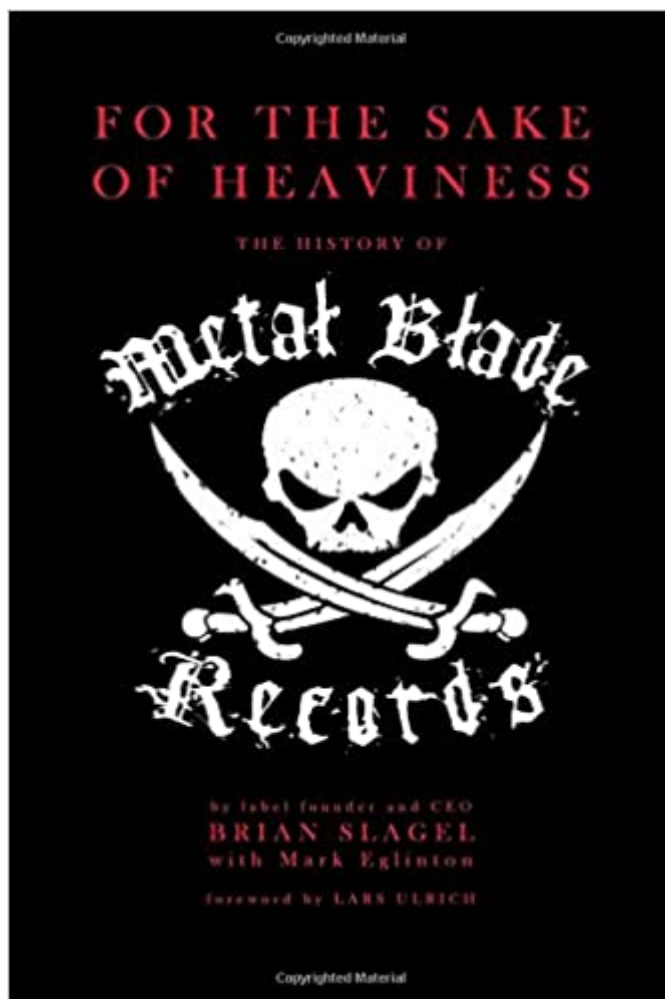


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For The Sake Of Heaviness: The History Of Metal Blade Records



Synopsis

The story of Metal Blade Records is the story of Brian Slagel—a metal-obsessed Southern California kid who launched a fanzine and landed a record store job before cobbling together what he assumed would be a one-off compilation of fledgling bands from the L.A. scene. Released in 1982, the Metal Massacre LP included the debut recordings of local groups such as Steeler, Malice, Ratt, and Metallica. In the wake of the album's unexpected success Slagel virtually stumbled into creating a proper record label, issuing the first releases by Bitch, Armored Saint, and Slayer the following year. *For The Sake Of Heaviness* is an inside look at how Brian built Metal Blade from a one-man operation in his mom's non-air-conditioned garage to the preeminent international home of heavy music that it is today. He shares his insights into signing and working with Amon Amarth, Anvil, As I Lay Dying, Behemoth, The Black Dahlia Murder, Cannibal Corpse, Cirith Ungol, Corrosion of Conformity, D.R.I., Fates Warning, Flotsam and Jetsam, Gwar, King Diamond, King's X, Lizzy Borden, Manowar, Mercyful Fate, Overkill, Raven, Sacred Reich, Six Feet Under, Trouble, Unearth, Voivod, Whitechapel, and others. Always hard at work on a diverse range of projects, Brian reveals the early advice he gave that helped guide Metallica's career; how he helped Metallica replace their bassist twice; his detailed work on Thin Lizzy and Alice Cooper reissues; his behind-the-scenes role in the careers of Mother Love Bone, Alice in Chains, Faith No More, Goo Goo Dolls, and Lamb of God; and his unlikely ventures with kindred metal heads—from hockey star Ken Baumgartner, to celebrity chef Chris Santos, to *The Howard Stern Show*'s Richard Christy, to comedians Jim Florentine, Don Jamieson and Jim Breuer. Throughout *For The Sake Of Heaviness*, Brian steps aside to present first-person insights and extended guest interviews featuring friends, colleagues, Metal Blade staffers, and a long list of artists, including Metallica's James Hetfield, Slayer's Kerry King, King Diamond, and many more. Brian highlights the ins and outs of his 35 year metal odyssey, from promoting small shows in California's San Fernando Valley in the early days, to forging a major partnership with Warner Bros. Records; from weathering the Parents Music Resource Center's attempts to regulate lyrical content, to squaring off with Time Warner over Gwar's envelope-pushing themes; from nearly going bankrupt after underestimating the impact of the rise of CDs, to surviving and thriving in today's rapidly changing music business environment. Featuring a Foreword by Metallica's Lars Ulrich, *For The Sake Of Heaviness* pulls back the curtain to reveal the definitive look at how Metal Blade began, what they've accomplished, and where they're going. With the help of co-writer Mark Eglinton, Brian Slagel invites the reader into a personal conversation about his life's passion, and the passion that drives Metal Blade—finding, exposing, and promoting the best heavy music on the planet.

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Customer Reviews

"Metal Blade is the one label in the hard rock world that has always been at the forefront of the scene, rolled with the times, gone from triumph to triumph, been in the thick of the action, outlived every single one of its competitors, and is revered and respected by musicians, fans, and industry peeps alike. And of course, at the center of the Metal Blade universe is Brian Slagel....Brian's passion, authenticity, and dedication to all things metals has been unequal." ["Lars Ulrich of Metallica "Brian's the guy he's always been....I have the utmost respect for him in that he has done so much for this kind of music. Through the ups and downs of the record business, and the ups and downs of the popularity of this kind of music, Brian has continued to fight and do what he feels is right."](#) ["James Hetfield of Metallica "We were all very excited about Brian's interest. Brian and I hit it off; we've been friends ever since."](#) - Kerry King of Slayer "Here was the record label that I loved so much growing up, and they thought our band was good enough to sign. I was blown away. It felt like I was living in a movie. Right from the beginning, we had a pleasant experience. Everyone felt like a friend, and it has never changed....I've always tried to make Brian proud of me and to impress him, because he's been like a big brother to me" ["Chris Barnes of Cannibal Corpse and Six Feet Under "Brian's sincerity is clear to metal fans worldwide, and that translates to long-term loyalty and interest in Metal Blade Records"](#) ["Alex Webster of Cannibal Corpse "From the start, whatever came out of your imaginations---that's what Brian wanted. He never interfered with the vision of a band."](#) ["Lizzy Borden "Brian was always a big supporter of Gwar. He has always backed us, and you can't deny the man's](#)

tenacity." **•Brad Roberts of Gwar**"He was very into us long before we became connected, and, since those early days, Brian and I have become very close. Any decisions we make are made together, both of us sitting in a room or a restaurant, with no lawyers. We're just two guys working out the best thing for us both. That's how it's always been.....I have the highest respect for Brian. I consider him a very close friend." **•King Diamond** "We decided to sign with Metal Blade, and I believe it was the perfect choice for us. We've had a great relationship with Metal Blade throughout our career. That's why we've stayed with them for so long." **•Johan Hegg of Amon Amarth**"I've been a fan of Brian's since I heard of him in the 1980s. He's a metal god!" **•Richard Christy of The Howard Stern Show and Charred Walls of the Damned** "I always say that, without Brian, there is no Armored Saint." **•John Bush of Armored Saint**

Brian Slagel is the founder and CEO of Metal Blade Records. He gave Metallica their first opportunity to record when they appeared on his 1982 Metal Massacre compilation alongside Ratt and a handful of other then-underground metal acts. The label went on to release seminal albums by Slayer, Mercyful Fate, Cannibal Corpse, Fates Warning, Amon Amarth, The Black Dahlia Murder, GWAR, Corrosion of Conformity, and others. **Mark Eglinton** is a multi-language and best-selling author, whose titles include James Hetfield: The Wolf at Metallica's Door, the first and only biography of the Metallica frontman. He collaborated with Pantera bassist Rex Brown on his memoir Official Truth and with Behemoth's Adam Nergal Darski on his autobiographical Confessions of a Heretic.

Decent book. Nothing mind blowing. Worth a read if you're a huge metal fan.

Gratitude to Brian Slagel for his role in the history of heavy metal. Such a humble guy for someone so instrumental in introducing what has become so important to so many people. The book flows smoothly, is well written and interesting and even though he has every right to be, it's not at all braggy. It's a joy to read about the beginning of the American metal scene in his words. Such a likeable voice and writing style. In the right hands and with the right casting, this would make a great scripted film.

received this a couple of days ago and pretty much read it without breathing or blinking. Been a metal/metal blade fan since back in the day, bought a bunch of records that they've put out and just

had to read the stories from the man himself. What's so great about this book is that, although he's been very successful, Brian Slagel is just a metalhead. That passion and excitement shines through in every word of this book. It's one that every fan of heavy music has got to own, and that's before even mentioning the extra interviews that are spaced along the way. Solid metal gold.

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