

The header features a dark background with yellow and blue lightning bolts. The text "HARDROCK HAVEN" is written in a large, metallic, serif font. To the right, there is a small image of a person playing a guitar, with the text "ALL ACCESS" and "BACKSTAGE PASS" overlaid. Below the main title is a horizontal navigation menu with the following items: HOME, CD/DVD REVIEWS, CONCERT REVIEWS, EDITORIALS, IN DEPTH, INTERVIEWS, and NEWS DESK.

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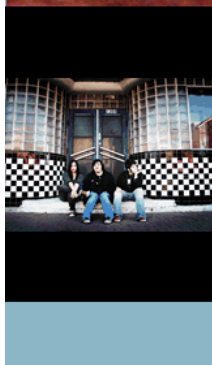
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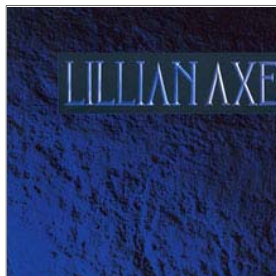
[Online Resource for AOR, Melodic, Hard Rock, Heavy and Progressive Metal Music](#)

## CD/DVD Review

## Lillian Axe

Lillian Axe Metal Mind Productions

by John Kindred  
Staff Writer



Comments: New Orleans-based melodic metal band, Lillian Axe, was formed in '83 by Stevie Blaze. The band first garnered interest from MCA records when Blaze along with drummer Danny King joined forces with vocalist Ron Taylor, guitarist Jon Ster and Rob Stratton. The band released the self-title debut studio album in '88 which was produced by the late Robbin Crosby of Ratt.

Containing 10 songs that reveled within the context of melodic metal, Lillian Axe's music carries an up tempo and positive vibe. Combining Blaze's fluid and expressive lead guitar performances with Taylor's vocal prowess the band delivers smart, intelligible

arrangements which fell in line with the feel good, party atmosphere of this particular genre during the '80s.

Opening the album is the uplifting "Dream of a Lifetime." Riding on a plateau built on synth arrangement the song plunges into the ring of an alarm clock before Ster and Blaze's guitars push forth with pompous mayhem. Listeners are teased with Blaze's harmony riffs and rhythmic crunch. "Inside Out" continues the melodic overtones. Here the band tries to deliver a catchy hook filled chorus but falls a bit short on delivery. "Visions In The Night" opens more melodic-harmony-guitar phrasing parlaying over a catchy rhythmic arrangement. Again the chorus feels more like a bridge which builds to the solo section.

"Picture Perfect" has a typical metal rhythm of muted and open position chords. Here Blaze demonstrates non-metal influences in the section leading to the solo. "The More That You Get" intro and verse rhythm reminds one of the chorus vocal melodies from Rainbow's "Since You've Been Gone." "Misery Loves Company" opens a driving rhythm, which shifts through several patterns before returning to the original opening rhythm that turns out to be the chorus progression.

"Nobody Knows" is the first "ballad" on the album, Taylor sings over an acoustic melody. Taylor sings with more clarity to his voice, a little less grit. Certainly this provides a change of pace as the songs up to now are each battling for a sense of identity. "Hard Luck" returns to a synth intro which builds into heavily distorted guitar rhythm. This song has a progressive feel and mixes in touches of melodic elements. "Waiting In The Dark" opens with a cool melodic theme, the drum and bass maintain a galloping up tempo beat and the guitars are acoustic melodies with distorted overtones providing tension and aggression. "Laugh In Your Face" closes out the album. Again the band pushes forth with their up tempo signature sound.

Lillian Axe finds a band discovering their musical identity. Key elements can be heard as the band finds their sound. The album is full of trademark harmony phrasing, varied textural elements, stylish vocals and a genuine feel good vibe makeup the foundation for future releases that truly shine.

## Musicians:

Ron Taylor - vocals  
Stevie Blaze - guitar, keyboards and background vocals  
Jon Ster - guitar, keyboards and background vocals  
Rob Stratton - bass and background vocals  
Danny King - drums

## Additional Musicians:

Michael Dorian - keyboards  
Nate Winger - background vocals  
Paul Winger - background vocals

## Production:

Produced by Robbin Crosby.

## Track Listing:

01. Dream Of A Lifetime  
02. Inside Out  
03. Vision In The Night  
04. Picture Perfect  
05. The More That You Get  
06. Misery Loves Company  
07. Nobody Knows  
08. Hard Luck

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Dec.: Teenage Casket Company  
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Sept.: Secret Smile  
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July: Army of Freshman  
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May: Gavin Makhail  
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1024 X 768

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09. Waiting In The Dark

10. Laughing In Your Face

Hardrock Haven rating: 7/10

The image is a vertical collage of three promotional banners. The top banner is black with white text and a white silhouette of a guitar headstock on the left. It reads "WILLIAMSONSMUSICSTUDIOS.COM" in a large font, with "FIRST CLASS PROFESSIONAL MUSIC TUITION" in smaller text below it. To the right, it lists "PROFESSIONAL GUITAR, BASS, RECORDING, MUSIC TUITION". The middle banner features the band name "AVANTASIA" in a stylized, gothic font on the left, with "TOBIAS SAMMET'S" above it. To the right, it says "THE SCARECROW" in a similar font, with "OUT NOW!" below it. The background of this banner is dark with a skull and a scythe. The bottom banner has a dark background with a fiery, blue and orange glow. It features the word "Heaven" in a cursive font on the left and "HELL" in a bold, blocky font on the right. Below "HELL" is the text "Records.com". On the right side of this banner is a small, square black and white portrait of a man with long, wavy hair, identified as Tony Harnell.