



## Episode 1,780: Entertainer Dissents From Industry, Demands Liberty

Guest: Jon Schaffer

**WOODS:** I'm a Blind Guardian fan, which meant that through twists and turns, I got to Iced Earth, but I didn't know because I must be living in a cave what your political views were until I saw your endorsement of Rainwater in the I guess Indiana gubernatorial election. By the way, I guess you're from Indiana? What state do you live in now?

**SCHAFFER:** I still live in Indiana.

**WOODS:** Oh, do you? Okay, okay. But I think you have a cell phone number from another state like I do. I never changed it when I moved to another state, so I was wondering if you were in Indiana or not.

**SCHAFFER:** Yeah, no, I still live here. That's true. It's a Florida cell phone. But I mean, I'm a global traveler, man, so — well, I was [laughing].

**WOODS:** [laughing] Yeah, you and me both, yeah. I asked just because I live in Florida now, and I was wondering if you were still in the Tampa area where there's obviously, as you know, a significant metal scene.

**SCHAFFER:** Yeah. Yeah, I mean, well, I left home as a teenager and launched the band there, actually, so I lived in Tampa from like '85 until probably '97.

**WOODS:** How would you characterize Iced Earth, by the way? There are so many sub-genres of metal, and sometimes people attribute certain genres to certain bands that the band doesn't even agree with. So what would you say about it?

**SCHAFFER:** Well, I mean, we're a heavy metal band, period. And that means it runs the gamut from every dynamic you can imagine, from Pink Floyd to Slayer and everything in between. And so when people in the old days, they called us speed metal or thrash metal, and then now we get labeled power metal a lot, as my brothers in Blind Guardian do. And neither one of us appreciate that, because there's progressive elements in there, there's classic rock elements. For us, I mean, we may be even a little more dynamic on the spectrum than Blind Guardian is. But there's doomy parts. You've got all of the influences from when we were kids are coming out in the music, and that's a very dynamic thing. So trying to stick us into one particular category just doesn't work. And I mean, the real fans know that, but the industry itself tends to, it's like they have to pigeonhole people into a category.

**WOODS:** Yeah, yeah. What are some of your, let's say, musical influences?

**SCHAFFER:** Well, I have to go back to the really, really early stuff, which would be Black Sabbath and Kiss and kind of the old wave of British heavy metal was, firstly, you had Black Sabbath, you had Deep Purple, Zeppelin. I was exposed to that stuff at a very – you know, three, four years old because of my older sister. And then I really gravitated towards Kiss a little bit later and Alice Cooper and that kind of stuff. And then when the new wave of British heavy metal came into effect, like Iron Maiden and Judas Priest, that was a huge turning point for me. Because of the speeds and the subject matter of the songs, the dueling guitar harmonies, especially with Iron Maiden, the tempo changes, and there was a lot of history in the lyrics, which I've always been fascinated with since I was old enough to read. So it was another level of the game-changing events in my life, musically. And even though I never was a guy who was into playing cover tunes, and I really never played – I only played a couple cover tunes in the early years of the band. It was all about originals. But even though I didn't study these guitar players or these songs, when you open yourself to listening to that music, you're being influenced. You don't have to play the songs to have the influences coming in.

**WOODS:** Now, in the kind of music you play, it basically would be almost unheard of for a band like yours – maybe I'm wrong, but to tour alone. Generally you tour with at least two or three other acts. Is that right?

**SCHAFFER:** It is, but we have done, there was a special tour back in I guess it was 2001 or '02 where it was just Iced Earth, and we did a showcase tour in Europe. That was three hours long. And so we went through three different periods of the band's career. We did the early stuff in the first hour, and actually changed the stage setup, changed our stage clothes while the crew was getting things ready. It was about a seven- to ten-minute break. And then we would come out and play another era of the band's history for an hour, and then we ended with the *Horror Show* album, which was the tour that we were on at that time. So other than that, that was the only time that we didn't take support bands out.

**WOODS:** Okay, okay. Well, that's funny. Just before the world ended back in January of this year, I saw Machine Head, and they did a three-hour show with no support, so my ears perked up when you said that. The reason I ask you that is that means you've gotten to know over the years a bunch of other bands, right? You've gotten to know the personnel, presumably, right?

**SCHAFFER:** Yes, that's right.

**WOODS:** Okay, so now let's get into some of the meaty, more political stuff. You frankly stand out like a sore thumb in the metal community. It's not just you. I'm sure you know there's a handful of others. But it's a handful of people whose political opinions I can't predict. I can predict and script what everybody over at Metal Sucks is going to say. I can predict – I know what their opinions are on everything. They have the exclusively approved opinions on everything. I know what they think about the lockdowns. I know what they think about policies that are basically destroying their careers right before their eyes, and they're absolutely a-okay with it. Has that been a problem for you professionally?

**SCHAFFER:** Well, here's the thing, Tom. I'm a man of my convictions, and I will not kowtow and say things that I don't believe in when I'm asked about it, just out of fear of possibly offending people. I don't really care. And if very ignorant people don't want to support me financially, I'm okay with that. They don't have to buy my records. I just am at the point in my life where this is serious stuff that's going on, and these people are, they're just dumb,

frankly. I mean, they don't understand history. They are naively trusting government and the bureaucracy when it is clear that this is a completely criminal situation that's going on. And I don't know what happened in the music business, when rock and roll and heavy metal and stuff was supposed to be rebellious, how all of these people turn into bootlickers. But I'm not one of them, and I don't want to be associated with those people, frankly. I do know a lot of guys in bands that share my feelings but are afraid to speak out, because they're afraid of what it's going to do to their career. But I just can't live my wife like that. That's not an option for me.

**WOODS:** Well, especially, for crying out loud, you look at the publicity photos of any metal band, and the exterior they're trying to transmit to us is a tough-guy one. And they have this tough-guy exterior and then they want to support Joe Biden. I don't see it. It seems like some kind of a disconnect there.

**SCHAFFER:** [laughing] There's a total disconnect. But you've got to realize — I mean, I know you're aware of this — you're talking about weaponized media, absolute brainwashing from every angle of our society, from Hollywood and of course government and the education system. And frankly, it's an epidemic of ignorance that is going on, and I'm just not going to be a part of it. I don't have any interest in that. There's plenty of people out there that do understand what's happening and what we're up against as a species, quite frankly, that I'm going to ally myself with those people, not with dumbed-down masses.

**WOODS:** It just seems like — I mean, I obviously a genre like punk is supposed to have *rebellion* written all over it, and that went away. And then metal, there's clearly a spirit of rebellion in metal, and yet now the message coming from most bands is: do what you're told [laughing].

**SCHAFFER:** Yeah, I was sickened by it all. You know, I'm new to Instagram, and actually my daughter talked me into doing it because of the book that I'm putting out and to start branding myself a little bit more than just within the Iced Earth and Demons & Wizards and *Sons of Liberty* and my other projects. So I did it, and I've never been one to be involved in social media. It's just not my thing. But I've seen these posts from bands where it's #stayhomestaysafe, and I'm like, f\*\*\* you. That is: stay home, stay controlled. Replace that word *safe* with *controlled*, and that's what that is. And they're just going along that.

I think people — you know, at first when this all started — and I don't want to sound coldhearted. Like, I don't want people to die, so that's not what this is about. But I also have a very clear understanding that when these people lock down our economy and shut down the middle class and basically say that you're not essential, but that this group of multinationals is, that's tyranny. It's tyranny, period. End of story. They are going to cause the ripple effect of these decisions, and it's not COVID that is causing this. It's the government's reaction to COVID that is causing this, which is benefiting their handlers. And the ripple effects of this, it's going to kill millions of people, *millions* of people, because they're going to keep it going. And I think that that's what people really don't understand here. I've seen enough the other side, of alternative views of what's going on with this virus. And frankly, it resonates with me more than what the mainstream is shoving down our throats.

Now, I stopped watching television — I don't even have it in my home — about 14 years ago, so I can't even — I feel like I am being assaulted. If I go into a hotel room and I turn the television on, I can't even take it anymore. I mean, it's just garbage, and it feels like it's

attacking me on some kind of a subconscious level, and I just refuse to allow it in. But I still see the clips of the garbage they're feeding the population on the mainstream, whether it's CNN or Fox News, frankly — I mean, I knew they were always there to manage the right. You could tell that many years ago.

They are also deceivers, and it's a shame that so many good people have bought into it and just buy everything they say hook, line, and sinker. And I believe there are some good people on Fox. Andrew Napolitano is an amazing human being, and I think Tucker Carlson's got a great view. I believe there are good people who work there. But when you're at the top, the people that are running the network that are putting the narrative out, that's a whole different story, man. And there's a lot of deception going on out there. Some of this within the people in the music business could very well be that they just want to get back to work, because it's horrible.

You were talking about Blind Guardian. Hanzi Kürsch is one of my best friends in the world, and we were lucky in 2020 that we had decided we weren't going to do any touring with Demons & Wizards, and that neither Iced Earth nor Blind Guardian would be on the road because we were focusing on studio projects. Well, many of our colleagues, they had their entire worlds turned upside down. When you get ready to launch a tour and you invest in pre-production, you're spending a s\*\*\*load of money on your stage design and on the crew. And just to get to build the show for a tour, well, you have to go out and be on the road for a while to recoup those expenses. And a lot of guys were just launching or already got their show designed, and then everything stopped. So they're taking a major hit. And I think some of them, they just want to get this over with so they can get back to work.

But the problem is, man, what I see, what I see was Ticketmaster floating that they're going to be doing this contact tracing, making sure you're vaccinated, and all this garbage, dude, I'm not having any part of that s\*\*\*. You know what I mean? I'll use a line Michael Badnarik used a long time ago: you come to me with your needle, and my .45 makes a much bigger hole. And that's just what it's coming to. And that may sound extreme, but the thing is, I've done the research and I understand what these eugenicists and the globalists are up to, and it's clear now they're making the big move. You can see it everywhere. There's the same narrative pouring out all over the world, out of the mainstream, World Economic Forum. You've got this literal James Bond villain Klaus Schwab telling you that by 2030, you're going to own nothing and you're going to be happy. Sorry, Klaus, I'm not going along with your program.

**WOODS:** Yeah, this thing about the Great Reset, I heard a guy in the UK named James Delingpole talk about it. And you know, I consider him a reasonable voice. And he said:

Look, I know, I know this great reset thing sounds like some crazy theory that a kook dreamed up. Believe me, I know that's what it sounds like. But the thing is what I have on my side is them actually telling it to us. So that's how I know. I didn't have to invent it.

Let me say a couple things about a couple things you said. First of all, in case anybody thinks you're exaggerating about the millions of deaths, on the show notes page for this episode, which would be [TomWoods.com/1780](https://www.tomwoods.com/1780), I'll link to the post I have called "Death by Lockdown," where I've got all the mainstream sources you want, that if you put them together, it does add up to millions of deaths caused by these lockdowns. It is genuinely undeniable.

As for Fox News, you're right. You can find a handful of decent people there. But the way you can sort of tell what they're up to is the kind of guests they have. And I have some very, very intelligent right-of-center people in my circles who are much better informed than most of the guests they have on, who generally are from Conservatism, Inc., where as long as they get their paycheck, they don't care what happens to the country. My people don't that often get invited on to Fox News. Every once in a while they do, But it's much more just the big losers in the world, I would say.

But let's talk about now what this does mean for music. Now, I saw that thing that you said about Ticketmaster. Then I saw some headlines saying, no, no, no, they're not actually going to do that. So it could be like the Biden team was obviously floating the idea of a four- to six-week lockdown. Then they found the polls saying fewer than half of the people were going to comply with that, which means one quarter were going to comply with it. And then suddenly, the messaging was, oh, no, no, we want to be more nuanced than a lockdown. So I wonder if that was a trial balloon, and then — you know, who even knows?

**SCHAFFER:** Right.

**WOODS:** But with you guys, since you're not playing to the Foxboro Stadium, maybe you can — you know, you can do tickets through the venue. I mean, you can you can avoid Ticketmaster if you wanted to, I assume?

**SCHAFFER:** Well, yeah, we could. But I think there's always a way, and I think every time that this kind of tyranny rears its ugly head, there's going to be a push back and there's going to be people who will find a way and who'll band together to get around whatever that will look like in the future. But it depends on what these governors do. And Tom, I have an international band. My singer's Canadian, bass player's British, and the rest of us are scattered around the states. And my crew's international too, so we're going to have all these different rules from country to country, state to state.

And I mean, I'm just really having a hard time with the — like, I haven't flown ,and I'm a guy who flies normally 100,000 miles a year, and I haven't flown since all this stuff started. And I refuse to wear a diaper on my face, so I'm not going to get into an airplane and deal with that unless there's like a family emergency or something. I'm just not willing to do it, because to me, it is slave training. The science behind — when you look at these boxes of the facemasks and they tell you that this doesn't protect you from a virus, what the hell is going on? I mean, it's a literal psychological warfare campaign against common sense.

**WOODS:** I just saw a video from Michael Osterholm, who is on the Biden COVID team, and this is a video from June, and they asked him about masks. Now, this was before he knew he was going to be on the Biden COVID team. So now this guy's been dead-wrong on everything. He overestimated the virus by 800 zillion times and all that. But on masks, he said, Look, I've been studying influenza for 40 years. That's my career. And I'll tell you something about masks. He said unless you've got a mask that's super-duper properly fitted, it's like closing three out of the five doors on your submarine. The water will just get in. So he says everything will just go through the sides. So it's not going to do anything. So this is one of Biden's people, flat-out said, come on now. Unless you're getting one of these crazy medical-fitted masks and you're wearing and properly — in other words, unless a bunch of things hold that are never got to hold, the mask thing, it just makes people feel better. In fact, I think he also said this whole thing about wiping down surfaces and sanitizing, he says we know that it's

not transmitting that way, but it's something people can do, so it makes them feel good. But it's not actually doing anything.

**SCHAFFER:** Right, sort of like the illusion of the body scanners after the underwear bomber. All that garbage, it's just the illusion of safety, and people are willing to sacrifice their freedom for that, and it's just unbelievable to me how many people sheepishly go along with it. I mean, I don't want old people to die, but there's other ways. Look at what Kristi Noem in South Dakota did. She's amazing. I was just out there. It's totally up to the people. Just use common sense. That's all she said. Yes, the restaurant workers are wearing face masks and in bars and whatever, but it still feels like America out there. Their economy is booming. Everybody wants to go there because they're embracing freedom. I just don't understand how we're — I think, Tom, it's the weaponized media. People are literally being scared to death and brainwashed, and it has to be — it obviously is — a much darker agenda moving forward.

**WOODS:** I also took a trip to South Dakota, because I wanted to see it for myself, because I wanted to feel normal for a while. I ate at a buffet. How about that? Whoever thought that would be a luxury? I ate from a buffet. The person behind me used the same spoon to put food on his plate, and it was fine.

**SCHAFFER:** Yeah.

**WOODS:** So that thrills and excites me. Now, in the meantime, I guess I kind of want to know, how is it — we've already said that you, you and a few others, don't hold the same kinds of views that most people in your industry do. So where did that come from? Were you a young man? Were you politically active or aware even at that age?

**SCHAFFER:** Well, I have been studying history since I was old enough to read, and especially a lot about the founders and real Americana. I was raised around people like that. My father was that way, and he bought me my first gun when I was seven years old and took me out and taught me how to shoot. I mean, it's just a thing that's always been there. And I don't blindly trust authority, especially it started to come together more when I really learned about the Federal Reserve system, and I think that's a crucial part of this whole discussion.

I mean, there's so much corruption, it's off the hook. The fact that it's becoming noticeable now, that we're literally looking like a banana republic, it has been in the works for a very long time. And this fraudulent monetary system has allowed this level of corruption to go completely haywire. And I believe that it is at the root of everything. Of course these international bankers, guys like Klaus Schwab and all these people, I mean, this is a move, where if you — if you think about how tyrants throughout history have tried to take over the world through military force, I mean, these guys finance those tyrants. And now they're basically taking over the world through fiat currency. It's an amazing, diabolical scheme. And getting all of these feckless traitors that are supposed to be our representatives in government to go along with this program, it's just dangerous.

And I guess I've been cynical about government for a very long time, and I just feel like this is all moving into a place that is actually very dark, and the people need to understand and try to snap out of the mind control. Because frankly, people can say that I sound like a tin-foil-hat conspiracy theorist or whatever. Well, it's clear that there is a conspiracy. When we have President Eisenhower in his farewell address coming out and warning us about the military industrial complex and the technological elite, and then JFK had plenty of warnings. I mean,

if we can't — and JFK actually used the words "ruthless, monolithic conspiracy." Are we not supposed to take the people that lead the country seriously when they warn us?

And just because the media and Hollywood have planted these things into their news broadcasts and their TV shows and their movies to sort of marginalize people that don't trust government and don't trust bureaucracies, to call us conspiracy theorists? I mean, it's emerging, the thing is. That's what's happening. They're making their big move now. People are starting to see it more than ever before.

I was just in DC over the weekend, and I'm going to tell you, man, it was the most unbelievable thing that I've ever seen, and I've been in a lot of protests. And the focus, the size of the crowd, the passion, the righteous indignation against what is happening, you can tell that this protest was very different than a 9/11 protest that I was involved in back in 2009 or '10. I mean, this is a completely different deal. The people are really waking up. And you get this sense that the American spirit is rising, even beyond what the mainstream and big tech has tried to control and censor and everything. It's just not working.

**WOODS:** Well, I hope so. The frustrating thing, of course, is that people with large followings like in the entertainment world and in the media tend to be on the other side. So for people who are highly suggestible and not capable of independent thinking, they tend to just do what everybody's doing. They go with the flow.

**SCHAFFER:** Yeah, I know.

**WOODS:** But yet it's amazing how many people despite that, despite the nonstop propaganda, are still seeing things the way you and I see it. I mean, to me, that's a miracle. And now in addition to Kristi Nunez, even though she was better at the start than Ron DeSantis, DeSantis in Florida really has been pretty darn good. He had a virtual roundtable with several really actually good academics from top universities, where they all said yeah, lockdowns are a terrible, terrible policy decision, we should never even consider them. So he did that. Then the very next day, he announced, okay, I'm reopening Florida. No capacity restrictions, people make their own decisions. And of course, he is under absolute assault for this.

But the way I put it with a guest the other day, unless Florida has a mountain of corpses that you have to walk over to get anywhere, that's a victory. According to these people, this thing should panic us to the point where we destroy our own lives. If Florida is even only 10% worse than other places, that's a victory. But it's actually a lot better than a lot of places, especially considering how old the population is here, how many travelers we have coming in and out. Florida has been really good. Maybe you shouldn't rule out your old stomping ground at some point.

**SCHAFFER:** Well, it's not ruled out, and I still go there to work. I mean, I worked in Tampa frequently, because it's one of the recording studios that I do a lot of work that is right there in Tampa. And I have family there, so I get down there. And I am very appreciative. That's why I said, in the beginning it seems like a lot of these Republican — and I hate to get into that kind of discussion, because it sounds very tribal, and I think the Democrat and Republican Party have deceived the American people time and time again, so I don't want to get caught in that discussion. You know, we have a Republican governor here who's a communist. I mean, Eric Holcomb is scum, as far as I'm concerned. The way he's handling this is absolutely criminal, and I hope something's done about it one of these days. But so I don't

want to just blindly say, like a lot of people do, that Republicans around the country have been better at the way they've handled it, because they haven't.

But DeSantis, I've been paying attention, and he's making some great moves. And as long as he doesn't backpedal and stays the course, then he's going to have my support completely — and a lot of patriots'. You know, there's a lot of patriots in Florida, man, for sure. So it's a psychological warfare campaign. It's all based on fear and control, and we know that this has been a way to overthrow and push agendas throughout history. This is just a very common tactic.

**WOODS:** Well, I don't want to keep you too much longer, but I do have a couple more things I want to ask about. First of all, just FYI, local bands are back to performing in Florida at the usual venues. We have a number of venues that, pretty much anytime certain bands come through, I know which of the three or four venues they're going to be playing at. And so we have local bands and festivals and stuff already going on at these places. So there is still live music, but obviously, no national tours are going on for obvious reasons. And these aren't national names. But young kids whose lives were crushed by this are getting the chance to perform, which is more than you can say for other states.

But let me ask you a totally unrelated question, because I've gotten completely different answers from different musicians. I had the lead singer of a band called Adelitas Way on talking about this, and then I've talked to some others who totally disagree. And that has to do with streaming services. Now, the guy from Adelitas Way says that they chucked their whole management company, and they just do everything in house, and he says it actually works better for them. And they actually do okay with the streaming services once the management company isn't sucking all the money away.

**SCHAFFER:** Right.

**WOODS:** I've had others saying to me, like I think this is Adam Curry's opinion, that it's made the musicians' business model almost untenable, because you used to sell albums, and even that was hard with all the competition you had. But now it's like I'm getting pennies for my work. What's your opinion on it?

**SCHAFFER:** Well, it's a very different thing. And of course, that's one of the reasons that I've moved into doing these Kickstarter projects. I've for a long period of time wanted to move into writing graphic novels and stuff. I have created a story called *Something Wicked* that's been lyrically on many Iced Earth records, and it's a story that I've been developing for over 20 years now. And so I've been wanting to move into that direction.

So the first Kickstarter campaign that I did early last year was for this book, *Wicked Words and Epic Tales*, which is an anthology of my lyrics, but it also has a lot of artwork that is related to the *Something Wicked*. And it's teaching me about learning how to self-publish. In the process, it's also going to give me an idea of how we can go forward as a band without a record company and without traditional management. I have an assistant that I work with, but giving these guys the percentages that they get, that they had gotten in the past, it's rape. It's financial rape for the service that you get. And I think that's actually a good thing, because it's really shaking up the industry.



And for veteran bands such as Iced Earth, we're in a position now that we feel like we won't even have to deal with record companies going forward. And believe me, they take a gigantic percentage of what there is coming from streaming, because that's what they're moving into, the entire industry is. There's still going to be physical product, but it's going to be very limited. But it's all going to streaming.

And I've been in a meeting with Sony a couple years ago, where they're looking at this – and from a business model standpoint, from their side, I get it. They want catalog. They want content. They literally hit a button on the computer, and it's uploaded and it's global and they're no longer worried about that one sale like back in the day, where it was this vinyl record sale and that's what we're focused on, or the eight track or the cassette, CD, whatever, and then the campaign was over.

Now they're looking at it as like, this stuff's uploaded. China and India and these markets around the world with massive populations are going to be able to have access to Spotify and those type of services. And so they can just literally kick back and rake in the royalties. And they frankly don't care how many jobs that in their staff get cut. They really don't. I mean, I've had meetings with the high-ups. They know this is coming.

So in that regard, when you have these all of these parasitic elements involved and you literally are getting pennies compared to what you got, then the bands have to restructure if they want to survive to be able to have any kind of future. Because if you have a record company taking 70% or 75% or whatever your deal is of your streams, and then you have management also taking 10% of gross, not net – but that's kind of a typical American management deal – dude, it's like you're backed into a corner where you have to change your business model.

So the last project that I did on Kickstarter was with Matt Barlow, who is a former singer and Iced Earth, and we decided to do this Schaffer/Barlow project, and the album's called *Winter Nights*. And we have some Christmas classics on there and then a couple old Iced Earth classics that we reimagined, and it was a very successful campaign. But now we're going to launch that here Friday, actually. It's going up on the streaming services, and we're going to see what it looks like to not have that parasitic institution taking 70% of the cut. We're going to see what the streams can be. And all of this is kind of a test market to see where Iced Earth can go and to be totally independent.

But I have to say, given all of the shakeups within the music industry, I'm not sure that if these tyrants have their way, that we're going to return to anything that resembles the past. You know, three out of five of us have decided that there's no way in hell we're taking a vaccine, so if they're going to make it mandatory for travel and for events and all that stuff, then I think Iced Earth may be finished, at least from a touring standpoint. And I don't want to do that, because I always wanted to, when I reached the end of the career, have a really massive farewell tour and headline all the big festivals in Europe and do a really special show and bring past members back and just make it a celebration of this unbelievable career. But there's just a certain level of tyranny that I will not comply with.

**WOODS:** I guess you've seen what happened in Denmark. They were floating that idea, and there were just massive protests against it, and then they abandoned it.

**SCHAFFER:** Yeah, and well, that's the thing, man. People have to push back. We have to let these tyrants know we're not playing games with them. And that's one thing. Whatever the mainstream media tried to hide — and I actually saw CNN filming down in one of the side streets on Saturday where there was just a couple stragglers, and you know what they were doing. They were they were minimizing the turnout. But man, it was hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people. I have never seen anything like this in my life.

And these globalists and what these criminals have no idea what they're up against. Once that spirit of freedom starts to click inside the hearts of the people and that we're losing something very special, I think they have no idea. They talk about the sleeping giant. Dude, it's awakening, and it's awakening, big. I mean, I was very impressed and inspired and actually feeling like, okay, all hope is not lost here.

And it's just going to accelerate. In some Machiavellian way, if Biden ends up pulling this coup off, I think that the resistance that will happen and the way that it will force people to get involved in their local communities and put pressure on their representatives at the town level, at the state level, everywhere, that it will cause a lash back like we have never seen before in this country. And if they steal this and these criminals get away with this, I'm also very concerned that patriots are not going to have any other — we don't have any recourse. How many times have we petitioned the government for redress of grievances? How many times? It's so often, and yet we get nothing. We just get the middle finger back at us. And I think this is a line in the sand where the people are really going, if we don't have an honest election, then we don't have anything left. I mean, we've really lost our country.

So either way this goes, in my view, we're going to experience a lot of turmoil in these next few years. And I'm not sure that there's going to be anything resuming to normal for quite a while. It makes it difficult for Iced Earth because we have an international band. I mean, if it was like the guys in Blind Guardian, they all live in Krefeld. Well, Frederik lives around Frankfurt, but still, they're all right there. They can still get together and practice, and they can do shows in Germany and in areas where they're going to be — it depends on what the lockdown ends up looking like. But they can still get together and do things. For us, it's much harder because of where we're spread around the planet.

**WOODS:** Right, right.

**SCHAFFER:** But I'm fully anticipating that, and honestly, Tom, I've been preparing for this for a very long time. And I'm just kind of waiting to see what happens, and I'm praying that common sense will prevail and that good people rise up and absolutely refuse to go along with this program.

**WOODS:** Well, here, here. Just a couple quick things. When's your book coming out?

**SCHAFFER:** Well, it was supposed to be out by Halloween. And because it went from a 208-page book to a 308-page book and the approval process has taken longer to be expected, it is now going to be hitting American shores in the middle of January. So probably the fulfillment will start right away, and I'm hoping that people will get their books and all the stuff that they ordered by the end of January, early February. I am getting advanced copies here. They're going to be shipped out from Hong Kong on Friday, and then I should get them early next week. And then I can film those and show people what they're actually going to be getting. The moment that I approve them, then it's full production. They're going to be on the

loaded on the shipping containers and sent overseas. So it's a process, but it's coming. It's really a badass book.

And then Schaffer/Barlow comes out this coming Friday on Spotify, and we're working on getting the physical product done and hoping that the COVID nonsense doesn't interfere with production — keeping my fingers crossed and o this whole thing — and that people will get their physical product by Christmas.

**WOODS:** Okay, and then the very last thing. Suppose people now, having heard you, they say I'd like to check out this band Iced Earth. You have a pretty big catalog. Is there an entry point that you recommend for people or an album you're especially proud of, something like that?

**SCHAFFER:** Well, I mean, we have 12 studio albums and there's live albums and compilations and EPs. So yeah, it's a massive catalog. I think a good entry point, the last album that we did called *Incorruptible* is a very strong album. If they want to get into some of the more epic, patriotic stuff, which I'm sure a lot of your listeners are into that kind of stuff, then *The Glorious Burden* is a great album. I wrote this massive epic about the Battle of Gettysburg that's 32 minutes long, has the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra on it. And it's a big trilogy and that's a really cool — that's a different era, different singer, but I mean, I've been the chief songwriter and the leader of the band and the productions and everything since the very beginning.

And then if you want to get back even earlier than that, the *Dark Saga* record, which was based on Todd McFarlane's Spawn character, we did a cross promotion with him, and we have Spawn on the album cover, that's a great album. *Something Wicked This Way Comes* is a great album. That's where I introduce my *Something Wicked* story with the *Something Wicked* trilogy at the end of that record. *Horror Show* is a great album. And if you get into this stuff, like what we're talking about really that's going on in the world, I don't know if you're familiar with my *Sons of Liberty* project —

**WOODS:** I am indeed. Just the song titles alone give away the nature of that project.

**SCHAFFER:** Yeah, and that was really like when I had my full awakening; it was something that I had to do. And I gave it away for free. I encouraged people to copy it, pass it around to just really think. And I had a website that had — this is an interesting story. I had a website that had a recommended reading list and some documentaries to check out. And that was it. It was like an information site.

I went on Judge Napolitano's show on a Friday, flew up to New York. And then on Sunday, I was on Eddie Trunk's show, and we're in Rockefeller Center. And by the time the limo took me from Rockefeller Center back to my hotel, they had shut down my website. And all it was was just: read these books, check out these videos, links to documentaries. And while I was in Eddie Trunk's studio, he played three or four songs, and the rest of the time we talked about exactly what's going on. And the switchboard lit up like hell from all over the country. So definitely some things were going on.

And it took me about a month to rebuild the website, and then about a year after that it was shut down again. And *Sons of Liberty* at that point, I wasn't being active with it because I was

focused back on Iced Earth, which is my main band and my income source. But it was done out of passion. I actually released the Sons of Liberty album on Alex's show, Alex Jones' show. I went down to Austin and went on the air with him. And it was G. Edward Griffin who called Alex and said, hey, you should get this guy on.

So I mean, there's a lot to this, but getting back to the Iced Earth thing, if you listen to the album *Dystopia* or *Plagues of Babylon*, those records are allegorical for what's happening right now. I mean, because I got crucified by a lot of the controlled media in the music business – Metal Sucks is a perfect example – those kind of magazines wouldn't even want to talk about it, and blogs and whatever, they wouldn't even want to talk about Sons of Liberty. So I kind of put the message lyrically in a somehow – like with *Dystopia*, we made the whole record about dystopian books and films, and so each song is really going down that road, almost all of them. But really, exposing the eugenicist program. That was what it was, and same with *Plagues of Babylon*.

And people now are listening back after seeing what's actually happening and going, *Holy crap, he was really trying to warn us about something*. And I was. If I was just to go along with the program and keep my mouth shut, I probably would sell more records. But at the end of the day, man, this is a big deal. I'm not willing to lick boots. Never, ever. Will not happen. And I will make whatever sacrifices necessary to fight for my freedom and for those that don't even understand what we're up against.

**WOODS:** Well, I guess the next action step for folks after hearing this is go to the show notes page, because I'll link to everything you just were talking about, all the albums you talked about. We'll get Sons of Liberty in there. It'll be a Jon Shaffer smorgasbord at [TomWoods.com/1780](http://TomWoods.com/1780). And I'd love to be able to end this by saying, "Well, good luck on your tour," or whatever, but there's just so much that's not known. And you're right, it's so funny that the globalists of all people just got done telling us that the best thing in the world is to have no borders and people just moving around as they wish. And now it's: stay in your house. Don't even think about going anywhere.

**SCHAFFER:** Well, I think that the cover is, what I feel, is that this is the big move into digital currency, global currency, global government. I mean, that's what this all is. And I think they're trying to destroy our morale, our finances, our spirit, everything, in order to pull this off. I just think that they don't realize that they have poked the bear, big time, at least with the American people.

And I mean, there's freedom people. There's liberty movement going on all over the world. And that's one thing that's really cool, man. I have been able to travel this world for 30 years. And I have played in China. I've played in Russia. I played in Israel. I've played in North Africa and South America, Central America, North America, Europe, Eastern Europe. I mean, all over the place. Australia, New Zealand. And you get to talk to people, and you just see – and the one thing that's awesome about heavy metal is that it doesn't matter what language you speak or what god you worship. There is this sort of a bond.

And that to me, you start to see that we're all really the same. We want to live our lives. We have these governments that constantly play games with us, divide and conquer, pit us against each other, whether they do it to their own population, which they do all the time, but then they also do it – you know, *This is the boogeyman, this country over here*, and all this garbage. But I've been in a blessed position to be able to go around and talk to people,

and after being in China for a little while, and we played in Beijing and Shanghai, and after a couple days, the promoter got to trust me and opened up a little bit. And he just said, "You Americans and your guns. If only we had guns." And you could feel the desperation. And it's just like they have really stomp the s\*\*\* out of people and the morale of people around the world, but it isn't really working.

And now I feel like the United States is kind of the last bastion. If we don't stop it here, then we lose. And I don't think that there's a lot of people out there that have a very clear understanding about what's happening. And I just don't think they're going to be able to pull this off as easily as they thought. They think we're so stupid. They think we're so dumb. And there is an element of that, but there is a much larger element that they realize of people that are figuring this out and that absolutely will not tolerate this.

**WOODS:** Well, Jon Shaffer, I appreciate your time very much. It was hard to contact you, by the way. Let me just tell you something. Iced Earth has their Facebook page set up so you that can't send them a message, so I couldn't contact you there. So then I went to your website. No contact information for you. So I think I wrote to management. Didn't hear back. So then I thought, I'm not giving up. I'm going to reach this guy, doggone it. So I wrote to your webmaster. Now, that guy, maybe give him a raise or whatever, because he actually put us in contact finally. You were a hard guy to track down, but I'm glad I did it.

**SCHAFFER:** Well, man, I'm glad you did, too. I've actually been a fan of yours, and I have appreciated — it's been a while, but I saw you years ago. You went on Fox a few times, right?

**WOODS:** Yeah, sure. I've been on, yeah.

**SCHAFFER:** Yeah, because I remember as soon as I saw your name, I'm like is this *the* Tom Woods? And I looked at the website, and I'm like, *Dude, it is. Awesome.* So I was very honored to get that email from you. And the thing is, like I said, I'm really not good at the social media and all that stuff. And we haven't really been — most of our stuff, it's all organic. Everything that there is with the Facebook page and all that stuff, it's just organic. And we're really not very good at it. It's something that we do have to start spinning. I guess it's because we've been in the business so long, you know what I mean? And now things are transitioning. And back when I started all this, there was no social media. Hell, there was no cell phones, you know what I mean? We used to go on tour to Europe and have to spend a ridiculous amount of money from a payphone to call home back then. And everything was done with the record company on a fax machine, going back and forth. So I've seen the technology change a lot, and I just haven't really been up on it. And actually, Hanzi and I are both pretty guilty of that, as far as the Blind Guardian guys as well and us as Demons & Wizards. But somehow it still carries on.

But I think if this ever moves back into a situation where there is normalcy and touring and all that, then we are going to have to be more involved in the social media thing, and I'm going to have to hire people that are really focused on that, because right now it's a super basic thing. But regardless, I'm very glad that you were able to get through and that we were able to have this talk, man.

**WOODS:** Well, if things do resume and you guys are touring, I'm going to secretly get the VIP meet-and-greet and then surprise you at that thing, and we'll get a picture together.

**SCHAFFER:** [laughing] Absolutely, man. Hey, if you're in Tampa, I'll look you up when I'm down there, because I get there fairly often.

**WOODS:** I'm sort of near Orlando, but I get to Tampa because there are a lot of great things that go on there. But at the same time, I like living outside Orlando, so I can have the benefits of Tampa and then get the heck out. But yeah, I'm there quite a bit.

**SCHAFFER:** Oh, well, I get to Orlando quite a bit too, because that's where my mother lives, and she's getting up there in years, and I'm probably going to end up kind of forcing her to move back to Indiana. So I'm working on that right now. But so I get there too. So I got your contact, man. I'll get in touch with you when I'm heading down that way.

**WOODS:** Okay, that'd be great. Well, thanks again for today. I appreciate it.

**SCHAFFER:** All right, thank you, Tom. Take care.