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## A Personal 'Memento'

IAN GOTHE'S DEBUT ALBUM  
EXPLORES THE BOUNDARIES OF  
SADNESS AND JOY

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO-KARASINSKI

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## Ian Gothe's debut album explores the boundaries of sadness and joy

Posted by [Christina Fuoco](#)



Ian Gothe calls his debut album, "Memento," a very personal album with deep meaning. But fans attending the Montrose musician's record release party on Saturday, Feb. 8, at Hotel Café shouldn't expect to hear too many of the tunes.

"I think one sad song is enough for that night," Gothe says with a laugh. "I'm replacing a track with a new original, 'Walls Came Down.' It's an upbeat tune. Then, I'll do a cover or two as well, but those are a secret."

The album was produced by Gothe and Grammy-winning producer and engineer Jim Scott, who has worked with Wilco and Tom Petty. "Memento" features guest appearances by Derek Frank, Fernando Perdomo, Tamir Barzilay and Sam Babayan. "Memento" will be out digitally and on CD via the California-based Blackbird Record Label on Friday, Feb. 7.

"Oh my gosh, James Scott is a legend. He's a seven-time Grammy winner," Gothe says. "One of the fun parts of working with Jim are all the stories he would tell us. One day he would talk about working with Mick Jagger. The next day, it would be Robbie

Robertson. Jim's studio, too, is amazing. It's like Toys R Us for musicians. It's so colorful with tons of vintage instruments and microphones."

Fans got a sneak peek of what to expect from "Memento" in November when Gothe released the single and video for "Spanish Caravan," his interpretation of the Doors' classic song.

The second single, the instrumental "Blood on the Rooftops in Montrose," pays homage to his favorite guitarist, Steve Hackett of Genesis. The intro to the song is by Hackett ("Blood on the Rooftops," from the Genesis album "Wind & Wuthering") paired with an original piece by Gothe.

"Montrose is a sleepy town, a family-oriented town," Gothe adds. "I was looking at the rooftops and the sky and all I see are these antennas. I have not watched TV for 20 years. I watch a lot of movies, but I don't watch TV. There's a lot of negativity coming from the roofs. That's what inspired me for the title or the story."

Born to an Armenian family in Iran, Gothe spent much of his adolescence traveling. He turned to music for friendship and comfort. Gothe left Iran at age 14 and lived with a family in England. Later, he moved to Baltimore and settled in Montrose.

"I lived in Baltimore in the early '80s," Gothe says. "When I moved to LA, I wanted to see more trees. I miss the greenery. I always wonder if I go back to Baltimore or England, how would I feel now."

Twelve years ago, he relocated to Montrose, where he has a love/hate relationship.

"I love California — especially Northern California," he says. "Over the years, you go through phases in your life. There are times when it's raining and cloudy and there's a lot of inspiration.

"There are times when you go through phases. A few years later, the ocean is an inspiration. I remember when I was living in Manchester, England, and obviously it rains so much over there. It's dark and gloomy. Some people hate that. Some people are more inspired by it. I would say one cool thing about Los Angeles is there are a lot of fantastic musicians right here. I get to meet a lot of them, like I did."

At Hotel Café, Gothe will be joined by a four-piece band, many of whom accompanied Jakob Dylan in the documentary "Echo in the Canyon."

"I've known guitarist Fernando Perdomo for years," he says of the "Echo in the Canyon" band member. "He also played on my record. When I reached out to him and asked him

who else he would recommend to join us, he said the 'Echo in the Canyon' band would be wonderful."

The rest was easy for "Memento," for which the band didn't rehearse prior to going into the studio.

"We said, 'Let's allow the magic to happen and try to capture it,'" Gothe says. "There was energy and there was a surprise element. We didn't practice or rehearse and all of a sudden something magical happens. Derek Frank, who's a fantastic bass player, said, 'Which basses should I bring?' I said, 'Bring five of your favorites and you can choose what sound you want to use for each song.' I gave him the freedom for inspiration."

"Memento" is a thoughtful collection of originals and covers and Gothe is looking forward to sharing it with fans.

"I hope everyone has a good time," Gothe says. "I'll play good music, see a lot of friends and fans I haven't seen in a while. Hotel Café is always fun to play. I like the sound over there. It's one of those clubs where it's geared toward music. The audience is attentive over there. That's what this album needs."

*Ian Gothe*

*8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8 | Hotel Café, 1623 1/2 N. Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood | \$12 in advance  
hotelcafe.com*