

EXTENDED BIO

The first iteration of Crack Cloud was formed nearly a decade ago as a proxy-rehab outlet on the fringes of Calgary, where two EPs and their accompanying visual pieces were created during this time. By 2017, several members had relocated to Vancouver. It was after the move that the band produced their astounding 2020 album *Pain Olympics*, and their 2022 follow up, *Tough Baby*. All at once, their vision became expansive, cinematic, and precarious.

Now, their third full-length studio album, *Red Mile*, acts as both a tribute and a homecoming. Members have since left Vancouver and returned to Calgary; returned to the long stretch of land colloquially referred to as the red mile. But what of the time away from home? After a decade of personal and collective growth, what does home even mean? To Crack Cloud, this is the liminal message demanding to be explored throughout *Red Mile*. The throughline thread of samsara - rebirth and life's cyclical pattern weaving together the eight tracks.

A departure from the hermetic, multi-year gestation of *Pain Olympics* and *Tough Baby*, *Red Mile* is the product of swift, group collaboration. Recorded predominantly between the outskirts of Joshua Tree, California, and Calgary, Alberta, the resulting album is informed by a bittersweet melange of new beginnings and familiar places. Crack Cloud have learned to concentrate their multi-hyphenate energy, re-emerging as a lean, focused rock outfit producing their most mature and vital work yet. The sprawling, novelistic structures of their previous records have been harnessed and condensed, but never boiled down. The band is derisive as ever to deal in superficiality. Through playful melodies and elliptical guitar soliloquy they deliver a record of exceptional depth and unprecious warmth; creating a lived-in feel not dissimilar to a loved picture frame: a captured still, carefully mended with electrical tape.

Much of the angst which lends their earlier work a caustic urgency has fallen away, replaced by a soulful but relentless introspection. The eight songs contemplate physical and psychic roadblocks, the experience of aging out of chaos, adjusting to strange new hopes, and making peace with the group's own mythology. The lyrics are cutting but merciful, with a sharp self-awareness that never slides into self-satisfaction. Crack Cloud as artists are as critical — and ultimately as forgiving — of themselves as they are the melting world around them. The songs balance an easy charm and cathartic power: affirming life without denying death.

Red Mile's eight anthems expand, wind and fold in on themselves in equal measure. They deploy gorgeous string sections, desert psych, sax blasts, group chants and punk snarls. In one moment, "Blue Kite" might recall Richard Hell; in the very next 'Paris 1919.'

"I Am (I Was)," is a neu canticle about learning to live with the void and finding meaning there regardless. The song blooms again and again in your ears, shapeshifting from a driving acoustic strum and jaunty piano into a thrilling motorik group chorus.

Red Mile's de facto thesis statement "The Medium" is itself a rock song meditation: an ode to the form and its practitioners. This genre that — typical, repeatable, corporatized as it can be — somehow still has the power to help us live through life. We see that the dusty sentiment of "I love rock and roll" can be exhumed, taken apart, and stitched back together. It's a song guided by faith - if the medium helps us proclaim our love today, it's worth protecting from derision tomorrow. Crack Cloud's *Red Mile* is a rock record - one made by people who know exactly how much that can mean.