

HYPERION

Interviewed by The Silver Age, September 4th, 2024

Hyperion is a classic rock band comprised of Chris Mattis, Kylee Steigelman, and Saint Crookham. Their latest single, “King of Swords,” was released in August of 2024, and they are finalizing an EP that will be released in October. For information about upcoming shows and releases, follow @hyperionoutpost on Instagram and listen to Hyperion on Spotify.

ALICIA LOPEZ: Do you want to go through, for each of you, your name, your age, where you’re based, and what instrument you play in the band?

KYLEE STEIGELMAN: Okay, yeah, do you want to start?

SAINT CROOKHAM: Yeah, sure, I’ll go first. My name is Saint Crookham. I play bass, and I sing for the band. I’m 21. Alright, Kylee, your turn.

KYLEE: I’m Kylee. I’m also 21. I am the drummer.

CHRIS MATTIS.: I’m Chris. I’m also 21. Guitarist, rhythm and lead.

A.L.: And you’re all based in Philly?

KYLEE: Bucks County, like, a little bit outside the city.

COLE GABORIAULT: What type or genre of music would you say you guys play?

KYLEE: We make rock music.

CHRIS: We make, like, classic rock inspired, you know, somewhat alternative, bluesy – very bluesy.

KYLEE: Yeah, a lot of blues. A lot of different influences combined together, but mostly, like, classic rock, I would say. A little bit of metal influence too.

SAINT: [pointing to Chris] This guy.

A.L.: How’d you come up with the name Hyperion?

CHRIS: [to Saint] That's for you.

SAINT: Alright, I'm going to tell you the real reason, but – so, my favorite game of all time is Borderlands 2. There was a corporation in the game called Hyperion. But I was trying to sell them on it, and they were like – yeah, he [Chris] liked it, but Kylee said it was corny. So I was like, “you know what? It's also mythological.” I forget because I was kind of, you know, talking out of my ass. But I forget the reason I told her, but it was ultimately named after this –

KYLEE: Tree – the tallest one in the world is named Hyperion.

CHRIS: There's also a Titan.

KYLEE: Yeah, there's a lot of things.

SAINT: Alright. Calm down. Another reason I told her to sell her on the name was the tallest tree ever was called Hyperion. I was like, “that's pretty sick.”

KYLEE: Yeah. But overall, I mean, I chose it because, although I did play Borderlands, and that's why he wanted to name it after Hyperion, I just liked the way the name sounded too. So I agreed to it because we had a deadline to come up with something.

A.L.: And I guess that's where Saturn's Children comes from too, right?

SAINT: Yeah.

A.L.: The myth.

SAINT: Oh yeah, Hyperion's the name of one of Saturn's moons. That's what I said.

KYLEE: Yeah, yeah. We could go with that one.

SAINT: Yeah. That's why.

A.L.: So how'd you guys meet each other?

KYLEE: Well, they met before I met either of them. So you guys can talk about that.

SAINT: I'll tell them. I met him, actually – me and him met first. I was coming back from a party –

CHRIS: No, that's not true. I met her in high school. Not met, but, you know, I knew her.

SAINT: Okay. So they knew each other from high school. And I met him – I was coming back from one of my friend's parties when I was like 15 or 16, and him and his brother were at this park that I was walking by. And he yelled out to me – he was like, “hey man, do you want to play bumper swings?” And then, you know, I was like, “hell yeah.” I didn't actually play. I said “no,” cause he was, like – he's a fucking burly man. So I was like, “no.” But we got to talking. I was like, “we should hang out.” We hung out. And then how I met her was his friends was friends with her. And she's also now my girlfriend.

C.G.: How long have you guys been playing music, both individually and together?

KYLEE: I mean, he's [Saint] been playing the longest. So you can talk about your history a little bit.

SAINT: Okay. I started playing piano at like 15. Played that for a few years. And then I met him, and then we started a band. And so – and that was about – we've been playing together for about a year and a half now – me and him longer because, you know –

CHRIS: We've had multiple bands.

SAINT: Yeah. Me and him have had multiple bands together. So – but for us three, we've been playing for like a year. A little over a year.

KYLEE: Maybe like a year and a half. Hyperion was formed after their band. They brought me in, and then we formed Hyperion.

SAINT: Yeah. And then me and him have been playing for like four years.

CHRIS: I've been playing guitar, self-taught, like five years, whatever.

A.L.: And when did you start playing the drums?

KYLEE: Not that long ago, actually.

CHRIS: About the same time we started making music together.

SAINT: Maybe a few months prior to that.

KYLEE: A little before we officially formed Hyperion, I started playing for fun. So maybe like two years or so.

A.L.: Saint, how long did you play the bass?

SAINT: Well, bass is kind of new actually. So it's only been like five months, I think, on the bass, maybe not even that long, But I tried to sell them to let me play it like a year ago. They were like, "no."

CHRIS: He was our rhythm guitarist.

SAINT: And they said I fucking sucked on the bass.

KYLEE: We didn't say that.

SAINT: And I was like, "guys, hear me out."

KYLEE: Yeah, we originally had two – a rhythm guitar and a lead guitar, and no bassist.

CHRIS: Yeah.

SAINT: Yeah. We were fucking awful too.

KYLEE: Nah. So yeah, like five months.

SAINT: Like, "guys, please, we need a bass, dude."

C.G.: So it sounds, then, like you guys are mostly self-taught. Do you have any formal training at all, or everything taught yourself?

SAINT: No, no.

CHRIS: None at all!

KYLEE: Yeah, no.

CHRIS: None at all.

KYLEE: I played drums in school when I was a little kid. But I didn't think that I was going to do anything with that. So I had stopped for a while, and then I got back into it with an actual drum set recently.

SAINT: You know, actually, to be fair, I took an online singing lesson – or, like, a course. It wasn't a lesson, it was a course, you know, but it helped. It certainly helped.

KYLEE: So I guess mostly self-taught then. Yeah.

CHRIS: Self-taught for the most part.

C.G.: Are you guys in school? Or have you gone to school, and if so, what for?

SAINT: She's in –

KYLEE: Yeah, I go to Drexel. I do fashion design and merchandising.

SAINT: Me and Chris are not.

CHRIS: Yeah, we are not in school. Maybe shortly. Or the military.

A.L.: So then musical influences – you guys said you're a whole blend of all sorts of stuff. Who are you inspired by individually and then as the band's sound?.

CHRIS: Let me start.

KYLEE: Yeah, you can start. You can start.

CHRIS: I'm going to say Jeff Beck, David Gilmour, Dickey Betts, John Frusciante, and Jimmy Page, and obviously Hendrix.

KYLEE: For me as a drummer, mostly John Bonham, but as, like, overarching bands that I like the sound of, I mean, Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, I like Lana Del Rey a lot, and, you know, Jeff Buckley.

CHRIS: We all love Lana Del Rey.

KYLEE: Yeah, Rolling Stones. Saint?

SAINT: Oh, mine is – my favorite musician of all time is, like, the Doors, Jim Morrison. I love Jim Morrison. The Beatles, The Kinks, Metallica. I fucking love Metallica. Lana Del Rey – I think she already said that, but, you know, we all agree on that one. I feel like there's one more that I'm missing... but I – you know what, you don't – forget that.

KYLEE: To clarify, I said John Bonham. I don't know if you know, but he is from Led Zeppelin, so...

A.L.: That's helpful.

CHRIS: Stevie Ray Vaughan! Stevie Ray Vaughan too.

C.G.: So then what does your guys' writing process look like as a band?

KYLEE: Oh, good question.

SAINT: Oh, that's a great question.

CHRIS: We've actually been experimenting a lot with that.

SAINT: Yeah. I don't know, do you guys want to answer that?

KYLEE: No, you answer.

CHRIS: I can say the way I like to. I like to come to them with a riff idea or something, and we just build on top of it, you know?

KYLEE: Starting with the guitar is good.

CHRIS: Lyrics-wise, you know, that's up to you [Saint]. I mean, I write some lyrics.

SAINT: You write some of the lyrics, yeah.

KYLEE: Yeah, he's our main writer, though, Saint.

CHRIS: You try to look for cool words and write them down. Remember what they mean.

SAINT: That is not true.

CHRIS: That is what you do.

SAINT: That is not what I do. Don't listen to that.

CHRIS: You watch war documentaries.

SAINT: No, I – you know what? We – we usually, like – we’ll play – Chris will come –

CHRIS: Tell them the hermetic [unintelligible]

SAINT: [unintelligible] Chris will come with a riff, and he’ll be like, “alright guys, we got a riff.” And he’ll start playing it. I’ll start playing something. Kylee will start playing something. And, like, as for the writing, truthfully, what most of our songs have come to be like is, you know, I’ll put my phone down, and whatever they’re playing, I’ll just sing to kind of improv-wise, and then I’ll go back and transcribe whatever has come out, and then just sort of hard-fit it. And that’s pretty much the whole process for most of our music.

KYLEE: So to summarize, I guess, we kind of start with jams, really, and then we take what we like and just kind of work on that. Yeah.

C.G.: Do you have any themes or, like, lyrical ideas that you often address in the writing and the finished product?

SAINT: Yeah, dude.

CHRIS: Religion.

SAINT: Yeah, a lot of, like, religious – you know, not being specific, you know. We like to get everybody. But a lot of religion, a lot of philosophy, a lot of –

CHRIS: Ancient history.

SAINT: A lot of ancient history. Yeah, we like the stuff that you would, like, fall asleep to on a long-ass YouTube video. I’m like, “that’s next song,” you know? It’s like, “what the fuck were they up to in 1920?” That’s what we’re writing about.

KYLEE: Current and historical events.

A.L.: So then I know “King of Swords” just came out like a couple of days ago. You want to tell us about your recording process and how you guys end up releasing music?

SAINT: Man, that’s a good question too.

KYLEE: You guys did your research.

CHRIS: We have a home studio pretty much. We’re sitting right at it.

SAINT: Yeah, we pretty much converted my room. I'll text Chris – cause me and Chris, we actually – we work together. And so I'll go to work, and I'll be like, “we recording today?” You know. And sometimes he says no.

KYLEE: He produces everything.

SAINT: Yeah, I do.

KYLEE: He does a great job.

SAINT: How we record is – for “King of Swords,” we were gonna, like, not really focus too much on it. It was more so, like, we need one song to put out, just to kind of break the ice to establish the platforms. And so Chris came over, and me and him, we kind of wrote out that song in like 25 minutes, and then we recorded it, and the song was written about – originally, it was written about, like – my idea was the whole song's contradicting itself. It's like you're talking – it's somebody, like, in a one way conversation with yourself throughout the thing. It's contradicting to itself. That's the only song where he kind of came over, and we were just like, “fuck it, let's make some kind of random song.” But for the most part, you know, it'll be all of us, they'll come over –

CHRIS: We'll come with ideas.

SAINT: Yeah, we'll come with ideas, we'll record them. Sometimes it takes a long time, sometimes it's very quick. And then they let me be, and I spend the next fucking week slaving over working on it and, you know, mixing it or whatever, sending it to them, and they go, “I don't like how that sounds, man,” “you gotta fix that,” “you gotta fix this.”

KYLEE: We're nice about it.

SAINT: They're not nice.

A.L.: What software do you mix with?

SAINT: I use – now, this is a little controversial – no, maybe not – but I use FL Studio and, like –

C.G.: No way.

SAINT: You know, truth be told, man, when I was like 15 – everybody wanted to be a Soundcloud rapper – I was like, “dude, I'm gonna make the fucking beats,” you know? During the gold rush, sell the shovel, you know what I mean?

A.L.: Yeah, you're right.

SAINT: So I started on FL. I was like – because Metro Boomin – again, Soundcloud era, don't judge me – but Metro Boomin, I'm like, "I got to be as cool as him," you know? And so I started on FL, learned how to use FL, have not learned how to use Pro Tools, have not learned how to use anything else out of just, like –

KYLEE: If it's not broken, don't fix it.

SAINT: Yeah. So FL Studio, short answer.

C.G.: Yeah. If you're getting the results you want out of FL Studio, don't pay for anything. Don't change at all.

SAINT: Dude, Pro Tools is a scam. It's like, you have to pay monthly. It's like, what the fuck?

C.G.: Yeah. It's ridiculous.

SAINT: That's insane. Crazy.

A.L.: So then, I guess, are you guys working on any new songs coming out soon?

KYLEE: Yes, we are.

CHRIS: We have an EP coming out soon, actually. It's going to have two extra songs that aren't released yet.

SAINT: Three.

CHRIS: Three.

KYLEE: It's still a working title. We don't have a title yet, but we have a few songs coming out in an EP.

CHRIS: Yeah.

KYLEE: So we're excited about that.

SAINT: Big songs, man. Really cool songs.

A.L.: And do you have, like, a rough time estimate when it's going to come out?

SAINT: Next month. Next month, for sure.

A.L.: Oh, nice. Real soon then.

C.G.: Are there any other kinds of art that you guys do? Any hobbies you guys are interested in? What do you guys do for work? Any interesting things outside of music?

KYLEE: Well, for me, I'm really interested in fashion. You know, that's what I'm choosing for my degree. And I started that before I knew that I loved music, and now I just really love both of them a lot. Do you want to...

SAINT: Let him go, next.

KYLEE: Okay. Chris, you can talk a little bit.

CHRIS: I love war movies, I love animals, I love cabins, and I love music.

KYLEE: I love animals more than him, actually.

CHRIS: No.

KYLEE: Yeah. I work at a doggy daycare as well. That's my side hustle.

CHRIS: Heavy on the war movies. I like war documentaries too.

KYLEE: Yeah. Saint, your hobbies?

SAINT: Well, I – I like to – I really like... I don't know.

CHRIS: Shane Gillis. We love Shane Gillis.

SAINT: We love Shane Gillis, yeah.

KYLEE: Not me. They love their podcasts. I don't care.

SAINT: She says that it's a man thing, but I'm pretty sure –

KYLEE: I like Pinterest. That's my podcast. And I like hanging out with Voodoo – that's our cat.

SAINT: Yeah, she's a prize winner, man. It's big game hunting when she's around.

C.G.: Why are you musicians?

KYLEE: That's an excellent question. For me, I really just love it. It's, like, a passion. Very fulfilling in a way that nothing else is.

CHRIS: It's the only fun job you can have.

SAINT: That's not true.

CHRIS: Every other job is fucking boring. It sucks.

SAINT: That's not true. Literally so untrue.

CHRIS: No, it's not. No. If you were to have one job for the rest of your life, you'd rather be something else?

SAINT: I would be, like, a fucking – you know those Amazon product testers?

CHRIS: Yeah, boring.

SAINT: That'd be pretty fun. I don't know. That'd be pretty fun.

CHRIS: It's a thrill.

KYLEE: He makes jokes. He's passionate about guitar.

SAINT: Yeah, yeah.

A.L.: That's pretty much it for our questions – is there anything we missed that we should have asked you all about?

C.G.: Fun facts you want included or anything.

KYLEE: He just broke his toe last year.

SAINT: Oh my god. I just – oh dude – I broke my toe on this motherfucker's kneecap. Because he – he – he just does – you know, he makes fun of my feet.

CHRIS: I held my hand up. You better explain it right.

SAINT: All right, don't include this in the interview fellas. Listen. I was – it was New Year's, you know, we're having a good time. And Chris makes fun of my feet. He says I got, like, knuckle draggers, and, like, he says, you know, I got some mean fucking claws on me.

CHRIS: Yeah, you got knuckles on you.

SAINT: I have literal knuckles, you know. Cause – I think it's because I walk barefoot all the time. But anyway, I digress. He was like, you know, "I want to feel how hard – if it feels like a punch." You know, like, if I were to kick his hand, does it feel like a punch? I was like, "all right." So he held his hand up, and he was – I took my shoe, sock off. I was wearing steel-toe boots for some reason. It was, like – still don't know why I was doing that, but I took my steel-toe boots off –

CHRIS: And he missed.

SAINT: Hold on.

CHRIS: And he missed.

SAINT: Took the sock off, went to go kick him, and he didn't move his hand, and I fucking missed. I broke my toe on his foot.

CHRIS: On my knee.

SAINT: I was in a foot cast for like six weeks. I didn't know I had broke it until the next day though. I was like – but yeah, that's the only fun fact.

CHRIS: We were also in a sort of horrific car accident.

SAINT: Yeah, this guy's the bane of all my bad luck. I have a – I don't know if you guys can see, but I got a fucking scar. Cause he split my chin open when he decided to crash into a pole. He was like, "you know what'd be sick? If we fucking almost died."

CHRIS: I hydroplaned.

SAINT: Yeah, he hydroplaned. He said –

CHRIS: I hydroplaned. I had the worst of it anyway. I fucked up my ankle. It probably won't – I'll probably have arthritis by the age of 30.

SAINT: He was in a wheelchair.

CHRIS: I was in a wheelchair. I split the whole top of my head open.

SAINT: You could see his skull.

CHRIS: Cause we weren't wearing seatbelts. Well, I wasn't. I don't know, were you?

SAINT: Yeah, I was. (I still don't know if I was, but...)

CHRIS: He was sitting with his legs up, so that could have gone really badly.

SAINT: You know what happened, too? Chris comes out covered in blood, blood all over him, and the cops are there and shit. And Chris had – you know, he had a little bit of weed on him. And so he needed a trip in the ambulance. They were going to search him. And me and him met up at the hospital later anyway, and I got to see him get his staples put in, you know, and I think he got this –

CHRIS: No, they wanted to do staples, but I was too scared.

SAINT: Right, yeah.

CHRIS: I said fuck that. I'd rather do stitches.

SAINT: Yeah. So I watched him get his skull stitched back into place. But he handed me off his – it was, like, a cart and his vape and all this shit – when the cops came, and then he got wheeled off. And some very kind Christian folks saved us that day. Like, literally. Chris was like – we crashed right outside of the church, and, like, it's like everybody in the church just started pouring out. They came – they gave him a blanket.

CHRIS: I still have that towel. I use it as a snot rag.

SAINT: He uses the towel that he got to blow his nose now. That's his snot rag. Kylee's really upset with us right now. She wanted us to, you know –

CHRIS: She wanted us to behave.

KYLEE: Yeah. I mean, I don't have – I was not in any horrific car accidents with them. I was a model in a fashion show.