

= Billy Talent =

Billy Talent is a Canadian rock band from Mississauga , Ontario . They formed in 1993 with Benjamin Kowalewicz as the lead vocalist , Ian D 'Sa on guitar , bassist Jon Gallant and drummer Aaron Solowoniuk . There have been no lineup changes , although Aaron is currently taking a hiatus from the band due to an MS relapse , Jordan Hastings from Alexisonfire , Cunter and Say Yes is currently filling in for him .

The band existed for almost a decade before mainstream success . The members met and played in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Secondary School under the name Pezz and remained underground in Toronto 's indie music scene until 2001 . The band renamed itself Billy Talent after running into legal trouble with the old name . It was then that Kowalewicz 's connection with an employee of Warner Music Canada 's A & R department landed the band a record deal and launched them into mainstream success . Since then , Billy Talent has made three multi @-@ platinum records in Canada , and continues to expand their success overseas , this included touring for 20 months supporting their second album . They released their third album , entitled Billy Talent III , on July 14 , 2009 , and their fourth album , entitled Dead Silence , on September 4 , 2012 . Dead Silence was followed up by a full UK tour over the course of October and November 2012 . To commemorate the longevity since the release of their first studio album , the band has released a greatest hits album entitled " Hits " on November 4 , 2014 .

= = History = =

= = = Origins as Pezz (1993 ? 1999) = = =

The band got together during a high school talent contest . Pezz began writing , performing songs , and gaining attention and credibility at first locally , and soon in Toronto 's broader indie music scene . Their first recording was a cheap 4 @-@ track demo . It was recorded in Ian D 'Sa 's basement in July 1994 , and was named Demoluca , after a friend of the band named Jason Deluca had stopped by the house , banging on a basement window while the band was recording . Soon after , in January 1995 , they all put in money to record another demo of better quality with engineer / producer Dave Tedesco at the " Signal to Noise " studio which they called Dudebox . Originally , two tracks from Demoluca and four newly recorded tracks were compiled onto it , but a year later the band recorded four more tunes live in the studio and re @-@ released it . After these releases and their continued performances in the immediate area , Pezz was gaining a following in Mississauga and it continued to spread .

D 'Sa studied classical animation at Sheridan College , and even worked on Angela Anaconda as an animator . Gallant almost finished a business degree . Kowalewicz was in between jobs , one which included working at 102 @.@ 1 the edge . Solowoniuk worked at Chrysler Canada . But during this , each member found the time and finances to max @-@ out their credit cards , and record their first full @-@ length album in 1999 . They laid down twelve tracks at a studio called " Great Big Music " , collaborating with Juno @-@ nominated music producer Brad Nelson . Kowalewicz started singing in melody with D 'Sa . The music began to transform from a " raw rap @-@ rock " songs into " catchy and angst @-@ ridden pop punk anthems " . With that , Watoosh ! was born and independently released . While popular within Toronto 's indie scene , it did not reach large mainstream sales levels .

= = = Billy Talent and success (1999 ? 2004) = = =

In 1999 , the Canadian Pezz received documentation from an American band named Pezz proving that the latter had held the name internationally since 1989 . The Canadian band had no legal claim to their old name and thus changed it to Billy Talent , inspired by the guitarist " Billy Tallent " from Michael Turner 's novel Hard Core Logo . The film adaptation by Bruce McDonald would be the

inspirational medium for the band . However , this still led to fans mistaking Kowalewicz as being named Billy Talent .

Now known as Billy Talent , their sound began to move in a more aggressive , punk rock direction . During this time , Kowalewicz ran into Jen Hirst , at 102 @. @ 1 the edge , the Toronto radio station he worked at . She had seen the band perform as Pezz , and he asked her to check out the band 's performance at a club . This would prove to pay off , as Hirst was later hired by Warner Music Canada to work in A & R. This connection would get the band their producer Gavin Brown , and a demo deal with the label . Before the demos were recorded , a local manager called Atlantic Records A & R executives , who were already in Toronto , to see the band perform in its tiny rehearsal space .

In 2002 , the band met with record executives , and ended up signing a co @-@ venture agreement with Atlantic Records and Warner Music Canada . In the fall of 2003 , the band released their full @-@ length self @-@ titled album , Billy Talent . The album found considerable sales success . " Try Honesty " was a successful first single , and was followed by other singles " The Ex " , " River Below " , and " Nothing to Lose " into late 2003 and 2004 . The band played sold @-@ out shows in Canada and the United States and had success in Europe . The band received Juno , (They won two Junos , Best Album of the Year , and Best Band of the Year) and MuchMusic Video Award nominations and awards , and spent late 2004 and most of 2005 touring . Billy Talent went on to be certified 3x platinum in Canada .

A track from the album titled " This Is How It Goes " was about Aaron Solowoniuk 's fight with multiple sclerosis . On March 17 , 2006 , Aaron Solowoniuk revealed in a personal letter to fans that he was the friend in that song . Solowoniuk was confirmed to have the disease , which causes anything from numbness in the limbs to paralysis or loss of vision , in January 1999 . His neurologist prescribed him medication that he would have to self inject three times a week , possibly for the rest of his life . Although it was a struggle for Solowoniuk to come to terms with the reality of the disease , going to numerous doctor appointments and touring with a mini @-@ fridge in their van has become normal routine . The medication has let him continue drumming with the band , as it eliminated his symptoms , and he has stated that " this changes nothing about my band or me . "

= = = Billy Talent II (2005 @-@ 2007) = = =

Billy Talent 's second album was mostly recorded at The Warehouse Studio in Vancouver , British Columbia , which was produced by Gavin Brown again with Ian D 'Sa co @-@ producing for the first time , and mixed by Chris Lord @-@ Alge .

Billy Talent II hit the shelves on June 27 , 2006 . It fared very well in Canada in its debut week , landing in at number 1 on the Canadian charts . It also enjoyed significant success in Germany , where it also debuted at number 1 in the album charts in its debut week , and was one of the top 10 selling albums in the country . As of June 15 , 2007 , the album has sold almost 700 @, @ 000 units worldwide , 215 @, @ 000 of them in Canada making it certified 2x Platinum , and 200 @, @ 000 shipped units in Germany achieved it platinum status there . However , the success did not duplicate itself in the U.S. The band has expressed that they know they are a new band there , and they are choosing to concentrate their attention on Canada , Europe , and other places overseas instead .

The album contains less anger and profanity than their previous self @-@ titled album , as they had mellowed out and matured as men and as a band . More of the songs dealt with real @-@ life issues , to the praise of fans and critics .

We wanted to do something completely different from the first record because we had changed dramatically and had learned a lot from personal relationships . Everyone in the band is partnering up and dealing with those issues . The general theme of this record is trust , the lack thereof or breaking up . That seemed to fuel the record .

The band ventured off on another UK tour in support of Billy Talent II , but this one would include more shows in countries they had not performed in before . During this tour leg , the gigs at London and Manchester , on September 8 and 16 , respectively , were recorded live . Limited edition CDs were released as the band 's only live album to date , Live from the UK Sept . / 2006 . Also during

the tour , the band had to miss their Southampton show " due to a death in the family " . The whole band returned the following month to play the show .

The band started their first Canadian arena tour with the bands Rise Against , Anti @-@ Flag , and Moneen , performing in British Columbia , Alberta , Saskatchewan , Manitoba , Quebec and ending in Ontario . Following the Canadian tour , the band ventured onto their first US club tour .

The band went on a large overseas tour , beginning on June 1 , 2007 . They temporarily came back in mid June to play shows at the MuchMusic Video Awards , the Molson Amphitheatre in Toronto with good friends Alexisonfire , Cancer Bats , and Attack In Black . Plus the Festival d 'été de Québec with Alexisonfire in Quebec City . They returned overseas , selling out multiple venues in Australia and performing at the MTV Australia Video Music Awards . They had planned to end their tour on September 3 , but the band played shows in St. John 's , Newfoundland , Saint John , New Brunswick and Halifax , Nova Scotia on September 5 , 7 and 8 , respectively . As of September 11 , 2007 , the band has indicated that their 18 @-@ month tour has officially ended , and they are " home for a while to catch [their] breath a little before [they] start writing the next record . " In the meantime , a live DVD album called 666 was released on November 27 , 2007 , featuring footage and audio from the band 's performances at London 's Brixton Academy , Düsseldorf 's Philipshalle , and Germany 's Rock am Ring festival (at the Nürburgring) .

In 2008 they opened for American group My Chemical Romance in the US with smaller group Drive By and attended several festivals and held concerts in Canada and Europe later on . Vocalist Benjamin Kowalewicz stated on July 1 , on Billy Talent 's official forum , that they are staying put in Canada until the album is finished , and that their promotional tour for II has come to an end . Their song " Red Flag " was featured in Burnout : Revenge , SSX on tour , and NHL 06 .

= = = Billy Talent III (2008 @-@ 2011) = = =

The single for " Turn Your Back " (jälllaboration form with the band Anti @-@ Flag) was released on September 15 in the UK and most of Europe , on September 16 in the U.S. and Canada and September 20 in Australia and was also featured in the video game NHL 09 .

The band entered the studio in November with Brendan O 'Brien , who has previously worked with Rage Against The Machine , Incubus , Stone Temple Pilots , Soundgarden , Pearl Jam and the Red Hot Chili Peppers . The band embarked on a supporting tour for the fourth album , starting in Australia in the Soundwave Festival in February . Also , they played two sidewaves , one in Sydney , and one in Melbourne , with Emery and Face to Face opening for them . After Australia , the band headed to North America , where they played the three @-@ day Coachella Festival . Ian revealed that the new album is to be called Billy Talent III .

During summer 2009 , Billy Talent toured North America with Rise Against and Rancid . On February 26 , the band was announced for Download festival in the U.K. They also played in Columbus , Ohio at Rock on the Range in May 2009 . During the Melbourne Soundwave show , Kowalewicz announced they would tour Australia again in August . Billy Talent also played at Reading and Leeds Festivals 2009 . Following the twin festivals the band toured the U.K. in late October / early November before moving on to tour the U.S. in support of their new album . In an interview with UpVenue , bassist Jonathan Gallant announced that the Canadian tour would begin in winter 2010 but would be an extensive one .

Their fourth album , Billy Talent III was released on July 14 , 2009 . On September 22 , 2009 , it was released in the United States , through Roadrunner Records .

Billy Talent kicked off their 2009 European tour on October 19 , commenting before the tour that they " can 't wait to come over to Europe and the U.K. " . They followed the European tour with a Canadian tour in March 2010 , with Against Me ! , Alexisonfire and Cancer Bats supporting . On February 1 , " Saint Veronika " was released as the third single from Billy Talent III .

On February 16 , 2010 , Billy Talent released iTunes Session , over iTunes , a 7 @-@ track EP with songs from all three of the Billy Talent Albums .

In August 2010 , Billy Talent played 3 tour dates in South Africa , one in Cape Town , Durban and at Oppikoppi along with other local bands such as Taxi Violence , Zebra and Giraffe and Jack Parow

. The band then played the main stage at the Reading and Leeds Festivals in the summer , along with bands such as Blink 182 , Guns N ' Roses , Arcade Fire , Paramore , Weezer , Green Day , Lostprophets & Young Guns . This was the band 's last performances on the Billy Talent III Tour , and it was announced by Kowalewicz that the band were going to take a break before beginning work on their next album .

== Dead Silence (2012 @-@ 2014) ==

In April 2011 , Kowalewicz stated that " At this point there is no time frame for touring , as our main priority is finishing writing and recording this new record " . Kowalewicz also stated " the songs this far are unlike anything we 've ever done before yet it still seems to capture the urgency of our first record " . Kowalewicz stated , in an interview , that the first three albums would form a trilogy and that the new album would not be named Billy Talent IV . In August 2011 it was announced in an interview with the band that their new album will be recorded in November . The album was produced by Ian D 'Sa and engineered by Eric Ratz and Kenny Luong who worked on Billy Talent II . The album 's first single " Viking Death March " was digitally released on May 25 , 2012 . The music video for the track was recorded at Germany 's Rock am Ring Festival and at Melkweg Amsterdam . , . The album 's second single " Surprise Surprise " was released on August 7 , 2012 on iTunes . The band released the album Dead Silence on September 4 , 2012 on their SoundCloud account .

The band embarked on a Canadian tour with Sum 41 , Hollerado and Indian Handcrafts .

== Hits (2014) ==

On August 22 , 2014 , the band announced a release of Hits , a " greatest hits " album including two new songs .

On September 25 , 2014 , Billy Talent released " Kingdom of Zod , " one of the two new songs on the band 's " Hits " album .

On November 4 , 2014 , the band released their first compilation album Hits .

== Afraid Of Heights (2015 @-@ Present) ==

On May 9 , 2015 , the band announced at SiriusXM Indies that they have been in the studio for the past few months working on their new record . Also announced that the album will be released in 2016

On November 26 , 2015 , Ben announced that they will be entering the studio to start recording Jan 4th , 2016 and should release their new album before Summer 2016

On January 15 , 2016 , Aaron announced via the Billy Talent YouTube channel that he would be taking a hiatus from the band due to an MS relapse . Jordan Hastings , from Alexisonfire , Cunter and Say Yes was announced to be filling in and doing the drum work on the new album in his place . Official band photographs in promotion of the new album feature both drummers .

On May 12 , 2016 , the band announced their new album Afraid Of Heights set for release on July 29 , 2016 . On the same day the band aired their first single from the new album called " Afraid Of Heights " .

== Musical style ==

Watoosh ! saw the band mixing multiple genres and making diverse songs on the same album , stretching from hip hop to indie and ska punk . However , this evolved into a more collected sound that was a mix of fewer genres on their second album , Billy Talent . The result of this has not been described by the band as their defining sound and that it was something that appeared to them after experimenting with different styles . On Billy Talent II , the band altered their sound yet again , based on more mid @-@ tempo and emotional compositions ; a bit more collected than their

previous work . It was also based on far less angst and aggression behind the production , things that were known factors behind their debut . In their music there are raw and frequent backup vocals heavily collaborated by main vocals , quick changes between loud and quiet , and Kowalewicz 's characteristic vocals which are the key elements that emphasize that assertion .

= = Band members = =

Benjamin Kowalewicz ? lead vocals (1993 ? present)

Ian D 'Sa ? guitar , vocals (1993 ? present)

Jonathan Gallant ? bass guitar , backing vocals (1993 ? present)

Aaron Solowoniuk - drums , percussion (1993 ? present ; on hiatus 2016 @-@ present)

= = Session / Touring members = = =

Jordan Hastings ? drums , percussion (2016 ? present)

= = Awards = =

Billy Talent has received a significant amount of recognition in Canada , winning 10 awards from 32 nominations at the MuchMusic Video Awards and 7 awards from 20 nominations at the Juno Awards . The band has also been nominated at the MuchMusic Video Awards every year since 2004 . Overall , Billy Talent has received 21 awards from 56 nominations in Canada . The band also had the number 1 rock song of 2009 " Devil on My Shoulder " on Much Music 's holiday wrap , along with the number five song " Fallen Leaves " for much music 's 99 best music videos . They are also the most nominated band in Much Music Video Award history .

= = Discography = =

Studio albums as Pezz

Watoosh ! (1999)

Studio albums as Billy Talent

Billy Talent (2003)

Billy Talent II (2006)

Billy Talent III (2009)

Dead Silence (2012)

Afraid Of Heights (2016)

= = Tours = =

Billy Talent Tour (2003 ? 2004)

Billy Talent II Tour (2006 ? 2008)

Billy Talent III Tour (2009 ? 2010)

Dead Silence Tour (2012 @-@ 2013)

BT1 Turns 10 Tour (2013)