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MUSIC

THE HELLS AND HEAVENS OF **KAI ANGEL**

by [Alex Brzezicka](#)

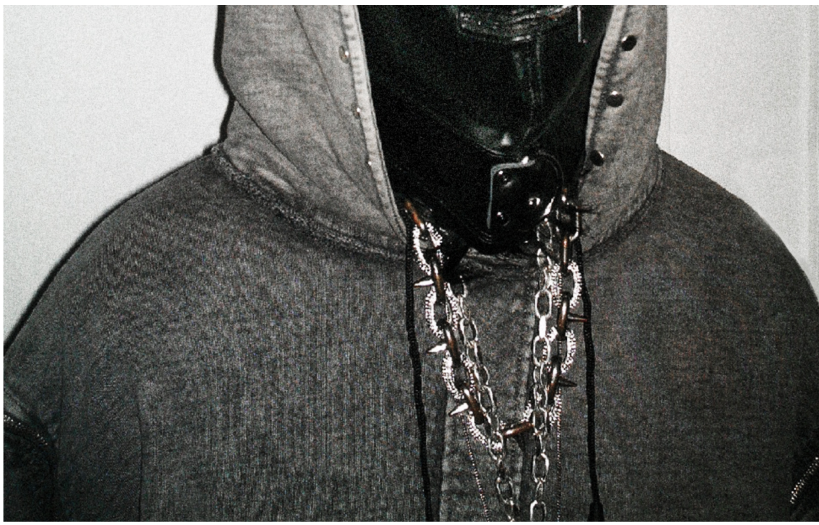
Lone ranger royalty,
Kai Angel emerges
from his hell to hunt
for the scraps of
heaven worldwide.

Kai Angel is a godsent from an alternative reality, ruled by fashion-forward and blood-thirsty emperors raised on Christiancore and Rick Owens. He's a dark-winged creature who exclusively lived in the graveyards and Gothic churches as his previous artistic alter ego, zavet, for the past couple of years. After the havoc in his homeland, he finally left the land called Russia, and the ashes of his past burning to the full moon, behind. From zavet's superhuman tomb, arose Kai Angel. Dressed in black, a dark prince of futuristic rap has waited long enough for the promised day. Setting himself on a vagabond quest of getting to sit beside the gods of the music industry, he's determined as hell. Devilspeed.

"Music-wise, I don't feel like I can have idols. I feel like I should be with them like they have to be my friends because I know that I'm very high taste-wise, fashion-wise," echoes Kai Angel's voice in a café based in an old church in London. Kai's confidence in his own work is admirable and fully justified. Backed by a catalogue of mind-bending singles and new EP, *KAIcOre*, his drive to create and climb the cruel industry's ladder is steel-like. His inner compass is always spot on, vision crystal clear, even if outside circumstances are confusing. "I'm still a nomad because I'm not allowed to officially stay here," the artist says, "This is what affected me the most since everything started with the war. I didn't feel safe and sure about my next day, tomorrow, even once. This whole year, I don't know what to do, like every day," he adds, "I'm just lost".

Navigating a new situation is a real challenge on both personal and artistic grounds. "You're like a little blind mouse that's trying to find his path," he says. Unable to access the proper facilities, his music became rougher, fed on the emotional turmoil. "I also really love what I'm going through. It makes 10 times more conflicts inside of me. Everybody who's on top had dozens of problems and traumas throughout their lives. I appreciate it. Even though I feel really bad right now and concerned, I know that it would benefit me. I'm getting more and more angry," Kai Angel firmly states.





The accumulated anger birthed Kai Angel's debut EP *kAiCoRe*. On the six-track record artist drags us into his personal inferno filled with demonic women, twisted Matrix references ["Trinity"] and spins on an anime Demon Slayers ["HASHIRA," "gyutaro theme (Ugly)"]. To escape the fire-ridden loop, we need to embrace the chaos as he did: "I wrote it in Paris. I went from London to Paris to my girlfriend. We've been living together for a bit there. Before I started writing, my microphone broke. It was a scary time in my life when all your projects are being postponed when you get cancelled from festivals, for example, I got cancelled from the Polish festival. It's just because I'm Russian," Kai Angel says. Irritated in a city that resembled nothing of home, he found solace in music, recording alone in his room on a cheap mic borrowed from a friend. "I really fuck with every song that I made there because at this point, after re-name, everything that I put out, it's so heavy. I love everything that I make. Also, before I didn't know how to mix my shit properly and now I mix everything by myself, not sending it to anybody. I control the whole process," from the cover of the EP made with his girlfriend to producing, it's a complete Kai Angel experience. Beautiful, and quite literally, haunted. "Inspirations-wise, during my journey in Paris I've been going to graveyards, I've been to Jim Morrison's grave. I wrote the lyrics to the song, '-boo-' at Jim Morrison's grave," he says, "You have spirits there, ghosts. If you're not protected energy-wise, you can get fucked up, somebody could attach to you". That's what happened to the artist, as he fell ill on all fronts and only spiritual practices let them banish the intruder.

Kai Angel's influences have always been deep-rooted in the various religious realms. "I'm not attached to any religion specifically. I do believe in universe energy and I feel it every day. I believe in astrology heavily. In Russia, you have a system that's called the Matrix of Faith. My friend, she's a specialist in it. She told me my whole life based on stars," he says, "I've been heavily influenced by the slavic version of Christianity until I was 17. I went with my grandpa once to church. I saw service, and I got so scared of it. It was a little church in a rural area. It was a bunch of old women that were scary and doing some repetitive things. I felt like that's so off, not what I'm into. I was kind of forced into Christianity and unconditionally believed it. I had a cross on my body. That day, I took my cross off and I started searching". Exploring Buddhism, Hinduism to the Israeli version of Christianity, he came to the conclusion that, as with everything else that's cultural, it's possible to pick the religious systems apart and see what fits where: "I'm very, very heavily obsessed with churches, but I don't feel it is a 100% source of religion. I feel like every religion is pretty much the same, and you need just to find your signs to follow".

That's the method Kai Angel also applies to his music-making, clashing beats against each other in the most satisfying, killer combat-mode way, chasing after the upgrades until what seems to be an eternity and beyond. He doesn't let his anger lead but uses it to spit bars of beauty, love and paradise. "Everybody does the same thing, but in a bit of a different way with the new regulations that came from the outer world. I'm even more dedicated now. I see that as an opportunity. If you're having a hard time right now, try not to leave all your health behind and just make it work for you," he advises.



In *kAiCoRe*, the artist shows that he really makes it work. "Earthquake? Na-a-a-ah/It's my music (Dangerous)/Please mind your head/Don't lose it", he warns in "rain (hEaVy)". Like TNT, the EP explodes momentarily so we gladly lose ourselves in the post-apocalyptic screams, distorted beats and trans-genres general madness. Especially HASHIRA got us hard, raging its heart out that no matter what this man glows in the darkness. So we can too. Period.

"I've been doing deep shit when I started. It was all experimental stuff like with language. It was so dark in a bad way and overwhelming. It was cringe. Throughout time, I simplified everything. I feel like this is what touches the most. I'm just being me. I'm being a dumb rapper in my lyrics and I love it. I love just to flex up and just to say dumb shit that is ridiculous. I am heavily influenced by Gothic, by mystic things so I will always mention them. That's like a screen through which the rapper flex goes on. It is like a mixture of some dark, scary, dumb shit."

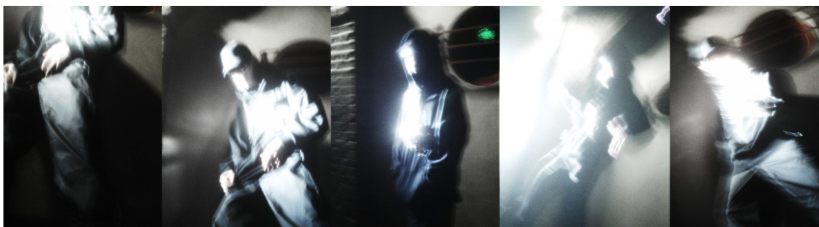
Stripped down from unnecessary crap, Kai Angel found a recipe that works wonders. It took quite a while. 25 years. Growing up first in Israel, then moving to cold and hostile Russia, suffering his parents' divorce, his childhood was rougher than he understood it back then. "In the 90s, Russia was a scary place after the Soviet Union fell. People been murdering each other every day everywhere. It was the rise of criminal authorities. It was a scary place". Luckily even as a kid, he looked the other way to escape both the dangerous and mundane: "My favourite channel was MTV. I was heavily obsessed with Tokio Hotel..." he smiles.



"I don't feel attached to Russia. That's why I feel good here. My English is good. I feel free. I feel like I could express myself even by giving you an interview right now. That's mind-blowing," Kai says. Always on a verge of an inner fight with Russian surroundings, he dreams of a haven in the UK. Even if here he still feels out of the place, it is the best place to be. "The first second, I got off the train, I was like 'yo, bro, I'm home!' I don't have any permissions to live here. I just travel. But I feel like that's where I belong. So here I go but everything's so tough in terms of settling down somewhere. I'm just still in a position where I can't understand what's going on and you just never know where life will lead you. But I feel way better," he says.

Choosing the damned path of a refugee, he feels free but bound at the same time. A part of his soul seemed to stay in the harsh Russian soil, living through the pain of his friends left behind. "You see how the wave ended? The hype? Everybody forgot about it. But we're still like in the same position. There's still war going on, people dying. We are sanctioned, our bank accounts are not working, etc. Everything is still very bad. Nobody gives a shit now," he points out.

Kai Angel's dark aesthetic fits into the gloomy mood of socio-political affairs and a recent wave of all things vamp. From Playboi Carti on Whole Lotta Red, Kanye West to Balenciaga, the once underground subcultural motifs got devalued by the mainstream. "You can do a twist on it as what I'm doing right now. I'm going over it and giving it new ways to live. Evolution," Kai Angel says. No time to rest, from coffincore, he's going cyber: "It is a new sub-genre to trap with a more heavy feel to it, with lasers and, more unique futuristic sounds," he says. Kai Angel proves it with his just released single, 'Madonna', where over sickening mesh-up beats he challenges Vogue to crown him a new Madonna. Couldn't be more iconic than that. Long live Kai Angel.



Addressing a fashion magazine sits well with Kai Angel's agenda that's got fashion engrained in it. Rick Owens and Matthew Williams are some of his biggest influences: "I'm also being a dumb rapper and spending on some very expensive pieces that I maybe shouldn't get. But it makes me feel like myself. If I buy Balenciaga pants, I just feel good. I feel healthy. I feel like I'm in the position where I should be," he admits. Projecting identity on clothing is as old as the fashion itself. Any artist wants his brand to feel complete, matching the outside to the inside.

With no real idols in the music world, he found them in the fashion realm. "For example, Rick Owens. I've seen him in Paris once. I almost pissed myself. I also feel like I really want to meet him and just be friends with him," Kai says. Rick, you've heard it. Even his old heroes like Travis Scott live don't impress him as they once used to. They say kill your darlings. That's what he's done. "Nobody knows about me. Nobody gives a shit about me. I believe that at one

your earnings, that's what he does. Nobody knows about his hobby, give a coin about his features that at one point in life, I'll just reach that level. I have to see or adapt to that. My mind is in a state of I'm not like obsessed with them. I feel like they're just the same people as I am".

Kai Angel's fans might be after the same feeling but their way of action is hardcore. From thousands actively engaging with his social media to a group on Telegram, his followers are growing in numbers. It was the most powerful when experienced in real life during a youtube live video shoot with 150 extras hauled from one Insta story. "Everybody was dressed up. Almost everybody had makeup. They took it that seriously. Everybody was so beautiful. I felt so happy," the rapper says, "That moment I changed everything, I felt like I have a big cut and that's just the beginning". A sense of a strong international family, praising you on a royal-like level is a solid foundation to build the future on. "I can't grateful enough to have it," Kai Angel shares.

Kai Angel is the lone ranger royalty. Rapper refines the meaning of 21st-century nomad, off- and online, conjuring spirits and saints of his domain on the way to world domination. Why not? The survival of the fittest can serve you right, if you know how to slay it, leaden by heart and ambition. Kai Angel might be a citizen of the night but he wields light magic, turning gruesome feelings into real gold material. In the current climate, that kind of treasure is rare as hell, so even though he exiled himself as an eternal outcast, we will forever stay by Kai Angel's side.

Follow Kai Angel on Instagram [here](#).

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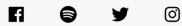
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