

## My interview with Arejay Hale from Halestorm

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Halestorm  
*Phil Mucci; Atlantic Records*

I had the chance to catch up with Arejay Hale, drummer for York, PA band **Halestorm**, Wednesday. **Halestorm**'s self titled album was released in April of 2009 on **Atlantic Records**. Ever since, the band has done non-stop touring across North America and is now on the road with rock heavyweights **Theory of a Deadman**. The tour will be making a stop here in Milwaukee this Sunday at **The Rave**. Here is our interview.

AK: Your band Halestorm is on the road right now with **Theory of a Deadman**. How is everything going so far?

AH: Everything is absolutely incredible. I'm so excited to be out with the Theory of a Deadman guys because we've known them for so long. While we were recording this record that we have right now they were making their record at the exact same time. Both groups were living in the same apartment complex in Los Angeles. They would walk outside and yell to us in their Canadian accents, "Hey, what are you doing later? You should come over to our apartment. It will be a hoot, eh!". So, we're very close with them. It's like a big family reunion on this tour.

AK: Two days ago I had the chance to speak with Sameer who plays guitar in **Flyleaf** who you've played with before. I asked him how fans in Europe are different from here in the States. I know you're going over there with Theory of a Deadman in a few months. Do you see a difference in the fan base over there opposed to American fans?

AH: This is our first time over there so we have no idea. From what I've heard, Europeans love rock n roll! Rock n roll is everything to them there and they're very passionate about it.

AK: They definitely are! They pretty much look at you as the person and not the glitz and glamour surrounding the artist. It's very cool.

AH: I'm really excited to go over there for the first time and especially with Theory of a Deadman.

AK: Does the band have any summer touring plans? Any festivals as of right now?

AH: As of right now, we have no idea where we're going. We're probably going to do the European touring and then come back and do more states touring, probably headlining shows. We'll maybe do some summer festivals as well; I think that would be pretty cool.

AK: Speaking of summer festivals, I know last year you played **Summerfest**, which is in Milwaukee on the **FM1021** stage. The stage harbors indie and alternative acts and at the time you were on tour with Staind who headlined that evening. Reception to your set was great and there were a lot of rave reviews that came out the next day. Would you ever want to play the **Summerfest** festival again?

AH: Is that even a question? We love Summerfest! That was our third time playing there. Our first time was in 2005 with **Shinedown**. Second time we played right in front of **Trapt**. We came back and played with **Staind**. That festival is one of our favorites if not my favorite. There is so much going on and there are so many bands.

AK: It is excellent. I love it.

AH: Plus, the corn there. You guys have the corn with the butter and the salt and it's great.

AK: Ok, well then I have to tell you something! Do you remember an early 90's hip-hop act **Arrested Development**? **Speech**, who was the lead rapper out of the group, that's his family's corn stand and he's there every year.

AH: No way!

AK: Absolutely.

AH: I had no idea!

AK: I had the chance to speak with him and apparently he's huge in Japan. So, there's some nice information for you.

AH: Next time we're there I'll have to stop by.

AK: I recently viewed the video for Halestorm's latest single, "It's Not You". In the video it features a women's roller derby match. Are you a big sports fan? Do you have any teams you like to watch?

AH: I'm kind of in between. I do like to watch some but I was mostly raised on music so I'm not too into them. Our bass player Josh got an email from the [Los Angeles Roller Derby Dolls](#) when we were recording our record and our label gave us the idea to use roller derby in our music video. We were all about it because the song, "It's Not You", is very tongue and cheek. It's sort of a female empowerment thing and the video is power, angst, and the aggressiveness of female empowerment. Overall, we thought it would be really cool for the video. To have 100 girls skating around you while you're playing is a pretty fun thing and is pretty fun to watch.

AK: Not to mention, for hours on end.

AH: We wanted to have fun with this video and not have it be boring and playing in some house or whatever. This is something cool and something interesting.

AK: I was curious if the band is big on social networking sites like [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), etc.

AH: We do a lot of social networking.

AK: Now that I know that you are I think this is a good question to ask you. Do you think it's good for the marketing aspect to potential fans, bad for the loss of mystery surrounding a group, or possibly both?

AH: I think it's a great way to connect with your fans. One thing that we do is every show we take a picture of our fans in the crowd and we'll post it online. The fans can come to our [Myspace](#) and they can see themselves in the picture. Then they can tell their friends, "Hey look, it's me!", and it makes them feel important. Our fans are very important to us and we like to keep them involved. We like to separate the mentality of band on stage, people in crowd. We like to get every one involved and ultimately at the end of the show we are all one pretty much.

AK: Then you will definitely love Europe. They will love you. I can guarantee it.

AH: I can't wait!

AK: Is it surreal to be signed to a major label and to have equipment endorsements and the opportunity to tour the world? I'm guessing that has to be total fulfillment being a musician.

AH: It's great and shocking to see how far we've gone. We really shouldn't be here because we've been signed to Atlantic since 2005. We've lucked out because we should be gone because being in band years is like being in dog years. Atlantic put us on the road and they hooked us up with writers. It was pretty much like band boot camp for three or four years before our record came out. We're lucky we had the chance to wait instead of getting signed and quickly putting out a single and a record. That can be like throwing toilet paper to a window, it sticks. The important thing is we love to make music and we were doing that ourselves for so long. We were playing 150-250 shows a year booking ourselves regionally. Once we got signed, we thought we could always go back to doing what we did but let's work to see how far we can take this thing.

AK: I read somewhere that the band has been together for just about 10 years. Considering it's a new decade what is, in your opinion, the stand out moment for Halestorm over the past decade?

AH: Oh my god, there's so many! It's hard to pick one! First off, we've done a lot of touring and we've opened up for a lot of bands throughout the years before our record was put out. Now that our record is out and having an audience grab on to it is amazing. You know, we're Halestorm, we're just a band! The response has been great. To do these headlining shows after being the opening band in the same venue it's shocking to see how many people come out for us. That's the surreal part for me. I think the coolest thing and the most outstanding thing in 2009 was being able to go do a show as us and seeing the crowd and know the songs. That was my favorite moment. When we would go into a song like, "I Get Off" or "It's Not You", and everybody would be singing along to every single word. That's the most surreal part for me.

AK: I know this Sunday you'll be playing at [The Rave](#) in Milwaukee and The Rave is a great venue. I don't know if you've ever played there before or if you remember playing there before.

AH: This will be our 4th time. The first time we were there it was in 2006 with [Seether](#) and Shinedown in the Eagles Ballroom. Then we came around with [Chevelle](#) and then we came around again with Shinedown. We're pretty much the house band!

AK: I guess so! Have you ever had the chance to go downstairs by the swimming pool? It's pretty crazy.

AH: It's very haunted! Our guitar tech was in the stall in bathroom and someone told me earlier if you turn the lights off in the bathroom you can hear children screaming?

AK: Yes!

AH: Well, while he was in there I told him that and he was like, "Dude, don't even talk about that stuff. It's freaking me out!" So I turned the lights off and he was like, "NO!!!". We like to freak everyone out in that place.

AK: It's crazy because sometimes the whole place will smell like chlorine. Back in the day, the place used to be a large gymnasium. Apparently, a child died young there and hence why they say you can hear screaming children.

AH: Wow.

AK: There are stories that the ghost of **Buddy Holly**, **Ritchie Valens**, and **The Big Bopper** are there.

AH: And uh, Jeffrey Dahmer. He used to live around there didn't he?

AK: I think so, I'm not sure. Oh man.

AH: I'm sorry. I don't want to bring up a serial killer. That place is definitely haunted.

You can see Halestorm on the bill with headliners Theory of a Deadman this Sunday at The Rave.

-AK

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