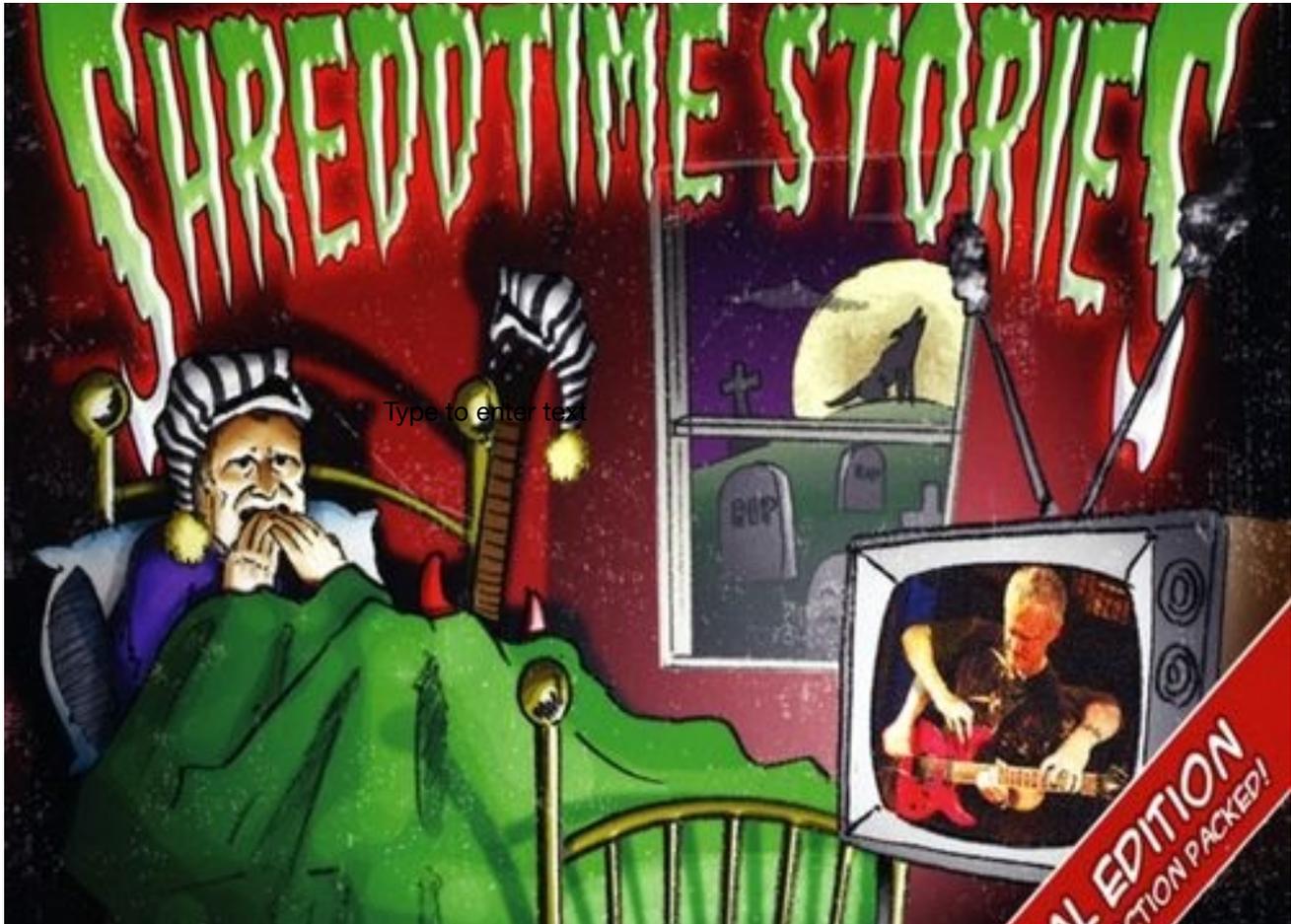

TD CLARK

Favorite albums, a must buy CD!



Hek82 chats with TD Clark, reknowned solo guitarist and shredder ... his band supports many national acts and he has recorded many great albums too, inc. my personal favorite "Shreddtime Stories!"

TD Clark just got out of the studio with Dee Snider not long ago. The anticipation of this new album with TD on at least four songs is too great... can't wait!

Hek: When I first saw you perform, you were playing with Yngwie Malmsteen; (his supporting act; at the time...)

TD Clark is a guitarist from Aurora, IL. Best known solo acts for supporting artists like Yngwie Malmsteen, Steve Vai, Michael Schenker, Gary Hoey, and Bumblefoot ... www.tdclark.com

TD Clark: Must've been a few years ago when I did a show with him at the House of Blues in Chicago...

Hek: Yes!

TD Clark: That was what led to the Guitar Gods tour that I did with him, Gary Hoey, Uli John Roth, and Bumblefoot! What happened was that on Facebook I had come across an ad looking for an opening band for the Yngwie Malmsteen Guitar Gods tour ...

Hek: Wow!

TD Clark: So as the story goes, I contacted the guy and it had to be decided ultimately by Yngwie, and April Malmsteen who was managing it... and initially I had no idea how I was going to fund this tour. It would be 4 guys, plus a tech/swag guy out on the road, so to get a van and the whole thing would be expensive...

Hek: Oh! So the whole band went with you... I see. I heard about the tour and followed the news although I missed out on the shows, I saw it on Facebook. People sure like social media pages more and more nowadays...!

TD Clark: Facebook is an awesome tool. You can't downplay the impact of Facebook. Unfortunately, it seems restricted with how friends are able to post on a social network like me trying to post to fans... it's kind of a pain. Anyhow, so I contacted the guy and submitted the video that we did when we played supporting Malmsteen at the HOB. The band and I had really killed it that

"Facebook is an awesome tool. You can't downplay the impact of Facebook." - Clark

night, although we had been a little on edge dealing w/ backstage passes and so on, the schedule was all changing, but we were ready to just go and do it... so by the time we got on stage we ripped it up pretty good! In particular, it was Dropped D symphony from my Shredtime Stories record! They saw our video tape and immediately contacted me back!

Hek: Alright!

TD Clark: "We are definitely interested" he told me, and Yngwie remembered us... And so, the negotiations began to afford to get us on the tour!

Hek: Now that you were elevated to the ranks on the Gods all you had to do



TD Clark, guitarist and Dee Snider the vocalist of Twisted Sister!

Nulla nunc lectus porttitor vitae pulvinar magna. Sed et lacus quis enim mattis nonummy sodales.

was snap your fingers and you would have everything you needed, I'm sure!

TD Clark: Sure, that's how it works! Trying to get funding and making calls... I called up all of my endorsers inc. ESP guitars sent guitars.. strings and bass strings... EMG pick ups... Conquest cables , everybody stepped up and the year was covered!

Hek: Cool!

TD Clark: A friend of mine is actually an entertainment lawyer- used to be my student, then worked for Playboy as senior legal consul and now he works for Mark Brunette who does Survivor and all those shows... He lives in LA. We had played several shows back a few years at Whiskey-a-Go-Go with Warren De Martini from Ratt and Uli John Roth from the Scorpions... Two years ago I played with Bumblefoot and Uli John Roth which was interesting because shortly thereafter we were all on the Guitar Gods tour!

Hek: Yeah, I know but I can't see every show, even though I might try- ha, ha!

TD Clark: Well at the show w/De Martini my one buddy and friend who runs an international construction company was there... Comes up to me and says "Holy Smokes!" we had killed it once again. Everybody in my band had put forth a 112% effort.

Hek: Great venue! Just to be there at the Whiskey is really cool... you know, the history of the place and bands that have played there, like the Doors.

TD Clark: Yeah! A while back when I started doing NAMM shows I wanted to always book the Whiskey- the NAMM shows were in Anaheim... then LA for a while, and moved back to the Anaheim convention center. You never know who's gonna be in the audience too, one year Jim Carrey was there when his daughter's band was playing there too! LA is fun like that... I'm from Chicago, so the music business is not really here- we do a lot of supporting shows with national acts, it's true. LA you just never know who you'll run into- San Franscisco too there seem to be a lot more rockers wandering about! So- this guy Derek saw us play, and he says "Wow! You're better than KISS, how come you're not playing bigger shows all the time?" ...

Hek: The shows you put on are really fun! That's what I thought when I first saw you play. Nice performance. The audience feels that they are part of it... even as far as social media communications goes. What a way to speak directly to us!

TD Clark: The one thing that I feel sets us apart as far as what we do as a unit- myself on guitar, Vince Consolo on drums, Barry Kleiber on bass, and Brian MacKenna on guitar.... It's my band basically, I wirtte the material for the most part... Each of us when he plays the tunes brings his own personality into it. I'll tell the bass player, hey- this is the groove we want, and I'll tell Vince this is kinda what we're looking for... then we toss our personality in. A lot of instrumental guitarists and watching the shredders as you might call them, I think the live show is the most important thing. Most shredders just stand there and shred. Not much crowd interaction and I don't like that. I've

been saying this since '91 when I toured w/ Ted Nugent and Bad Company- the number one thing I don't want to do is be Van Halen without a singer! Super high energy, crowd interaction, great songs- I pride myself on good, catchy songs that even the most normal non-musician can listen to while they work out or clean the house, or drive their car. So, I'm very happy to hear you say that you had a good time at the show, 'cause when we play it's a good time... totally what this is all about. One thing I learned about the guitar community is that they're gonna say you're playing too fast or there's not enough feel... Number one thing is that you've just gotta go be yourself! Go out there and present the songs in a fun fashion so that people walk away from it saying, "Hey- that was great!" And, I'll say that from the Guitar Gods tour, I was very proud of all of us- we got so many great reviews from that tour, it just blew people away! People wanted to know who in-the-heck we were. We were playing the Paramount Theatre in Long Island and Gary Hoey is from Boston right across the water there, so all these people came out to see him- he showed me his phone and it was blown up with texts from audience members who loved the first band which was us! Smokin' it and out of our minds!

Hek: Cool!

TD Clark: Good time band havin' fun.

Hek: Now I feel like I really missed out on the Guitar Gods 2014 tour! Do you think you'll be able to do another one?

TD Clark: I don't know. We all got along great... the Malmsteen's and their son Antonio was there and they were quite busy but we saw Bumblefoot and Gary Hoey like everyday.

Hek: I have to say that TD Clark as a solo artist who is definitely praiseworthy, and whether or not you want to worship him, that would be up to you; but I suppose some people do! Great player. I have to praise Shreddtime Stories again. When I got my first copy I would just listen to it over and over again. It'll never wear out! Shreddtime is so cool!

TD Clark: I appreciate that. That recording was Fred Barthelomeo on drums and Jimmy Ward, who is a Ca. native played bass on that. My current line up has been with me for just about 6 months after that.

Hek: Continuing praise... I've listened to all of your albums online- Next Big Adventure, Personalities, Perspectives, Shreddtime Stories of course, and Under Your Tree the Xmas album. All really nice listening and very enjoyable. Timeless, in my opinion.

TD Clark: Well, to bear in mind when putting an album together is the focus on songs, not just shredding. The entire Shreddtime Stories isn't just me playing shred all over the place at 350 bpm.

Hek: Well, the songs are great!

TD Clark: Not truly just all shred as one may think... I tied it into bedtime stories. I also have a lesson DVD out called "Heavy Metal Breakfast" perfect for the morning after.

Hek: Yes, it's good!

TD Clark: On that record the most shred is on Dropped D symphony, David Shankle from Manowar trades solos with me on that one. The fastest I probably play is on the song "The Introduction", in the middle section I'm goin' for a John Sykes vibe where I do this blistering E harmonic and Dorian kind of shred-run, seriously probably one of the fastest things I've ever recorded. Outside of that, most of the songs are pretty straight like the title track Shreddtime Stories is kinda like Eric Johnson meets Joe Satriani meets Gary Moore meets Vinnie Morre kind of thing, you know different things like that.

Hek: Okay! Definitely some shred stuff on the Xmas record...ha, ha!

TD Clark: Every album I put some acoustic nylon.

Hek: I have to add that as an instructor you make everything intelligible too. Speaking to you from the perspective of someone who wants to learn shredding. When I first approached TD Clark and he is really personable w/ people. Watching you play I never felt like it was impossible for me to understand what you were doing on the guitar. Whether or not someone like me could play that.

TD Clark: Teaching... Music theory and playing is more about what you like to hear. Here's the thing- you might have 20 instructors telling you what they think is important and to a certain degree there're probably all right. The number one thing that I do when I teach is the breakdown of a tune that the student wants to learn. They'll learn the key, the scales, and how it all works together, so by the time the song is learned, they understand. Movements reoccurring in different songs, as well as harmonic arrangements and how the notes work together. Some guys are heavy into reading and I don't really believe in that.

Hek: So you break it down into components, then explain what the components are and they can put them together into the song.

TD Clark: I don't think that sight reading is all that important. Did you know I just played on Dee Snider's new record?

Hek: I was so excited to hear that news! I saw it posted on Facebook. He's got Dee Snider now, from Twisted Sister- as we know the band kind of had a set back when their drummer, AJ Pero; passed away. The whole world was wondering what may happen because we all love the band so much, and Mike Protnoy stepped in. And here he is in Chicago-it's Dee Snider and he's got you playing guitar for his new album- true? Is it a new solo album?

TD Clark: Well, he's always had solo stuff but what he did this time is a little different ... Basically, I think Twisted Sister is retiring- although nothing is ever that permanent.

Hek: I think they might do another year and go into 2016 ...

TD Clark: Well they're in a current touring situation but from what he was saying in the studio it sounds like Twisted Sister might hang up the cleats for a while after they complete these dates. Dee has a solo band already so it was kinda strange when I got the call to go down there. The producer Damon Ranger has won Emmy's, Grammys, he just won an Oscar for the Life of Pi.

Hek: Oh, wow- really!

TD Clark: He called me up, and I had done a session with him for a movie song not too long before. He had said at the time, hey- I'm doing the Dee Snider record. For the Dee Snider record we did four tracks that I played on, I believe- definitely different from what would be the Twisted Sister albums. It is a much more Modern Rock sound, and I don't know exactly how much I'm supposed to divulge...

Hek: Oh! First hand information...

TD Clark: I'm not exactly sure how to even describe it- it's still Dee Snider and it's still Rock. It still has the roots of Twisted, whether it's a feel Rock or Punk... Production kind of lends itself to much more modern stuff like Foo Fighters or One Republic, a mix of what he does great and some new things that he also does well.

Hek: Hek yeah!

TD Clark: Talking about putting songs together and sight reading... well, when I got the call for the session, they sent me the MP3s. They don't send charts anymore. I've done music for ESPN, Television and film, and rarely would anyone ever send charts. I did a Tommy Bolin tribute record some years ago and they sent me the head of this song and I had to play a Gibson box guitar...with no actual reading of the song.

Hek: Okay.

TD Clark: Getting back to the Snider thing- they sent me the MP3s of the song and I had to figure it out ahead of time, and then I got down there and we tracked it. That was pretty much how it worked.

Hek: These day they send MP3s over cell phones. Makes me laugh that it works as a way of putting songs together. Anyways that's so cool- he kind of briefed you and told you what he wanted?

TD Clark: Well, Dee wasn't involved in that. The producer Damon Ranger sent me the tracks. The producer is the one that handles all that. The artist is very rarely involved with sending music... So, Damon put it together and was the one working with Dee when he wrote all the new songs. So, Dee never called me about any of that stuff. When I went into the studio I met Dee and we hung around and began tracking. We did have some great conversations and he met my kids. My kids came with

one day in the studio and so did Daniel from Pickers with the dudes who run Riot Fest... Mancow showed up... so it was like totally crazy.

Hek: Sounds like fun! How long did it take?

TD Clark: Well, we recorded on Thursday, Friday night I played a show with him right in Wrigleyville by Wrigley Field where the Cubs play. Um, we did a show... but it was just like we did "We're Not Gonna Take It" and it was a wrap party... big party, the song was the culmination. Damon on bass, Chuck White on drums and myself on guitar. We just rocked it out and people went totally crazy. It was definitely cool being on stage playing "We're Not Gonna Take It" with the guy who actually wrote and sang the song (Dee Snider on vocals). I've done a lot of shows and worked with some great people.

Hek: Wow!

TD Clark: I also play with Chris Medina from American Idol. He's had Gold records around the world. I've played with Joe Taylor. I've done a variety of different things.

Hek: I know you've played with so many great musicians... I've seen you with Michael Schenker...

TD Clark: One of my supporting acts. When I play with Chris Medina I'm actually playing in his band.

Hek: Well, you've supported Malmsteen... on the Guitar Gods tour, Bumblefoot, Hoey...

TD: Lynch Mob, Ratt, Great White...

Hek: Steve Vai...

TD: Queensryche...

Hek: The list goes on...

TD: Yup! And it is different... whether you're playing with someone or you're the supporting act. Like with Chris Medina, I'm in the band. It's not solo band support.

Hek: So, you became friends with Chris Medina who won American Idol... true?

TD: No, he actually got cut at about the 20 mark. The interesting story is...

Hek: What it takes to get there ...

TD: Well, he had a girlfriend who had gotten in a car accident and actually became brain damaged. She had been with him to the audition which he got... but at the finals when the time came to cut him Jennifer Lopez had a break down. She was balling and they escorted her out. They had to cut the tape. She didn't want him cut.

Hek: Okay.

TD: He went off to Europe and had a number one song called "What Are Words"... it was huge in Norway and Sweden. It sounds very Spinal Tap, but if you look on You Tube you'll see it has like 4 million views.

Hek: I'de love to hear it. I'll definitely check that out. I've heard of him and I still hope to catch a show.

TD: Yeah, he just called me about a gig but I'm already booked playing somewhere else. So, I'm kinda bummed out.

Hek: Sounds like you're in high demand. More power to you.

TD Clark: It's been good, you know! I can't complain. I've got great kids- whom I love although they were driving me crazy this morning... Normally, it's all good. I run an after school lesson company called guitar fundamentals, I'm contracted to do lessons and I wirted all the books for kids. We contract K-5 we're in 12 school districts and 60 park state districts in 4 states and we're expanding. Check out my Marz Jamz guitar method books...

Hek: Youre business smart!

TD: I could probably be better and smarter. I try everyday...

Hek: Ha, ha!

TD: I've got to earn their college money, you know.

Hek: It has been great to hear from you! I certainly am hopeful that you and your bands are thinking of heading our way soon! Near LA in Anaheim, Ca. I am looking forward to hearing a TD Clark show, whoever playing with you.

TD: All of you listeners look me up on Facebook or find me at my personal website: www.tdclark.com I like to stick to Facebook as a new way to stay in touch.

Hek: The website is great... your Skype lessons are great. You can actually Skype people all around the world.

TD: Yeah, I've had students in England, even India. Remember it helps to speak English if you want to do that. Contact me for a Skype lesson!

Hek: Okay, excellent!

TD: All of my records are downloadable. They're on iTunes. "Under Your Tree" my Xmas album is the latest. I'm working on a vocal record next. A lot of different stuff happening and talks of tours with different artists. This summer I'm playing with Joe Taylor, we just did a show at Hard Rock Chicago.

And next will be a 7,000 seat venue for a giant festival at the Pennywise Theatre in Long Island. I'm goin out to do that and then I've got a string of shows with my solo band, and I play in a couple different tribute bands. Always looking for more students too! Thank you so much for having me on!

Hek: Awesome!