

After 45 Years, A Final Bow - "On my terms"



Sturgis, South Dakota Sep 1, 2026 (Issuewire.com) - On August 12, 2026, Randy V took the stage at the Full Throttle Saloon in Sturgis, South Dakota, with The Haunted North, opening for Rob Zombie. What he didn't tell anyone that night was that it would be his last show.

Randy's career began at 16, the moment he heard Ronnie James Dio sing "Stargazer." Mentor Ruby Starr pointed him toward her nephew, Johnny Cappelletty, in Toledo, Ohio, envisioning the two teens as born rock stars. After a few phone calls, Randy moved there with nothing, and the journey began.

Together they joined Damien, a partnership that spans over forty years. At 22, Randy signed with Select Records alongside his Damien bandmates. They released two albums, shot two videos that rotated on MTV, and secured national radio play. When their second album dropped in 1989, they were running neck and neck with Guns N' Roses and Skid Row out of the gate. With Fetish Doll, Randy appeared on two film soundtracks. Beyond his work with The Haunted North, he has produced and published Carmen Santillan's first album and Dulce Leona's first EP.

Randy initially retired in 2016. Then guitarist Sean Francis called with a question: "What if JD DeServio and Jeff Fabb played on our debut album?" Randy reconsidered, and The Haunted North was off and running again. DeServio and Fabb played on the entire record, and later on the band's most recent last single, "Savage Ghost." The Haunted North became a comeback Randy never saw coming, giving him a final chapter he didn't know he still had in him.

As Rob Zombie noted the night The Haunted North opened, "We're all a little older and a little slower now" Randy is dealing with health issues that make the physical demands of fronting an original heavy rock band more than he can sustain. He is also in the dissertation phase of his PhD in communication, and his work as a researcher may well bring music back into his life in a new form. He will not be joining a cover band or fronting a tribute act and has nothing against those who do, but it's not who he is. He'd rather walk away with dignity than linger in a form that doesn't fit.

Randy emphasizes that this is not a sad announcement. He loves music and always will. But there's a difference between loving music and needing the music business, and he no longer needs the latter.

Randy extends special thanks to Mark Butler of the Full Throttle Saloon, whose tenacity and persistence got The Haunted North on that stage. He also thanks his bandmates: cofounder and lead guitarist Sean Francis, who called him back in 2016 and gave him a second fire; bassist Clayton Janzen and drummer Mike Delta, whose hard work, professionalism, and preparation made the Zombie show what it was. He credits manager Armi Jarvis of Armi of One Media with keeping the band alive when YouTube, Facebook, Spotify, and Instagram came after them with vicious censorship over their single "Black Flag Flying." Without her enormous personal sacrifices, Randy says he would have walked away in early 2023. She gave the band another three and a half years and made the Zombie show possible. The full story of what happened with "Black Flag Flying" is available here on Randy's Substack: [The Suppression of 'Black Flag Flying'](#)

Randy also expresses heartfelt thanks to every bandmate and crew member he's shared a stage with over 45 years, and to everyone who bought a record, came to a show, or passed his name along to a friend.

The Haunted North doesn't end with Randy V. Cofounder Sean Francis is taking the band forward. There will be a pause while Sean restructures, but The Haunted North will return. Previously released work remains under White Choker Publishing, but the future belongs to Sean. Randy fully supports him and encourages every fan who believed in what they built to stand behind him and the band as they evolve into whatever comes next. Sean has earned that, and the music deserves it.

About Randy V:

Randy V is the cofounder of The Haunted North, with a career spanning 45 years across The Haunted North, Fetish Doll, Wolf Gang, and Damien. He is currently completing his PhD in communication.

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