

## ART & BOOKS

### [Dream Theater: the Stuff That Dreams Are Made Of.](#)

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**Two decades on, Dream Theater is still one of the most creative & technical bands in Progressive Rock.**

Dream Theater is celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They are currently on tour with their latest album *Octavarium*, first released on 7 June 2005. This multi-faceted collection has proved once more that the resilient band can still take music into hitherto uncharted territories. The album contains eight songs which incorporate a vast array of musical genres. It is both “a continuation of Portnoy's *Alcoholics Anonymous*” and “an epic rivalling *A Change of Seasons*.”<sup>1</sup>

Dream Theater was formed in 1985-1986 by three students from Boston's prestigious Berklee College of Music: guitarist John Petrucci, drummer Mike Portnoy and bassist John Myung. They succeeded in shaping a unique genre of soft metal, with no bestial roaring, no saturated guitars, no haphazardly beaten drums. On the contrary, their melodies rely upon symphonic magnificence and fluid instrumental passages.<sup>2</sup>

Their skill in mastering their instruments is widely recognised as outstanding, but Dream Theater are also renowned for the complex structure of their albums. Their pieces are often built as a cluster of short stories set in enigmatic plots.

Its most advanced experiment in this field is perhaps *Metropolis Part.2; Scenes From a Memory* released in 1999. In this concept album Dream Theater tried to create a scenario tied to their preceding works. The story was based upon a session of hypnosis led by a psychoanalyst who urged his patient to re-visit his past, his memory, and ultimately his own death. Mike Portnoy and James Labrie (the vocalist) wrote extensively about the stories narrated in this theatrical opus. Commercially speaking, the album was not a major success but it led to a world-wide tour and was hailed as a masterpiece by fans and critics.

The critically acclaimed band has won several prizes and awards. Its most prestigious distinction came when John Petrucci was nominated as the third player on the famous “G3 Tour” in 2001 again in 2005. Together with Steve Vai and Joe Satriani, Petrucci toured Japan and the United States last year and yet again established his mark as one of the most brilliant guitarists of his generation.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dream\\_Theater](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dream_Theater)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.dreamtheater.net/info\\_biography.php](http://www.dreamtheater.net/info_biography.php)

<sup>3</sup> Allan Richter “A Long Island Sound by Way of Topographic Oceans,” *The New York Times* 22 August 2004.