

MONOTRONE – BIOGRAPHY



Bäumli (Vox, Git)

Franky (Bass)

Philippe (Vox, Git)

Fran (Drums)

In 1976, guitarist **Thomas «Bäumli» Baumgartner** started playing guitar at the tender age of 7. His parents supported him so much back then that they even drove him to an AC/DC-show on the Highway-To-Hell-Tour, delivering him to the door and patiently waiting for him to return after the show.

Later, his obsession for Rock'n'Roll would even make him quit school in his teens to join LEE WHITE, local hair metal heroes at the time. In the style's heyday, during the mid-80s, he was seen as a wonder child of the scene, both as a player and songwriter. He then decided to pursue his own band and left for London to move in his with singer mate David Rubio to form TOY BOY.

Struggling to find a deal and brought down by material pressure in the big city, he and David returned to Switzerland to start from scratch and form a new band. Being infected by the new sounds of the exploding scene of the late 80s, which would later be called «Grunge», they adapted and updated their style. Calling themselves EROTIC JESUS (a quote from a Jane's-Addiction-Song), they recorded a demo which immediately got them a deal with Germany-based, newly found label G.U.N. Records (backed by BMG).

To back up their debut-mini-album «Obnoxious» of 1992, they opened for MANIC STREET PREACHERS on their first European Tour. Unfortunately, this same year, the band's rhythm section was involved in a car accident that put the band on instant hold. Drummer **Fran Lorkovic**, freshly graduated from conservatory, stepped in for the writing sessions to what would become their first longplayer «Extravaganza». They struck great chemistry, and Fran became the bands' permanent drummer. After that followed several tours through Europe supporting Perry Farrell's then-new band PORNO FOR PYROS, and later in 1993 ICE-T'S Body Count on their debut album tour. Despite these successes and lots of positive feedback in the press there was turmoil in the band regarding the musical direction.

First, Fran left to pursue further drumming exploration in Amsterdam and New York. Next, Tommy would join ex-POLTERGEIST guitarist/singer V.O. Pulver in his newly formed group GURD, who went on to record the two highly acclaimed albums «Gurd» and «Addicted». During this time and accompanied by tours supporting SPUDMONSTERS and CHANNEL ZERO, Tommy would be forced to back out and leave the band, due to financial distress in 1995.

Guitarist **Philippe Strübin** would step in for him, he had met bandleader Pulver working together at the same pizza delivery service. Philippe would go on to record the subsequent and likewise successful albums «D-fect» and «Down The Drain» with the band. These were backed by tours opening for the likes of PRO-PAIN and LIFE OF AGONY.

In the meantime, Tommy and Fran decided to reunite to form the power trio UNDERGOD and would release three albums together between 1998 and 2002. From the 2nd album on, their style shifted to a more electronic and industrial style, equally intensely touring and sharing stages with the likes of VOIVOD, DISTURBED, CLAWFINGER, ZEROMANCER or LETZTE INSTANZ.

When Philippe left GURD in 1998 and drummer Tobias Roth followed to form the trio DISGROOVE, he turned away from hardcore metal to his love for alternative rock, effectively taking guitarist, lead singer, bandleader, and songwriter duties in one. They went on to release four critically acclaimed albums between 2004 and 2012, touring with bands like DIE HAPPY, HELMET and VELVET REVOLVER.

After UNDERGOD called it quits in 2004, Fran and Tommy's paths would cross several times again, be it in a Led Zeppelin tribute project or in early versions of what would later become Tommy's remarkable bands, THE BLACKBERRY BRANDIES, with singer BETTINA SCHELKER and later NEO NOIRE with ZATOKREV's Fredy Rotter and bassist and former DISGROOVE-member **Franky Kalwies**.

After Fran's eight years of leading the highly special ZLANG ZLUT, a duo, with him as drummer/singer combined with electric cellist Beat Schneider, he took an invitation to perform and sing a couple of tunes for a series of Jazz evenings, sharing the stage with Philippe. The two connected and started working on songs for a potential future band.

So when Tommy approached Fran in 2018 for a possible new collaboration, Fran suggested Philippe as the singer, and the trio would be completed by bassist Franky to become the power-pop quartet they are today.

BAND MEMBERS

Philippe Strübin – Vocal & Guitar
Thomas «Bäumli» Baumgartner – Vocal & Guitar
Franky Kalwies – Bass
Fran Lorkovic – Drums

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DISCOGRAPHY

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