



## Biography

It was unforeseeable at the time that he was potentially birthing a new band when guitarist and songwriter Michael "Mick" Böttcher (*Emergency Gate, Pikes Edge*) started writing a new album for his former Thrash band *Free Key Bit Chess*.



Mick, who has a classical guitar education and a degree in sound engineering, wrote 14 new songs in a vacation home at La Palma / Canary Islands (ES) in 2014 that did not fit into the concept of his current band. Back in Germany, he met Thomen Stauch (*Blind Guardian, Savage Circus, Coldseed*) when the German power metal band *Serious Black*, at that time still with Roland Grapow (*Helloween, Masterplan*) on guitar, were in Munich's *Dreamsound Studios* where Mick was working as an engineer to produce their debut album.

Mick and Thomen had a good chemistry and decided to stay in contact to record the new songs because they recognized the potential and the originality of the material. In 2017, the two met in Meerbusch (DE) to work on the drums. All of the songs took on an organic dynamic through Thomen's distinctive drum style, and now offered an ideal basis for the vocal arrangements.



The next step was to find a singer who could put his own stamp on the project's style, which was gradually taking shape. Through a recommendation by a friend, Mick and Thomen got in contact with singer Carsten Schlu (*Blessed By Rhenus*). During their first session, it quickly became clear that Carsten had a very unique voice, with a combination of growls and clean vocals in his own style of singing. Thereupon, Carsten was firmly integrated into the project, and now a band was forming. DAWN OF AMBER.

In July 2018, Thomen Stauch met his longtime friend Benedikt "Bene" Zimniak (*Starchild*, *Mekong Delta*, *Tomorrow's Eve*, *Ivory Night*) again at a birthday party and told him about the band, and about their need for a second guitarist. Two days later, Bene, who once replaced Mike LePond (*Symphony X*) on bass on a tour with *Tomorrow's Eve*, received the material, and the band was four.

With this lineup, a pre-production teaser with three songs was produced at the end of 2018.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnhHdkzA92A>

The video brought the band to the attention of bassist Ilker Ersin (*Moon'Doc*, *Freedom Call*, *Powerworld*, *Lacrimas Profundere*), who then contacted Thomen Stauch, whom he knew from a joint tour with *Freedom Call* and *Blind Guardian*.

With the addition of Ilker on bass, DAWN OF AMBER was complete for the first time.



In the time following, it turned out that their singer could not meet the challenges of the band, and an adequate replacement had to be found.





After a long search, Mick became aware of the US-American singer Ryan Strain (*See of Trees*, *Luminary*, *Plaguestorm*, *C4TM*, *Recode the Subliminal*). Ryan had published several vocal covers of metal songs on YouTube and had just released an album with *Enigmatic Entrance*, a project with Alex Landenburg (*Kamelot*, *Rhapsody*, *Mekong Delta*).

In September 2021, Ryan flew to Germany for three months to record the complete pre-production at *Mick's Mix Audio Productions*. During the recording sessions, and two days before the band would have their first photo-shoot, they received the news that Thomen Stauch would no longer be available as drummer due to his commitments with his family and his new band *Mentalist*.

Since Ilker has been in good contact with Oli Beaudoin (*Kataklysm*, *Belphegor*, *Ex Deo*, *Keep of Kalessin*, *Neuraxis*) for several years, it was obvious to ask him if he would record the drums for the album.



Oli is a 2016 JUNO Awards (Canadian equivalent of the Grammy Awards) winning drummer, composer and mixer. He not only plays the drums on the debut album, but the band also benefits from his knowledge and talent as a producer.

#### **The production lineup as follows:**

Ryan Strain (US) - Vocals  
Michael Böttcher (DE) - Guitars  
Benedikt Zimniak (DE) - Guitars  
Ilker Ersin (DE) - Bass, Backing Vocals  
Oli Beaudoin (CA) - Drums

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