

# WESTENRA

*MORGANA HAD THE LOVELY OPPORTUNITY TO INTERVIEW WESTENRA - A MELODIC GOTHIC ROCK BAND*

**Can you tell me a little bit about each member of the band and their role within the group?**

Luciferia: lead singer; songwriter; website; social media; merchandise.

Karl: guitar; songwriter; graphic design; merchandise.

Dominique: bass; songwriter; social media; music production; video editor.

We all live in Whitby, having moved here at different times over the last 10 years due to our love of the goth weekends.

**How did the Westenra members meet?**

Through mutual friends and being part of the goth social scene in Whitby. It turns out that Karl nearly ran Luci over a few years before we actually formed the band!

**Whose idea was it to start a band?**

Dominique & Karl started jamming together in early 2019. They then advertised for a singer and Luci joined in May. Our first gig was at The Little Angel in Whitby on Halloween that year.

**Is there any inspiration behind the name 'Westenra'?**

We wanted to recognise the Dracula connection to Whitby. The character of Lucy Westenra from the novel seemed apt due to our singers name. And the "W" logo that Karl designed bore an uncanny resemblance to the arches of Whitby Abbey.

**What are the themes and topics that you typically sing about?**

Luciferia: I feel more comfortable drawing on my own personal experiences and feelings. Subjects we have covered so far include mental health, not conforming to society's rules, and addressing injustice and exploitation. And we're not afraid to confront and challenge important issues in the world today. I find music very therapeutic and it has helped me through some difficult times.





**You wrote the songs within the album 'First Light' in 2020. Has anything changed within your creative process since 2020, to now?**

"First Light" was mainly written during the lockdown of 2020 so we had to write our own parts independently and remote from each other, communicating by sending ideas back and forth over email. We now try to all be in the same room when we start work on an idea - we have developed such a good songwriting dynamic and find that we are at our creative best when collaborating from the start.

**Which is your favourite album/ep/single you've worked on?**

Our most recent EP "Toxic Little Tales" was the most satisfying as we worked on all the songs together, and are happiest with the production and level of songwriting.

**Who are some of your favourite tour partners or collaborators that you've worked with so far?**

**We would not have had the success that we have without the help and support of many others. In no particular order:**

- Baxter Photography have provided us with some fantastic studio and live photos;
- Whitby Krampus Run have invited us to play their annual Krampus Ball twice, and our collaborations inspired us to cover Iron Maiden's "Number of the Beast" song which was released as a charity single;
- Whitby Brewery have been very supportive of not just us, but to the whole goth community with their Goth At The Brewery event (held every goth weekend). They have also allowed us to use their venue to record numerous videos (for Virtual Goth City Festival, for the Channel 4 Rosie Jones tv travel show, and for our interview/performance with Jonathan Ross);
- Crafty Cove Whitby have allowed us to use their facilities for filming music videos and for photo shoots;

- Pandemonium Whitby have been promoting and selling all our CDs;
- The Whitby and Scarborough goth & alternative communities have supported us since our very first gig;
- Dominique collaborated with Drew Freeman (All My Thorns/Sometime The Wolf) over lockdown for the "Dreamscape" charity single; we played it live with Drew at Goth At The Brewery in 2021; and
- The Mission very kindly signed one of our hoodies and we shall be auctioning that off in early 2024 with proceeds going to the Sophie Lancaster Foundation.

**You released 'Toxic Little Tales' in October 2023, which contains 4 songs. Could you let us know a little more about this album and what inspired it?**

We wanted to release new music and videos to coincide with our performance at Tomorrow's Ghosts Festival (with The Mission) in Whitby in October 2023. Work commenced on it in January 2023 and we drew on our experiences of the past 12 months. This produced four tracks that took no prisoners by raining down fire and brimstone on perpetrators of injustice and exploitation, and showed how a phoenix truly can rise from the ashes. We were keen to try and expand on the sound of our previous releases and explore different musical styles, whilst maintaining our goth roots.



### **What are the band's biggest achievements?**

We are immensely proud to have been one of only two bands (the other being Coldplay) to have played a gig at Whitby Abbey. We were invited to perform as part of their 125th Anniversary celebrations of the Dracula novel, and even had the area where we performed renamed as "The WESTENRA Arches". And of course, our recent performance in our hometown at the world famous Tomorrow's Ghosts Festival with The Mission has been a dream come true.

### **What are some of the band's upcoming gigs?**

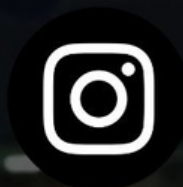
March 22nd we play with post-punk legends Wasted Youth in Stockton-on-Tees. April 26th we co-headline The Shadow Factory event in Whitby with Auger. More shows will be announced soon

### **Lastly, What do you hope people take away from your music?**

We get lots of messages from people who say that our songs have helped them through difficult times and deal with issues in their own lives; to be able to connect with people in that way is very humbling and rewarding. Our songs have multiple layers (both lyrically and musically) so we hope that people enjoy discovering something new each time they listen. But we're equally as happy for people to just come along to our shows and dance and singalong to our songs :-)



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