

# Mono Inc.



## Biography

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In 2000 Martin Engler (drummer, songwriter and producer), Carl Fornia (guitar) and Miky Mono (vocals) relaunched their previous band project as MONO INC. From 1995 to 1997 the three had already played together in the band *Wild Thing* and then from 1998 to 2003, initially as a trio under the name *Mono69*, they went in search of their own special sound. In 2003 Manuel Antoni joined as bass player, completing the quartet, which is why the Monos call 2003 their founding year. Independently, they produced their debut album "*Head Under Water*" and submitted it to all major labels. They were rejected consistently. Since the band was unwilling to compromise its style for a coveted record deal, they decided in 2004 to set up their own independent label NoCut. The mechanisms of the music business were well known to Martin and Carl: Martin had professional experience as songwriter and producer under contract with EMI for various interpreters since 1990 – Carl on the other hand because he gave up his mechanical engineering studies in 1993 to join a music management company in Hamburg.

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Inspired by the setting and the Texas way of life, the album was quite different in sound, mood and content from any previous or subsequent *MONO INC.* production. The album provoked plenty of discussion. Not every fan or critic liked the fact that *MONO INC.* was including unfamiliar country, lending the result an American flavor. Still, it contained many German lyrics. Nonetheless, "Terlingua" *climbed* back to #6 in the official German *Album Charts*. At its release, Martin made it clear that this would end his „German phase“ for the time being. The experiment was fun and inspired new songs. But the concept for the following album did not allow for bilingualism. After two extremely successful *TERLINGUA* tours in 2015, the band withdrew from the public for six months to recharge their batteries.

On March 11, 2016, the album "MONO INC. Live" was released. In addition to the double audio, the fans were happy about the visuals on the double DVD or Blu-ray. The concert was recorded on November 17, 2015, with a sold-out crowd in Dresden as part of the *TERLINGUA* tour. The release was celebrated with a cinema premiere on March 5, 2016 in the Hamburg UCI cinemas, where band and fans could enjoy the result on the big screen together.

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In spring 2019, *MONO INC.* on a symphonic tour, on which they presented a special symphony program in selected locations – primarily atmospheric theaters – together with a string ensemble and a pianist. This concept aroused such interest from fans and media alike that the tour was completely sold out months in advance. The ambience was dark and sensuous, and the musicians dressed in the same way. In the first part of the show, the songs from the then current album *WELCOME TO HELL* were celebrated. After the break, a selection of older pieces and greatest hits were presented in this extraordinary sound dress in the second part. During the tour, the band decided to record the concert in Haus Auensee in Leipzig and release it as a double album. *SYMPHONIC LIVE* was launched on May 24, 2019 at the end of the successful tour. In addition to the normal 2 CD version, there was an exclusive album version that also contained a DVD with the complete show. *SYMPHONIC LIVE* shot to # 5 in the official German charts in the first week after its release, which is more than unusual for a live album.

On January 24th, 2020 the band released studio album number 11 with "The Book of Fire". The new concept album shot straight to # 1 in the official German album charts. *MONO INC.* kidnapped their fans to the time of the Inquisition, whereby the plot should again be understood as a parable. The band set new standards by telling the entire story of the young healer Aellin in their first Earbook, which was published at the same time. In 12 chapters, the audience was able to immerse themselves in the historically researched tragedy of the inquisitorial epoch and fully grasp the background of the

English texts. In the audio book, the story was read out personally by Katha Mia and Martin Engler, accompanied by piano versions of "The Book of Fire" played by Martin .

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The fact that there was an enforced break from March 2020 to April 2022 is little more than a footnote these days. After all, the 4 monos had fallen somewhat softly during the pandemic because a) their fans gave them a great deal of support and b) they were invited to so-called Strandkorb Open Airs.

In April 2022 THE BOOK OF FIRE tour continued with a lot of energy, momentum and great emotion. Over 50 shows in Europe were on the tour schedule, which is why new songs were written all the more surprisingly and unexpectedly. One idea worth pursuing followed the next. The result was a new album, which was to be called „Ravenblack“, released in January 2023 and again reached #1 in the official German album charts. Consequently, such an album had to be framed by a tour, which lasted from April to September 2023.

The next step was inevitably a necessary break, having been in the red from April 22 to September 23. Time to reflect and mentally prepare for MONO INC. Symphonic – The Second Chapter.

With fresh energy, the time had come in April 24: 18 concerts under the MONO INC. Symphonic banner were on the calendar. A highlight for everyone involved, which was captured on film in Stuttgart in order to release the result as a live CD/DVD/BluRay in August 2024.

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## VIDEOS & TRACKS



MONO INC. - Voices Of Doom  
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In 2004, "*Head Under Water*" was re-released by NoCut. Two singles from the album made it into the most important German trend charts of the time for rock, metal and Gothic: DAC, MRC30 and Native25. With the debut in their luggage, the band played an extensive tour as support for the medieval rock band *Tanzwut* and was able to land their first festival slots, one, for example at the Wave-Gothic-Treffen.

By the end of 2006, when the band gathered in the studio to prepare for their second album, the breakup between the band and their front man occurred due to different life plans and musical differences. Carl and Manuel convinced Martin to take on the role of lead singer from now on, because they knew his voice as the main songwriter from the demo tapes and they also knew the authenticity that goes with it when the composer is also the front man, as correct and saw a logical step for the future. Martin said later in an interview that he was already queasy when the two pointed their fingers at him and said, "You have to do this!" And he also struggled with the decision for a few days. In retrospect it was probably his best career decision. He didn't want to be a singing drummer, however, and insisted someone else had to take his place on the drums.

He was replaced on the kit by 19-year-old Katha Mia, the only female to audition for the part. She impressed the three gentlemen of the band with her talent, enchanting beauty and straightforward beats. The decision to cast her was made in seconds.

With this exciting new line-up complete, the band *set out* to record their second longplayer, "*Temple of the Torn*", slated for release on June 15th, 2007. In the second half of the year, they had a major breakthrough. Their song "*Burn Me*" was chosen as theme music by the German network DSF for their new TV series "Traumberuf Rennfahrer". The series was launched September 2007 and ran through June the following year, giving the band major media exposure.

Their third album "*Pain, Love and Poetry*" hit the Gothic scene in April 2008. It was a mere eleven months after their previous album. They convinced Katha Mia to add some background vocals, in addition to her drumming. It was a smart move. The up-tempo single "Get Some Sleep" got regular play in the clubs from scene DJs and *quickly* became an underground hit. The accompanying video clip was recorded at the world-famous M'era Luna Festival in Hildesheim, where *MONO INC.* In 2008 they were allowed to appear for the first time as the opener (in the morning at 11 a.m.) in order to win over new fans in just 25 minutes of playing time. Another single from the album, "*Teach Me To Love*", a romantic duet with Lisa Middelhaue of Germany's top metal band Xandria ) topped the playlists of independent radio stations and drew significant print media attention. In 2009, *MONO INC.* with "*Pain, Love & Poetry*" in their luggage on extensive tours as the opening act for Subway to Sally and ASP and appeared at over 40 concerts in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The band enjoyed increasing popularity and their following grew steadily, also because they were the first band ever to convert their tour diary to video format for reading on their concert tours and thus the fans could be close to success and failure. The format *MONO INC. TV* still exists, watched by millions of fans

from all over the world.â

On September 17th, 2009, the album "*Voices of Doom*" was released, which received a lot of attention and positive reports. The title track "Voices of Doom" as well as the track "Gothic Queen" are integral parts of every *MONO INC.* show to this day. They were the first singles to break the 1 million view barrier on YouTube. The 8-minute ballad "If I Fail", however, went unnoticed by the band and label for reasons that are still unknown in China.

The breakthrough followed in 2010, when *MONO INC.* went on a major arena tour as a support act for UNHEILIG. This tour brought the band so much attention and popularity that they then ventured on their first extensive headlining tour and proudly reported a number of sold-out venues. Out of gratitude and humility, the band began their social commitment for the Bärenherz children's hospice during this tour. The close connection to this charitable institution continues to this day. Over the years many successful events and campaigns have been initiated and plentiful donations have been generated. Tragically, founding member Miky Mono was killed in a microlight aircraft crash at his Spanish home on Mallorca. The band processed this personal shock in several texts and various touching live moments.

On March 18, 2011, the album "Viva Hades" was released, which was the first *MONO INC.* album to enter the official German album charts at number 50. The album, which was released for the first time not only as a regular CD, but also as a DVD limited edition of 2,000 pieces, was well received by the domestic and foreign press. The now legendary *MONO INC.* Raven can be seen for the first time on the cover of this album. Another successful headlining tour soon followed with the support act *Lord of the Lost*, which included appearances in Austria and Switzerland, as well as guest appearances at major festivals.

On August 17th, 2012 the concept album "After the War" was released, which entered the Official German Charts at # 6 and was the first Top 10 success in the band's history. The title song was successfully released as the first single, later followed by "Arabia" and the double single "Wave No Flag / From the Ashes". The song "From the Ashes" was featured live during the cruiserweight world championship boxing match between Yoan Pablo Hernández and Troy Ross on September 15, 2012, in the Stechert Arena in Bamberg during the entrance of Hernández. The "After the War Tour" was extended by thirteen additional concerts due to the numerous sold-out venues. Pyro effects and video walls were also used in what turned out to be the most successful tour in the band's history up to this time.

Until then, *MONO INC.* had only recorded English texts. The album *Nimmermehr*, released August 9, 2013, for the first time included some German lyrics. It entered the official German album charts at number three in the first week after its release. The single "Kein Weg zu Weit", released as a duet with New German Wave Legend Joachim Witt, brought the band into the recycled playlists on the German mainstream radio landscape for the first time, and major TV stations such as ARD and RTL were taking notice. In an emotional music video, the problem of domestic violence was thematized. In it, Martin dealt with many of the fears of his own childhood, which was marked by violence and pressure. According to his own statements, it was the collaboration with Jochen Witt that inspired Martin to turn to his native German language for the first time. On the accompanying tour, where *MONO INC.* were billed for the first time as headliner in larger halls, Jochen Witt also joined the band as a special guest, where he not only sang "Kein Weg zu Weit", but also his greatest hits such as "Der goldene Reiter" and "Die Flut" in a duet with Martin and the band.

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