performed double duty drumming , was no longer in the band because of scheduling conflicts between Megadeth and Lamb of God . He was replaced by Dirk Verbeuren from Soilwork , on Adler 's recommendation . A second US tour is planned for September and October with Amon Amarth , Suicidal Tendencies , Metal Church , and Havok .

= = Controversies = =

Mustaine has made numerous inflammatory statements in the press , usually regarding issues with former Metallica bandmates . The feud stemmed from his ejection from the band , how it was conducted , and disagreements on songwriting credits . Mustaine expressed his anger in the movie Some Kind of Monster , in a scene he later disapproved of as he felt he was mischaracterized , and that it did not represent the full extent of what happened during the meeting .

During a live performance of " Anarchy in the U.K. " at a 1988 show in Antrim , Northern Ireland , Mustaine drunkenly and confusedly dedicated the song to " the cause " of " giving Ireland back to the Irish ! " Before the final song , Mustaine said , " This one 's for the cause ! " This elicited a riot and fighting between Catholics and Protestants among the audience . The band had to travel in a bulletproof bus for the remainder of the tour of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland . Mustaine later said that he had been misled by T @-@ shirt bootleggers about the meaning of the expression " the cause " . This incident served as inspiration for the song " Holy Wars ... The Punishment Due " .

Controversial and misinterpreted lyrics have caused complications for the band . In 1988 , MTV deemed that the song " In My Darkest Hour " encouraged suicide and banned the video . The station banned the video for " À Tout le Monde " for the same reason , though Mustaine said the song was written from the perspective of a dying man saying his last words to his loved ones . According to him , MTV considered the videos for " Skin o ' My Teeth " and " Symphony of Destruction " a " little bit too harsh " and refused to play them as well .

During a world tour in 2001 , the Malaysian government canceled the band 's show in the nation 's capital because the authorities had a negative perception of the group 's image and music . The government pointed the band 's mascot Vic Rattlehead as inappropriate and told the members that

they would be arrested if they performed . Dave Mustaine responded : " I recognize what the Malaysian government is trying to do , and it is admirable of them trying to protect the young people in the country . But it just shows the degree of ignorance and apathy that the government has toward the problem . "

In 2003 , after recovering from an arm injury that threatened to end his career , Mustaine became a born again Christian . Minor controversy was sparked by Mustaine 's announcement that Megadeth would not play certain songs live due to his new identification as a Christian . In May 2005 , Mustaine allegedly threatened to cancel shows in Greece and Israel with extreme metal bands Rotting Christ and Dissection due to the bands ' anti @-@ Christian beliefs . This caused the two bands to cancel appearances .

In July 2004 , Ellefson sued Mustaine for \$ 18 @.@ 5 million in Manhattan Federal Court . Ellefson alleged that Mustaine short @-@ changed him on profits including tour merchandise and publishing royalties . The suit was dismissed in 2005 , and Mustaine filed a countersuit alleging that Ellefson had used the band 's name in an advertisement for musical equipment ; the suit was settled out of court .

= = Artistry = =

= = = Influences and style = = =

Traditional heavy metal bands such as UFO and Black Sabbath , new wave of British heavy metal ( NWOBHM ) bands such as Motörhead , Iron Maiden , and Diamond Head , and punk rock bands such as the Sex Pistols and Ramones had a significant influence on Megadeth 's sound . Hard rock bands such as AC / DC and Led Zeppelin were also influential on the group 's guitar style . Although the music has roots in punk , university professor Jason Bivins wrote that Megadeth followed the basic blueprint of Motörhead and Iron Maiden . He described the style as a mix of " the instrumental virtuosity of the NWOBHM with the speed and aggression of hardcore punk " , while also drawing lyrical inspiration from the horror @-@ obsessed punk band Misfits . Mustaine has also listed albums by the Beatles as recordings that influenced him .

Mustaine is the band 's primary songwriter . He develops songs starting with a particular riff that , with modifications , becomes the central part of the song . He has said that song fragments are composed separately , and then the band makes a compact structure from them . Drummer Shawn Drover stated that Mustaine had saved many riffs over the years and that some recent material is based on those demo recordings . Ellefson stated that the band constantly creates new material , and that making a recording begins with exchanging ideas after which the band enters the studio and discusses the concept , direction , artwork , and song titles . The lyrics are usually written after the music is arranged . Discussing the band 's lyrics , Mustaine said that many of the themes are derived from literature , such as the novels of George Orwell .

The music of Megadeth and its underground metal contemporaries from the 1980s featured harsh vocals , double bass drum patterns , staccato riffing , tremolo picking , and screeching lead guitar work ; albums from this period were produced on low budgets . After forming Megadeth , Mustaine followed the thrash metal style of his previous band , Metallica , with more emphasis on speed and intensity . Megadeth 's music is characterized by its neat instrumental performance , featuring fast rhythm sections , complex arrangements , and " snarling " vocals . When asked to describe Megadeth 's guitar style , Mustaine answered : " When you go to a show and see a guitar player who just stands there , that 's a guitar player . A thrash guitar player is a guy who plays like he wants to beat the guitar 's guts out . " Most of the songs are recorded in standard guitar tuning as Mustaine believes it to provide a superior melody to alternative methods of tuning .

During the band 's early days , Mustaine was the rhythm guitarist , while Chris Poland played lead . Although Poland performed only on Megadeth 's first two albums , music journalists Pete Prown and Harvey P. Newquist credit him with making the music more colorful because of his jazz influences . According to former Metal Maniacs editor Jeff Wagner , the band 's songwriting techniques peaked

with the fourth album , Rust in Peace , which he described as a " flurry of precision and fluidity , making good on Megadeth 's claim to being the world 's state @-@ of @-@ the @-@ art speed metal band " . Musicologist Glenn Pillsbury stated the guitar work on the album was a mixture of Mustaine 's " controlled chaos " and the " technical brilliance " of Marty Friedman . Studio efforts released in the mid- and late 1990s featured songs with compact structures and less complicated riffing .

Megadeth 's lyrics often focus on death , war , politics , and religion . The lyricism centers on nihilistic themes , but occasionally deals with topics such as alienation and social problems . The earliest releases featured themes such as occultism , graphic violence , and Satanism . Nuclear warfare and government conspiracy were preoccupations on albums such as Rust in Peace and Countdown to Extinction . During Megadeth 's commercial peak , Mustaine elaborated on more personal themes such as addiction and intimate relationships . For the lyrics on Cryptic Writings , Mustaine said that he wanted to write songs that had more appeal to a wider audience . The title of United Abominations is a satiric play on the name of the United Nations ; Mustaine criticized the organization 's ineffectiveness on a number of songs on that album . Later albums contained lyrics in a similar vein .

= = = Legacy = = =

Having sold over 50 million units worldwide as of 2014 , Megadeth is one of the few bands from the 1980s American underground metal scene to have achieved mass commercial success . Along with contemporaries Metallica , Slayer , and Anthrax , Megadeth is regarded as one of the core founding groups of thrash metal . These bands are often referred to as the " big four " of thrash metal , responsible for the genre 's development and popularization . Loudwire ranked Megadeth the third best thrash metal band of all time , praising the group 's " provoking lyrics and mind @-@ warping virtuosity " . CMJ New Music Report called the band 's debut album a seminal release and a representative of " the golden age of speed metal " . Similarly , Billboard called the band 's second album Peace Sells ... but Who 's Buying ? a " landmark of the thrash movement " whose lyrics it found still relevant . MTV also recognized the band as an influential metal act , highlighting the technical aspect of the early albums .

Megadeth is considered one of the most musically influential groups that originated in the 1980s . As part of the early American thrash metal movement , the band 's music was a direct influence on death metal . Sociologist Keith Kahn @-@ Harris wrote that the mainstream success of Megadeth was one of the reasons for the expansion of extreme metal to countries where it had previously been unknown . The band 's sound and album artwork influenced a number of thrash metal bands in the 21st century , including Toxic Holocaust and Warbringer . According to Nielsen SoundScan , Megadeth has sold 9 @. @ 2 million copies of its albums in the United States between 1991 and 2014 .

= = Awards = =

Genesis Awards :

1993 : Doris Day Music Award ? Countdown to Extinction

Loudwire Music Awards :

2011 : Metal Album of the Year ? Thirteen

2011 : Metal Song of the Year ? " Public Enemy No. 1 "

Metal Hammer Golden Gods Awards :

2007 : Riff Lord ? Dave Mustaine

2015 : Golden God ? Dave Mustaine

Revolver Golden Gods Awards :

2009 : Golden God ? Dave Mustaine

= = Members = =

Dave Mustaine ? lead vocals , guitar ( 1983 ? 2002 , 2004 ? present )  
David Ellefson ? bass , backing vocals ( 1983 ? 2002 , 2010 ? present )  
Kiko Loureiro ? guitar , backing vocals ( 2015 ? present )  
Dirk Verbeuren ? drums ( 2016 ? present )

= = Discography = =