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From 1978 until around 1985, there were few bigger bands in Canada than Triumph.

Known for their musicianship, hard rocking, uplifting and intelligent songs and an over-the-top stage show that was bombastic, intense and thrilling to witness, Triumph dominated rock radio in their home and native land and also became a successful and in-demand touring act south of the border, as well as in Europe and Japan.

Although the band, composed of vocalist/drummer Gil Moore, bassist/keyboardist Mike Levine (he of the ubiquitous hockey sweaters and Lanny McDonald mustache) and the gifted guitarist/vocalist Rik Emmett, formed in 1975, it took until their third studio album -- 1978's Just A Game -- to make them an international sensation.

The album featured the now-classic tunes, Hold On and Lay It On the Line, both staples of the band's shows forever thereafter, and songs that still get tons of airplay on the radio, thanks to the classic rock format.

Throughout the rest of the 1970s and into the 1980s, Triumph churned out a steady stream of hit albums and iconic songs, including Live For The Weekend, Fight the Good Fight, Magic Power, Never Surrender, Spellbound and Follow Your Heart.

By 1985, the band was beginning to implode, lasting two more records with Emmett before breaking up after a daytime show at the Kingswood Music Theatre at Canada's Wonderland in the summer of 1988.

It was a painful and rancorous departure, the wounds from which have only recently healed.

The band got back together to be inducted first into the Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame in 2007, and then into the Juno Hall of Fame in 2008.

Emmett, Moore and Levine also played two "reunion shows" in 2008 at big festivals in Sweden and Oklahoma, igniting speculation that a full-scale tour would follow.

It hasn't -- yet.

What has followed is the new Triumph Greatest Hits Remixed CD/DVD package, released a couple of weeks ago in stores.

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The release of the album has reignited the speculation of a possible tour, and also thrust Emmett back into the limelight as a full-fledged member of the band.

Although he had nothing to do with the new CD/DVD project (much of the work was done a number of years ago by recording engineer Rick Chycki), and enjoyed a successful, varied and critically acclaimed recording and performing career in the 20 years between Triumph gigs, Emmett has jumped on board the promotional bandwagon.

"I am a good team guy, and I stepped up to the plate, and am doing what I said I would do when we had the big reconciliation. And those are my songs after all. It is a chance for me to sort of reclaim that large chunk of my history that I denied for a couple of decades," Emmett told QMI Agency, adding that he was bombarded with comments from fans on his own website talking about some of the changes and tweaks that happened to some of the songs on the new album.

"There are some people who just figured that the original mixes were religious experiences for them, so now some sort of sacrilege has occurred. I thought it was pretty interesting and I just try to say, 'listen folks, calm down. If you want to listen to the old mix, they are still around. It's still there.'"

In fact, Moore had all of Triumph's albums (excluding 1993's Edge of Excess, which featured Phil X on guitar) remastered on the band's own new label, TML Music, a few years back.

The new package features 14 songs, including a cover of Nazareth's Love Hurts, which was recorded with Phil X back in the early 1990s. There are also 12 music videos, and some bonus material.

All of the press and promoting has a common theme -- discussion as to the future of Triumph as a performing entity.

In a nutshell, Emmett said he is ready to go, whenever the other two guys are.

"There is doubt about whether or not the band would actually ever go out and tour and play again. And, of course, Live Nation (North America's largest concert promoter) is interested, and they're sniffing around and wanting to come to town and sit down and take us out for dinner and have a conversation," Emmett said.

What it comes down to, in Emmett's estimation, is a desire on the part of Levine and Moore, the latter in particular, to embark on a Triumph tour of old with big venues, tons of lasers, lights and pyro.

Emmett and others in the industry think that's unrealistic for an act that hasn't done something of that magnitude since the days when hair metal ruled the roost.

"And I am saying to him, 'well, geez Gil, you can't take a production that costs \$60,000 a night to put on and put it in some small club where you can only sell 800 tickets, that kind of thing,'" Emmett said.

He believes there would be interest in Triumph as possible an opening act, or on festival bills, or even as a headliner in smaller venues, but it would limit the sort of stage presentation the band could put on.

Emmett would be happy with any of that, because he argues it's really about the music and connecting with the people who like it.

"I have said to the guys, 'you think about the legacy of the band, and that U.S. Festival performance in 1983. We were on a stage in daylight, and it was just the three of us and our songs, and our own musicianship as a trio, and it had to stand the light of day, and there were half a million people or whatever there, and we did it. It was just the three of us working on a hot afternoon [that performance was released as a DVD in 2003]," he said.

"But it's hard to convince Gil that it would work without the cocoon of the big show, and I think there would be some fans who would be disappointed if it didn't have the big show.

"It always felt to me that the songs stood just fine. Look, here's three guys, they're going to get up there and bash out their songs as best they can. And those songs, what they're about like the magic power of the music, and holding on to your dreams, and laying it on the line and all that kind of stuff, it's a relatively straightforward, humanist, virtuous, anthemic thing ... and I always thought that was the heart of the band."

Emmett isn't even sure that Moore wants to get out and tour again, rather that his goal was simply to rebuild the bond with Emmett that had been broken two decades earlier.

"I think, in Gil's case, to have Rik back, that was all he ever wanted. It became clear to me that, you know, some bad things happened, and we carried this messy, ugly thing around for a couple of decades inside ourselves, and now we can sort of let it go, and be back to where we were when we were on good terms as people," he said.

"And he was willing to work to get himself back into shape again to play that gig in Sweden, and play that gig down in Oklahoma, as a drummer, which he hadn't really had much interest in at all.

"After the Triumph version two thing with Phil X, I think he kind of thought, 'well, I guess I'll just walk away from drums for the rest of my life, I don't need to be a performer.' And I think he kind of went through that whole exercise of having the reunion gigs just because it may be part of the price he felt he had to pay to square things up with me again."

So, the concept of a Triumph tour hasn't even entered the starting gate, and it may never happen.

Although Emmett said that Moore has apparently converted the part of his house that used to be an indoor swimming pool into a gym and a rehearsal space, where he may have set up a drum kit.

"So, there may be a plan in the back of his head, but he hasn't gone all the way to say, 'look, I am going to do this. I am going to dedicate myself to getting back in shape and I want to go back on the road in a year from now.' That hasn't happened. But who knows?"

While waiting for word on what plans, if any, there are afoot for Triumph, Emmett continues to be busy, playing solo gigs, playing with his longtime collaborator Dave Dunlop in an act called The Strung Out Troubadours, as well as his Trifecta project with guitar virtuosos Oscar Lopez and Pavlo.








For updates on Triumph, visit the band's website at www.triumphmusic.com.

For information on Emmett's various projects, see www.rikemmett.com.

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