Artist

**156/SILENCE**

Label

**SharpTone Records**

Date

**2024**

By Ryan J. Downey

**BIO**

**156/Silence** creates soundtracks for the pushed aside and marginalized. Equal parts frenetic, unhinged, passionate, and ambitious, their music resonates with outsiders of all stripes. 156/Silence is for anyone determined to peel back the façade of false pleasantries, shallow platitudes, and fakery.

It’s a mission the band began in earnest with underground missives. (*Metal Injection* advised readers to “wreck your speakers with 156/Silence” on the eve of 2017’s *Karma* EP.) The group excels live, offering both community and devastation, while touring with the likes of The Acacia Strain, Unearth, Upon A Burning Body, D.R.U.G.S., Signs Of The Swarm, and Orthodox, among others.

Howling personal declarations, jagged riffs, post-hardcore, noise, thrash, sludge, and ambiance collide within 156/Silence. In 2018, *Kerrang!* hailed the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania group as one of the *6 Underground Metalcore Bands Redefining the Scene*. Less than a decade after their emergence, 156/Silence delivers again on that promise with an incendiary fourth album, *People Watching*.

“We pushed ourselves to get out of our comfort zone and explore new things,” says vocalist Jack Murray, who writes lyrics and vocals over music penned primarily by guitarist Jimmy Howell.

“We have differing feelings about different records,” Howell says of himself, Murray, guitarist Ryan Wilkinson, bassist Lukas Booker, and drummer Kyle O’Connell. “But we can all agree that *People Watching* is our best album yet. You could ask anybody in the band, and nobody would disagree.”

*People Watching* boasts rich and blistering songs like “Blood Loss” (featuring Carson Pace of The Callous Daoboys), “Wants I Need” (featuring Craig Owens of D.R.U.G.S.), “Change Agent” (with Trae Roberts of Mouth For War,” “Target Acquired,” “Intravenous,” and “Funeral Arrangements.”

156/Silence sounds ravenous, ominous, and haunting. Their songs are literary and cinematic, cerebral and brutal, drawing from real and imagined horrors, all intertwined with melody and might.

Murray’s lyrics remain keenly observational, personal, and incisive. He approaches each song with the same intensity and raw nerve that propelled earlier anthems like “Conflict of Interest,” “High Dive in a Low Well,” and “I Am A Fault.” That authenticity is crucial to the band’s ever-growing audience.

No two 156/Silence albums are alike, from the unhinged frenetic chaos of *Undercover Scumbag* (2018) to the gloriously savage and technical *Irrational Pull* (2020), which *Metal Hammer* likened to Converge and Botch. The diverse ruminations found in *Narrative* (2022) took things even further. *BrooklynVegan* called the album “bolder and richer” and “an exciting step forward for [the] band.”

*People Watching* continues the prolific outfit’s tradition of steadfast evolution and innovation. Produced by Jonathan Dolese (D.R.U.G.S., Emmure, Attack Attack!), *People Watching* ushers in a new era for the band. *Knotfest* wrote that “Unreasonable Doubt” “sees 156 level up in combining aggression and artistry.” *Revolver* praised the dark melodic edge of the *Animal Farm*-inspired “Better Written Villain,” declaring, “156/Silence may have just penned an instant classic of their own canon.”

“I look toward bands we love that grew *with* their listeners – bands like Thrice, Glassjaw, and Deftones,” Howell says of their continuing creative mission. “They have a sound, but they grow and change. Some bands are comfortable repeating a great band’s sound. I don’t want to do that. I want to make you *feel* the way you do when you hear one of those bands, without sounding like them.”

The album embraces melodic hooks without sacrificing any heaviness. Howell’s lush cinematic soundscapes expand, as well. Their golden age of metalcore roots shimmer and swirl together with influences ranging from Aphex Twin to Deftones, from movie soundtracks to horror videogames.

*People Watching* is truly the culmination of the last nine years of 156/Silence. “I’m incredibly proud of what we’ve created,” Murray says. “This album has been a long time coming.

“Welcome to the new era of 156.”

**SHORT BIO**

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**LINEUP**

* Jack Murray – Vocals
* Jimmy Howell – Guitar
* Ryan Wilkinson – Guitar
* Lukas Booker – Bass
* Kyle O’Connell – Drums

**SELECT DISCOGRAPHY**

* *People Watching* (2024)
* *Narrative* (2022)
* *Don't Hold Your Breath* EP (2021)
* *Irrational Pull* (2020)
* *Undercover Scumbag* (2018)
* *Karma* EP(2017)