

REVOLVER

DECEMBER 14, 2018

Link to article: <https://www.revolvermag.com/music/oszy-talks-ozzfest-new-years-bash-metal-camaraderie-working-during-holidays>

OZZY TALKS OZZFEST NEW YEAR'S BASH, METAL CAMARADERIE, WORKING DURING HOLIDAYS

"People look at heavy-metal guys and they think, 'Oh, they're bad people.' But we're really not."



Ozzy Osbourne, 2016

photograph by Francesco Castaldo/Archivio Francesco Castaldo/Mondadori Portfolio
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Though he was briefly sidelined with a scary hand infection that had the Prince of Fucking Darkness wondering if his time was finally up, Ozzy Osbourne is back fully healed and ready to bid 2018 farewell and ring in 2019 in style. He'll do so with a horde of famous friends, including Rob Zombie, Marilyn Manson, Korn frontman Jonathan Davis and Ice-T–fronted rap-rock pioneers Body Count, at the Ozzfest New Year's Eve bash set to take place Monday, December 31st at The Forum in Los Angeles. (Tickets are available via Ticketmaster.)

At the time of the event's announcement, Ozzy commented, "I asked Sharon what we're doing this New Year's Eve and she said, 'WE'RE DOING FUCK ALL!' So I thought, 'We didn't do Ozzfest in 2018, so let's do a New Year's Eve Ozzfest.'" Now he's opened up a little more about the big show, which features a lineup that he describes as "kind of like the all-stars of Ozzfest."

HOW YOU DO FEEL ABOUT WORKING THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS?

OZZY OSBOURNE I've always wanted to work through Christmas — it's a good start to the new year. Ozzfest at the forum, New Year's Eve, with us, two stages with Manson, Rob Zombie, Zakk Sabbath, Ice-T, a bunch of different people.

THIS YEAR'S LINEUP FEATURES A LOT OF OZZFEST ALUMNI.

Yeah, that's the beauty of it, it's kind of like the all-stars of Ozzfest. That's one thing I'm really proud of because of how this all started. Many years ago when we tried to go on Lollapalooza and they said we don't have enough space for Ozzy and this kind of music. So, we took a chance and did it all our own and it took off. And here we are, 21 years later. My god.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A REAL CAMARADERIE AMONG THE HARD-ROCK WORLD.

You know people look at heavy-metal guys and they think, "Oh, they're bad people." But we're really not. I mean, if something bad happens, I'll get phone calls "Are you OK? Do you need any help?" This goes back years to even when Randy [*Rhoads*] got killed. I recently contacted Jonathan [*Davis*] after his wife passed away. It means a lot to support each other.

LET'S TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ZAKK AND WHAT IT'S LIKE HAVING HIM BACK OUT WITH YOU. ON OZZFEST, HE'LL BE PULLING DOUBLE-DUTY, PERFORMING ON THE SECOND STAGE WITH ZAKK SABBATH AND THEN WITH YOU FOR THE FINAL SET OF THE NIGHT.

It's good to have him back. Zakk's like a member of my family and it's a joy to work with him now that we're both sober. You know, he's the longest player — guitar player — I've ever had both with Sabbath and my solo gig.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO WITH OZZFEST THIS YEAR?

I wanna give them a great show, I wanna have fun. I mean, I'm bringing the New Year in with a big bang!

AND YOU'LL BE ONSTAGE WHEN THE NEW YEAR RINGS IN?

Yeah. I got to time it, because when you rehearse, you know, I'll play through songs. But then when you go onstage, you start to just go with it. We've got to time it so we can stop for the countdown.