Holding Absence *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* bio

From the moment of our first breath to the very last gasp we take before we die, we never stop growing as people. Every trial and tribulation, every heartbreak, success and failure, every scar, blemish and wrinkle is another brushstroke illuminating our life’s unique canvas. As Holding Absence frontman Lucas Woodland sings on “The Angel in the Marble,” the closing track on his band’s outstanding third album *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* (released on August 25th via SharpTone Records), we are, each and every one of us, “a puzzle, a painting, a work of art in the making.”

Holding Absence’s new album is a testament to how our life’s story is never fully told, with opportunities for change and growth found in every moment, from the depths of despair to the euphoria of our greatest loves. Whether adding flourishes of colour to an already picturesque painting, or chiselling away at the marble to reveal the beauty within, *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* – the final act in a trilogy of records encompassing the first chapter of Holding Absence’s career – speaks to how we are each an unfinished work of art with new meanings and qualities waiting to be discovered.

“The moment this all came together for me was when I realised a marble sculpture has to be broken to become beautiful,” Lucas says of *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction*’s themes. “When we think of ourselves as growing, evolving and getting better, we often view it as though we’re adding things to ourselves. This album is me discovering that sometimes you have to take the bad parts of yourself away, rather than feeling like you always have to add ‘good’ things. And yes, that can be a hard process and it hurts, but it’s for the best. *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* is an album of hope, but you need to go through hardship to find hope. Sometimes, you need to work to find happiness in life.”

A record Lucas describes as a form of self-therapy that sees him more candid and comfortable with his emotions than ever before, *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* brims with a level of energy, excitement and sheer weight of feeling that is unparalleled in contemporary alternative music. Whether Lucas and his bandmates – guitarist Scott Carey, bassist Ben Elliott and drummer Ash Green – are performing relatable anthems about imposter syndrome and self-loathing like massive singles “Crooked Melody” and “False Dawn,” gushing love ballads (“Honey Moon”) or existential reflections on suicide (“Death Nonetheless”), the four-piece’s approach on their new album is packed with the kind of vigour that saw *Kerrang!* label them as British rock’s “new leading light” and *Loudwire* proclaim the Cardiff natives to be “the UK’s most exciting new rock band.”

Recorded at Canada’s Jukasa Studios with producer Dan Weller (Enter Shikari, Bury Tomorrow), *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* builds further into the lore of Holding Absence that sets them apart from many of their contemporaries. Taking influence from a varied array of sources including Renaissance sculptor Michelangelo, sci-fi blockbuster *Star Wars* and the Japanese pottery art of Kintsugi, Holding Absence’s new LP speaks to the desire of Lucas and his bandmates to create a project that exists as so much more than just a band.

“It’s really important to state that this record is the third part of a trilogy,” Lucas says. “*The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* is the final piece of a wider art project, with this record serving as a bit of a love letter to Holding Absence before we take the next step. In that regard, I really took inspiration from the *Star Wars* trilogies and how people over the years have completed these epic projects that really fill in the blanks and allow the art to evolve into something bigger and different.”

“Another big part of this album is the idea of putting things back together and how that makes them more beautiful,” Lucas continues. “That’s where Kintsugi and Michelangelo’s marble statues come in, because they show how visible breakage can be a beautiful thing, and how we are all essentially likes blocks of marble, but it’s our interpretation of what’s inside and how we chisel away at that over our lives which makes us who we become. Those metaphors and that acknowledgment and acceptance of those imperfections are key to understanding the record.”

Having broken one million monthly listeners on *Spotify* and with top song “Afterlife” racking up in excess of 30,000,000 streams, *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* looks a sure bet to bring even more success the way of Holding Absence, who’ve toured with the likes of Funeral For a Friend, Electric Callboy and You Me At Six. Previous LP *The Greatest Mistake of My Life* saw the band grace the covers of *Kerrang!* and *Rock Sound*, with glowing coverage from outlets including *Loudwire*, *Alternative Press* and *Upset*. *The Guardian*, meanwhile, praised Holding Absence as a band “making pop-rock anthems with rib-rattling drumming and mainstream appeal.”

With that love only set to grow once *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* is released, it’s important for Lucas to emphasise how this album represents that what’s come so far is just the beginning of Holding Absence’s journey.

“Our first album (2019’s *Holding Absence*) was about love, *The Greatest Mistake of My Life* was about loss, and this album is about the person that’s left at the end of that, and the lessons they’ve learned from their trauma. It’s the end of a trilogy – the album art literally says this is part three of three – but it’s not the end of Holding Absence. *The Noble Art of Self-Destruction* ends on a note of hope, of looking forward free of fear and of embracing yourself, cracks and all. I think that’s something to be really proud of.”