



I will be honest, when Dire Thorns approached me and I had a quick listen they weren't my cup of tea, but, everyone needs a psilocybin laced coffee once in a while. (I do not advocate banned or control substance use without medical supervision – please don't sue my ass).

I had never heard of Dire Thorns so lets get to know the band from the wrong side of the bridge together (Yorkshire Joke).

Thank you so much "Dire Thorns" for doing this interview.

Thank you

Let's start at the basics, who are you and how did the final line up meet?

I am Jake McCabe, main vocalist / bassist of Dire Thorns. I've been trying to start this project up since I was in year 4 / 5 so our line-up has been hectic. Our drummer, Joe, joined us in February 2022 after being recommended by a local drum teacher. Many changes later, we got France, our current lead guitarist around July 2023, hired the same day he and I had first met at an open event at my college, Grimsby Institute. After I had decided to move onto bass to allow for more Korn / Primus elements in our music, I hired rhythm guitarist Connor after knowing him for a while through college in November 2023. Finally, I completed the line-up with the addition of Ethan on samples and backing vocals last December. Being two years younger than the rest of the band, I met him through a mutual friend who knew him at their school. My response here may feel jumbled, although that's mainly because our history of line-ups is exactly that.

You have a complex past, ultimately how did you come up with the name "Dire Thorns"?

This goes back to late 2017 when I was in Year 8; the first time I started getting a decent sum of band members. One of our two drummers at the time (context: Dire Thorns was a two drummer band for a long time) had presented us with a list of about 7 possible names, most of which I forget, but I know for certain that the first was "Feast of Slaughter" and last was "Dire Thorns" which, as you can probably infer, eventually won. I don't know where these titles came from though, probably a random online generator or something. The title means nothing other than to sound catchy and be conveniently searchable, both of which it fortunately is.

Do you have any specific influences for your sound and style?

Although I write 90% of the music, this is often influenced by the line-up of people around me. Personally, I don't really listen to music much unless there's something that interests me about it on an emotional or technological scale. I got into Slipknot at age 10 and have always wanted to make a masked band by proxy, and getting into Korn opened my mind to how intriguing a role the bass guitar can take on in a composition.



Photography by mnkr_designs

Otherwise, I tend to just base songs off of something interesting I heard and morph it into my personal style. Linking back to what I said at the start of this paragraph, I have had bandmates into many different genres that have influenced our songs. Joe (drummer) adds progressive elements, Will (ex-bassist) encouraged us to do more guitar solos and co-wrote a more ambient black metal style song with me (Feed Me To The Inferno), France and Connor (current guitarists) are way into hardcore stuff like Knocked Loose, which is currently working it's way into our future material. I could go on for ages.

I saw on social media that you do mask commissions, this got me thinking. Do you guys live the dream as music full time or do you all have jobs or study full time as well?

We are FAR from doing the band full time. Personally, I don't care if we ever can or not. We are all in School / College right now and I'm looking for work in Music Technology or International Communications (I speak a few languages). For me, Dire Thorns is my life, it's been my main focus since I was in Primary School, so I'm very used to doing it alongside other responsibilities and I am perfectly happy with working a day job to earn myself a living. I don't need full time to succeed with Dire Thorns, I can manage my time well enough for that to not be a concern.

Whilst we're on a creative roll, who did the artwork for "State of Sikosis" and what inspired the artwork?

That was me, I hate paying for stuff so I usually try to find ways to achieve whatever I want myself. I wanted a picture of someone trying to tear their mouth open so what I ended up doing was taking a picture of myself with my phone flash at like 10pm in my bedroom, editing the living daylight out of it and slapping some text on the bottom. I'm quite happy with the result, especially since it goes so well on a t-shirt.

Talking about the title track from the EP, "Sikosis" how was the writing and production process for it?

This was a reworking of the second oldest song I ever wrote: "Psychosis" in 2015. I purposefully misspelt the title to make it more memorable and searchable in an online setting. Taking the old riffs, I arranged them in a dynamic order and reworked the lyrics to fit my modern writing style and to actually be about something, as opposed to just things that'd sound cool. This piece is about a paranoia of mine wherein I assume that the people around me think that I'm staring at them and that I'm someone to avoid. It's a strange feeling that's gotten better with time, however I was surprised to realise how many people, especially younger guys, had such an anxiety.

What is your favourite track from the EP and why?

Feed Me To The Inferno. It is such a gorgeous piece and it perfectly spices up the middle of a live set. It's the first Dire Thorns song to not only have a guitar solo, but also a bass solo. The black metal elements are atmospherically euphoric, and the lyrics detail feeling as if you're on a different frequency to other people around you, like what you say doesn't make any sense to them, and what they say doesn't make any sense to you. The lyrics can get risky in places to discuss, since they're around themes that I am still getting my head around to this day.

There was a hint in one of your posts that new music is coming soon, when can we expect that?

Probably about May / June, I can't guarantee that though. We have a finished track that I may re-record drums and some vocals for, and I'm editing the music video as we speak. We will be debuting the song live on our April tour run.

You've had some great feedback from the likes of, "From The Depths Entertainment", "Midweek METAL Podcast" and "Metal Incorporated" do you agree with their opinions?

Yes, I'm brilliant.

What would be a big achievement for the band?

Many things could be. Since Dire Thorns got gigging, it's given me a great view of what I need to do next to achieve what I want to. I'd love to get on some decent festival slots and get touring with other weird metal artists like us, Evil Scarecrow, Anti-Clone and such. Once we climb up in the UK, we can start looking towards mainland Europe and the USA. But ultimately, whatever happens happens. I don't expect too much of myself, but I do expect progress.

Do you have a funny story from any of the gigs you have performed?

At a Grimsby gig a woman around her fifties called our bassist at the time over and whispered in their ear **"I can be your slutty mummy"** which is, to this day, one of the funniest situations that've happened at a performance.

You have a free space here. Is there anything you would like to say to new and existing fans?

Balls gyatt skibidi toilet



"Dire Thorns" has had a bit of a rough journey getting to the line-up today, is there any advice you would give to bands going through similar situations?

Get good at doing everything by yourself. When people come in, involve them as much as you can, collaborate and have fun, but don't rely on them too heavily. Don't wait on people who can't be bothered. Involve them when they want to be involved, but they can't expect to be given all the benefits for 10% of the effort. You will find the right people, but especially if you're starting in primary school, decent members are gonna be rare.

Thank you, "Dire Thorns" for joining me and allowing me to have the chance to get to know you. You have converted me to a fan! If you haven't already you should check out "Dire Thorns", all the links will be below on the page.



Interview and edit by Sarah Parker