

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



TECHNOPOLIS CITY OF ATHENS SEPTEMBER 11TH & 12TH 2026

Rock Hard Festival Greece 2025 was a pure sonic assault on Athens and wow, what an absolute monster of a weekend it was! The 2025 edition delivered a masterclass in Heavy Metal, proving this new festival a serious contender to the crown jewel of the Greek Metal calendar.

From the doom-laden majesty of legends CANDLEMASS ft. Messiah Marcolin to the anthemic, fist-pumping power of HAMMERFALL, every moment was pure magic. OVERKILL brought their signature relentless thrash energy, tearing the roof off, while guitar virtuoso GUS G. & Friends shredded with breathtaking precision. The riffs were heavy, the solos were lightning fast, and the atmosphere was absolutely electric. We witnessed epic singalongs, circle pits, and a crowd united by the power of metal.

A massive thank you goes out to all 12 bands, the crew, and every single headbanger who made 2025 unforgettable. If you were there, you know just how special it was. If you missed it, you definitely missed out on the party of the year!

But if you did, fear not - we are stoked to now announce that we will be staging the 2nd edition of the Greek Rock Hard Festival in 2026, again to be held at the Technopolis City of Athens, on the 11th and 12th of September.

For the 2nd edition of the festival in Greece, we already have the final line-up ready for announcement now:

Friday 11th of September

BLOOD FIRE DEATH - performing A Tribute to Quorthon and the Music of BATHORY

Celebrating the visionary legacy of Quorthon, who proudly pioneered Black and Viking metal, this event reunites a constellation of the Norwegian Black Metal elite. Originally conceived to honor the fallen master, the project features a core line-up of Erik Danielsson (Watain), Ivar Bjørnson (Enslaved), Blasphemer, Apollyon, and Faust.

This immersive performance captures the spirit of Bathory's legendary recordings, praised globally as "pure magic." For this special Athens show, the band will be joined by iconic special guests, including Grutle Kjellson (Enslaved), Gaahl, former Bathory bassist Frederick Melander, and Mayhem's Attila Csihar. This marks a rare opportunity for Greek fans to witness this historic homage, where the genre's defining figures gather to celebrate the music that shaped their artistic paths. AND MORE GUESTS TO BE ANNOUNCED!

STRATOVARIUS – a travel through time with a Special 1990s Set

STRATOVARIUS, formed in Finland in 1984, stands as a titan of European melodic power metal. Shaped by guitarist Timo Tolkki, the band reached their peak in the mid-90s with the classic lineup featuring vocalist Timo Kotipelto, keyboardist Jens Johansson, and drummer Jörg Michael. This golden era produced seminal albums like 'Visions' and 'Destiny', blending neoclassical speed with symphonic arrangements and hits like "Black Diamond."

The band shares a deep bond with Greece, where they enjoyed massive popularity in the late 1990s, immortalized by the partly in Athens-recorded live album 'Visions of Europe'. For this festival appearance, Stratovarius will deliver an exclusive set dedicated entirely to their 1990s masterpieces. Expect a journey through the decade that defined them, showcasing the technical brilliance and melodic power that made them icons and inspired a generation of metal fans.

MORGANA LEFAY – Rare Reunion Show

On September 11, Rock Hard Festival Greece will welcome one of the most revered cult bands ever to emerge from Sweden. And this is no ordinary appearance: MORGANA LEFAY will return to the stage for just their second announced show of 2026. The other will take place in their hometown of Bollnäs, making this, at least for now, their only international performance of the year.

Even more importantly, their last live appearance took place back in 2018. Eight full years of silence. Eight years of anticipation.

From "Knowing Just As I" and "The Secret Doctrine" to "Sanctified", "Maleficium" and "The Seventh Seal", MORGANA LEFAY built a discography that has lost none of its power over time. These albums still sound inspired and distinctive, decades after their release.

On September 11, songs like "To Isengard", "Master Of The Masquerade", "Maleficium" and many more will once again come alive on stage. The legends from Bollnäs are returning—and that is not something that happens often.

PRIMORDIAL

Formed in Ireland in 1993, PRIMORDIAL has forged a unique identity within the extreme metal underground. Merging the bleak intensity of black metal with Celtic heritage and epic storytelling, the band transcended genre boundaries early on. Built around founding members Pól MacAmhlaigh and Ciarán MacUiliam, alongside commanding vocalist Alan "Nemtheanga" Averill, they became one of the first Irish representatives of the global black metal scene.

Over three decades, albums like 'The Gathering Wilderness' and 'To the Nameless Dead' have cemented their status as one of the most respected and authentic acts in metal. Their latest release, 2023's 'How It Ends', proves their uncompromising vision remains vital. For Greek audiences, who have long revered the band, PRIMORDIAL's return promises a performance of raw intensity, ritualistic atmosphere, and profound emotional depth that few bands can match.

TRIUMPHER

Athens-based TRIUMPHER has rapidly emerged as a leading force in modern epic heavy metal, transcending their local underground roots to gain international recognition. Formed in the early 2020s, the band blends epic metal with black metal intensity and a theatrical atmosphere. Their debut, 'Storming The Walls' (2023), and follow-up 'Spirit Invictus' (2024) established their powerful sound, featuring towering vocals and sharp guitar work.

In 2026, they released their third album, 'Piercing The Heart Of The World'. This ambitious record showcases cinematic arrangements and monumental performances, further solidifying their status. Having already conquered major festivals like Keep It True and Up The Hammers, TRIUMPHER proves their rise is no coincidence. With an uncompromising vision and undeniable talent, the Athenians are carving a distinct path in the global epic metal landscape.

Saturday 12th of September

ANGRA - performing 'Holy Land 30th' Feat. Kiko Loureiro:

Rock Hard Festival Greece 2026 will host a truly historic event as power metal legends ANGRA return for a special 30th-anniversary celebration of their masterpiece 'Holy Land'. Performing the seminal 1996 album in its entirety alongside career classics, the show features a rare temporary reunion with acclaimed guitarist Kiko Loureiro. This performance is one of only two European dates honoring this landmark record, making it an unmissable event for fans across the continent and beyond.

Renowned for blending technical metal with Brazilian rhythms and orchestration, 'Holy Land' holds a cherished place in Greek metal history. The powerful line-up includes founding guitarist Rafael Bittencourt, Felipe Andreoli, Bruno Valverde, Marcelo Barbosa, and vocalist Alirio Netto. The concert will of course also pay tribute to the late Andre Matos, whose voice defined the band's early era. Fans can expect an unforgettable, once-in-a-generation experience honoring one of melodic metal's most visionary albums.

DIRKSCHNEIDER - performing Special Best of Accept Set

Rock Hard Festival Greece proudly welcomes heavy metal icon Udo Dirkschneider and his band DIRKSCHNEIDER for a rare performance dedicated to the legendary songs he recorded with ACCEPT. With a career spanning nearly five decades, Udo's gritty, raspy voice defined the sound of German metal on classic albums like 'Balls to the Wall' and 'Restless and Wild'. Following his departure from Accept in 1987, he enjoyed massive success with U.D.O., but this event focuses on the timeless anthems that started it all.

This exclusive show will feature a true powerhouse line-up including Udo's son Sven on drums and longtime ACCEPT bassist Peter Baltes, reinforcing the connection to the band's golden era. Audiences will experience a celebration of Udo's legacy, delivering the high-energy hymns that made him one of the most distinctive voices in European heavy metal history.

BLAZE BAYLEY – IRON MAIDEN Anniversary Show

Rock Hard Festival Greece has its very own Hall of Famer! **Blaze Bayley** is coming to Athens, carrying with him a chapter of IRON MAIDEN history that remains as fascinating as ever. For some, he was the band's most controversial choice. For others, he was the voice of a dark, unique, and unfairly overlooked era. For everyone, he is an inseparable part of the band's legacy.

From 1994 to 1999, Blaze stood at the helm of a band that needed a singer capable of carrying the weight of a legend. The result was two albums that, over time, have earned the recognition they always deserved: "The X Factor" and "Virtual XI". Bold, distinctive records that proved far more influential than they were initially given credit for.

In April 2026, the story came full circle when IRON MAIDEN were inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame, with Blaze rightfully sharing in that honor. It was a moment that confirmed what fans have known for years: his contribution to the band's history is permanent.

At Rock Hard Festival Greece, Blaze Bayley will deliver an exclusive IRON MAIDEN Anniversary set, devoted entirely to his years with the legendary band. Songs from "The X Factor" and "Virtual XI", selections from "Best Of The Beast", and a rare opportunity to experience this era performed live by the very voice that defined it.

One thing is certain: this will be a night to remember, featuring one of the most honest, passionate, and respected artists the metal world has ever known.

FRANK BLACKFIRE – Best Of SODOM & KREATOR Set

Frank Blackfire, the man whose riffs helped define some of thrash metal's most essential records, is coming to Rock Hard Festival Greece for a performance that speaks for itself.

SODOM and KREATOR. "Agent Orange" and "Coma Of Souls". Two legendary bands, two landmark albums, and countless riffs that shaped an entire genre. Frank Blackfire was right at the center of it all,

one of the composers, and in Athens, he will bring that era roaring back to life with a set dedicated to the golden age of German thrash metal.

In Athens, Frank Blackfire will deliver a set crafted specifically for fans of classic thrash. Anthems from his years with SODOM and KREATOR, performed by the very guitarist who helped create them.

For those who wore out their copies of "Agent Orange" and "Coma Of Souls", this is a rare opportunity. For younger fans, it is a history lesson at maximum volume.

Frank Blackfire is bringing German thrash exactly where it belongs: front and center.

DREAMLORD

Greek thrash speaks for itself when bands like DREAMLORD are involved. Heavy riffs, real intensity and songs that hit immediately—that is exactly what they bring to the table.

Since 2010, the Athens-based thrashers have been steadily building their reputation. Their debut album, "Disciples Of War", put them firmly on the map, while the recent "Artificial Imprisonment" proved that this is a band with a clear identity and plenty to say.

DREAMLORD will open the second day of Rock Hard Festival Greece exactly the way a heavy metal festival should begin: loud, fast and with zero unnecessary introductions. One of the most promising names in the modern Greek thrash scene is ready to hit the Technopolis stage and ignite the crowd from the very first note.

Ticket sales for the festival will be starting on April 30th, 2026 from <https://www.rockhardfestival.gr/tickets>

FESTIVAL WEBSITE:

<https://www.rockhardfestival.gr>

PRESS INQUIRIES:

Please contact Sakis Fragos at: sakis@rockhard.gr

SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RHfestivalGR/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/rhfestivalgr/>

X.com: <https://x.com/RHfestivalGR>

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@rock.hard.festival>

Youtube: <https://youtube.com/@rockhardfestivalgreece>

ROCK HARD:

Rock Hard is one of the oldest and most significant heavy metal organizations in the world and one of the leading magazines in Europe since its inception in Germany in 1983. Its Greek edition first hit the newsstands in 2005, and since 2011 it has continued exclusively online at www.rockhard.gr.

In addition to Germany and Greece, Rock Hard is published as a magazine in France and Italy, boasting hundreds of thousands of readers every month and even more followers on social media. Over the years, Rock Hard has become synonymous with impartiality, objectivity, and independence, honoring the past while simultaneously emphasizing the present and future of heavy metal music. Its interviews, album reviews, and exclusive content serve as a reference point and spark discussions among fans of Heavy Music. It's no coincidence that many international media outlets republish its content, and it is worth noting that Rock Hard has the most references among international media on Wikipedia.

PARTNER:

This year, to bring you the best show possible, the festival will be powered by mobile game ROCK KOMMANDER!

Rock Kommander is a celebration of Rock and Metal culture – Manage your own rock bands, connect with a passionate community, and experience exclusive collaborations with real bands!