

## Music review

# Avenged Sevenfold alters sound, continues success



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By Dalton Carver  
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They're coming off two different kinds of nightmares in 2009 and 2010. Huntington Beach's Avenged Sevenfold has returned for the sixth time to scare mothers, incite head-banging, but most of all, to make rock and roll that will actually last.

Never afraid to be experimental, A7X has transformed from a screaming, metalcore band in their first two albums, to a hard rock/heavy metal outfit in their last four. Imagine the contrast

between The Devil Wears Prada and Breaking Benjamin.

Many bands have done this, but the majority of them eventually disbanded, such as Atreyu, or have received much less attention, like Papa Roach.

Avenged Sevenfold thrives on through their sixth album, "Hail to the King," which adds a blues-rock sound to the majority of the songs.

The name is appropriate, as they find themselves at the top of the rock heap. However, the metal outfit hasn't earned this position without difficulty.

In 2009, James "The Rev" Sullivan, was found dead in his home. The drummer and key component to the band died of a drug overdose.

Resisting the temptation to disband, A7X released their fifth album, "Nightmare," in 2010. More of a concept album alluding to the subject of Sullivan's passing, the release was well-received by fans, but got mixed reviews from critics.

This leads up to "Hail to the King," the first album without any percussion work from Sul-

livan.

His replacement, Arin Ilejay, formerly of Confide, has filled the large shoes in terms of talent and technique. However, the image Sullivan portrayed remains unique and untouched, which is probably for the best.

The first song of the release, "Shepherd of Fire," does a great job of introducing you to the rest of the album.

Death, gloom and hell have always been a subject of A7X's writing and this first track seems to be coming from the point of view of the devil himself. If any of that frightens you, don't despair.

Not all of the material is about fire and brimstone, but viewing their imagery on the album art should give you a good idea of what you're getting yourself into.

The title track, "Hail to the King," is one of the strongest songs on the album. Synyster Gates' and Zacky Vengeance's guitar work is phenomenal. M. Shadows' brooding, but hook-filled voice syncs perfectly with the thumping of Johnny Christ's bass mastery.

It's a great example of how a band can balance a song with all of their talents, something that A7X has always done well.

The album continues to be hard-hitting until "Crimson Day." More of a ballad, the song really slows down the pace of the album. Although it's not a bad track, it wasn't one of my favorites.

I feel the same about the second ballad on the release, "Acid Rain," which runs a little long. "Planets" may also seem odd to some listeners.

It's probably one of the songs that most utilizes a Black Sabbath/Led Zeppelin feel. I liked it, despite it being something different from them.

The bonus track, "St. James," most likely named after Sullivan, is one of the best tracks on the album. It's some "City of Evil" mixed in with current A7X, and it's enjoyable to listen to, as well as canonizing the late drummer. "Sometimes our saints are sinners," lyrics from the track, really sum it up.

Despite their genre jumping, A7X always delivers a technical

and hard-hitting rock-and-roll experience.

Even with "Hail to the King's" new Led Zeppelin, blues-rock influences, M. Shadows' unique vocal style, as well as Synyster Gates' guitar work, allow the listener to easily discern that it's Avenged Sevenfold.

It's a release that fans of "City of Evil," the self-titled, and "Nightmare" should enjoy. Lovers of older rock, like Black Sabbath, will get a headbang out of it as well.

I'm not sure that the fans of the first two albums will buy into it as much, but those fans were most likely lost with the release of "City of Evil."

If you've been a fan since the beginning, and held on until now, nothing Avenged Sevenfold releases will disappoint you. The album solidifies that Avenged Sevenfold will be one of the music acts that will have impact on the 2000s.

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## Technology review

# Although similar to previous model, new laptops contain upgrades



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If you see a freshman and senior using similar laptops, don't be fooled.

The brand new Dell Latitude E6530 looks similar to the laptops issued two years ago but

comes with major under-the-hood improvements.

The most surprising featured packed in the laptop is its ability to connect via Bluetooth. You can now connect your mouse without a USB dongle.

You can also connect all your mobile devices without a working internet connection. Bluetooth connectivity was not present in the previous two laptop models.

In terms of power, it is by no means a monster processor but the quad core Intel i5 Processor clocked at 2.90 GHz should be sufficient for Microsoft Office as well as your favorite cat videos on YouTube.

One specification that is expected in this year's machine is a 64-bit operating system. Such operating systems are common today, but because Southwestern

issued a 32-bit laptop two years ago, it is an upgrade worth noting.

With the upgrade, laptops will fully utilize its hardware components.

The laptops come with 8 GB of RAM. This is especially surprisingly as it is double the typical amount for consumer-targeted laptops.

With the 64-bit operating system coupled with 8GB of RAM, start-up time for the E6530 is relatively short at 52 seconds.

This marks a huge improvement compared to the older 32-bit model that ticks away 2:05 minutes at start-up.

Though not the latest Windows 8, the new laptops come with Windows 7 Professional which should serve students' school-related needs flawlessly.

It also comes with Microsoft

Office Suite.

Users can also rest assured that their data is stored securely in the 500 GB internal hard disk.

This is another notable upgrade from previous laptops that came with only 300 GB worth of storage.

When it comes to peripheral connection, the E6530 sports the latest and fastest USB 3.0 ports as well as one USB 2.0 port. Users can connect up to three USB devices at once.

There is also an HDMI port for your external monitor needs.

Besides USB ports, the E6530 also features an express chip slot as well as an eSATA. The express chip slot comes in handy when a better graphics card or sound card is needed.

Though not popular among regular users, the eSATA slot can be used to expand the memory

arsenal with an external hard disk.

Users can personalize their laptops with preloaded Builder Pride desktop wallpapers.

In comparison to past year's Toshiba laptops, this brand new Dell Latitude E6530 is sturdier and solid.

Its overall dark themed body reinforces the tank-like feel users get when using the machine.

Overall, the brand new Dell Latitude E6530 is a huge upgrade from the previous Toshiba laptops.

With a relatively fast machine coupled with upgraded Wi-Fi connection, internet addicts can expect a speedy experience when surfing the internet on campus.

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