

CRADLE OF FILTH BIO 2025

“Leading purveyors of wildly theatrical extreme metal.” – *The Guardian*

Cradle Of Filth is an international institution, a lush and subversive next-generation extreme metal counterpart to their countrymen in Black Sabbath, Judas Priest, and Iron Maiden. Sharper than a crown of thorns, brandishing iconoclastic wit permeating a dense catalog filled with music of the night, Cradle combined the raw ferocity of their early nineties Scandinavian contemporaries with the crushing poetic melodrama of gothic-tinged local peers into a quintessentially British signature sound.

The Cradle Of Filth canon is a jaggedly elegant, slyly seductive, and thrillingly brutal bombastic trip into the darkest corners of vampirism, Victoriana, and venomous verve. Salacious, cinematic, and theatrical, the band mines the literary work of Milton, Goethe, Lovecraft, and Poe; historical figures like Countess Bathory, sadistic French baron Gilles de Rais, and inquisitor Heinrich Kramer; and the gloriously atmospheric exploitation of Hammer horror films. Those thematic indulgences have enraptured fans worldwide and resulted in Cradle collaborations and associations with late Hammer legends Ingrid Pitt and Sir Christopher Lee, as well as Pinhead himself, horror icon Doug Bradley.

Ghost, BABYMETAL, and Motionless In White were among the *9 Bands Who Wouldn't Be Here Without Cradle Of Filth* corralled by *Kerrang!* in a 2021 write-up saluting Cradle's influential power. Bandleader Dani Filth has accepted invitations to collaborate with diverse artists, including Bring Me The Horizon, The 69 Eyes, Twiztid, and megastar Ed Sheeran, who grew up loving Cradle Of Filth.

The latest entry into the bestiary, the arrestingly catchy 14th studio album dubbed *The Screaming of the Valkyries*, is a succinct summation of the ghosts of Cradle's past and a bold step into the future. Dani's recognizable scream and equally identifiable growl

stand mightily alongside twin guitar attacks, symphonic flourishes, and a shockingly swinging rhythm section nonetheless steadfastly explosive.

“If you’re a band with a strong identity, fans relish that. They want to hear echoes of the past. If I buy a particular band’s record, I don’t want it to go off on tangents that sound unacceptable to my ears,” Dani explains. “You must have one eye on that while still trying to expand the vision or the horizon of what you are creating, which is a new monument, a new testament to the legacy of the band.”

The menacing album opener, “To Live Deliciously,” hits immediately with rhythmic urgency. It is built around a Libertine lyrical hook, twisting and writhing with aggression, atmosphere, and melody. “Demagoguery” blends dark beauty, blast beats, and slaytanic groove as only Cradle can combine.

Across the album’s blunt and unforgiving yet inviting expanse, Cradle summons the succulent flavors of classic albums like *Dusk and Her Embrace* and *Cruelty and the Beast* with the galloping (but no less fierce) thunder of recent entries *Hammer of the Witches* and *Existence is Futile*. Flashes of early influences (New Wave of British Heavy Metal, Motörhead, Mercyful Fate, Bathory, Celtic Frost, Sisters Of Mercy, Christian Death) coalesce with carnivorous glee into unapologetic death ‘n’ roll.

“White Hellebore” is Cradle Of Filth at its most devilishly straightforward. It juxtaposes traditional heavy metal with blasts of thrashing fury, spinning back to operatic goth without sounding disjointed. Anchored by arguably the most mournful melody in their catalog, “Non Omnis Moriar” (“I shall not wholly die”) could be a cousin to Paradise Lost or Anathema, inverted through Cradle’s thorny prism.

“You Are My Nautilus” is the darkest song Iron Maiden never wrote, spinning an epic tale with dueling guitars. “Ex Sanguine Draculae” conjures *Dusk*-era atmosphere with imaginative new colors.

“It’s very fresh. We wanted something cinematic and catchy where you can hear everything clearly,” says Dani. “I despair whenever someone asks me to describe a record. Because it’s an eclectic mix of styles and pacing. We’ve explored every facet of our arsenal. There are the ponderous, melancholic tracks, the extremely memorable melodies, and the songs that hearken back to previous records.”

Now a staple of every major rock festival, the improbably GRAMMY Award-nominated Cradle Of Filth’s origins stretch back to 1991 in Suffolk, England. (“Is Dani Filth Suffolk’s Greatest Icon?” asked a *Guardian* headline about the “hijacking” of a tourist board poll by impassioned and cheeky fans.)

As evidenced by the late-90s BBC doc *Living with the Enemy*, in which a disapproving mother travels with the band, Cradle rose from the underground (via classic demos, albums, and a particular piece of merch *Rolling Stone* declared “the most controversial T-shirt in rock history”) to become notorious devils, scourges to pop culture and so-called good taste in the grand tradition of the Sex Pistols.

Sensationalism isn’t what made Cradle Of Filth icons, however. The band’s musical and visual artistry boasts narrative depth, emotional intelligence, diverse soundscapes, and subversive charm. The so-called Enlightenment and its seedy underbelly shine beneath the band’s dark light, equally gorgeous and gory. Unsettling moodiness, righteous vendettas, and libertine delight persist as Cradle staples.

This is why the band continues to resonate with all who share a fascination for the supernatural, an infatuation with the forbidden, and a ghoulish yet romantic curiosity about things morbid and rotten.

While Dani Filth is the sole consistent member, the 2025 lineup is far from inexperienced. Drummer Martin “Marthus” Skaroupka joined Cradle nearly 20 years ago. Guitarist Marek “Ashok” Smerda and bassist Daniel Firth have been in the band for over a decade. Guitarist Donny Burbage and keyboardist/female vocalist Zoe Federoff have rounded out the Cradle Of Filth lineup since 2022.

The Screaming of the Valkyries beckons the brave into a new era of Cradle of Filth misadventure. The fourteenth chapter of their ever-expanding sadistic story celebrates massive melancholic melody, blackened thrash, and apocalyptic existential dread with a grinning smattering of unbridled revelry.

A legacy-cementing album, *The Screaming of the Valkyries* is a bloody dark love letter to the longtime legion of Cradle of Filth faithful and a stunning entryway for fresh lambs to the sonic slaughter.