

# PARAGON CAUSE

**WHAT WE  
STARTED  
RELEASE DATE  
APRIL 17, 2020**

1. **LOST CAUSE** 4:17
2. **SILENT PRAYER** 2:59
3. **SOMETHING NEW** 2:55
4. **GIVE IT A CHANCE** 2:39
5. **WITHOUT YOU** 3:09
6. **MASTER OF MY THOUGHTS** 1:34
7. **FANTASIZE** 3:28
8. **TIME FOR ACTION** 3:28
9. **SEE YOU SUFFER** 3:09
10. **LET ME BE** 2:52
11. **LOST CAUSE (RADIO EDIT)** 3:22



**CLICK HERE  
TO LISTEN TO  
WHAT  
WE  
STARTED**

**FEATURING  
THE 1st SINGLE  
LOST CAUSE**





**When creativity meets talent, drive, and encouragement from a valued mentor, the results can be spectacularly successful and incredibly fulfilling.**

Ottawa-based ethereal alt-rock/electrö-pop duo Paragon Cause are such a case, as their new full-length album, *What We Started*, is a powerfully bold statement by a band that is brimming with confidence and artistic zeal.

Coming less than a year after the release of their EP *Lies Between Us*, it sees the dynamic musical duo of Michelle Opthof and Jay Bonaparte reunite with producer/songwriter Sune Rose Wagner, a Danish indie-rock legend, best known for his band *The Raveonettes*. Together, over an intensive and intensely collaborative session in the fall of 2019, they composed, arranged and produced a collection of 10 exceptional new songs, that highlight the magical way Paragon Cause have evolved as artists, developing a style and sound that is imbued with emotional darkness, light and plenty of shades of grey.

Wagner had been a long-time idol of both Opthof and Bonaparte, but this time around, they were less star-struck and approached the sessions that would lead to *What We Started* with a heightened level of confidence and focus in their own abilities, seeing Wagner now as more of a valued senior collaborator.

“The first session, that led to last year’s EP, we didn’t feel as open and free because we were getting to know each other, we were learning how to work and collaborate together. For the new album, we were a lot looser, there was better communication and I think we all felt a lot more comfortable interacting with each other. This time he was a more active creative collaborator, as opposed to being a producer overseeing everything. It was like he became like a third member of the band,” said Bonaparte.

“For me, I found Sune was able to pull the best performances and the best ideas out of us this time around because we were a lot more open and he was also allowing us so much freedom to explore our ideas. He has this amazing way of boosting your confidence, and so I went into the process for this new album feeling so fresh and empowered,” added Opthof, who is the band’s lyricist and usually sets the melodic tone for each song.

While *Lies Between Us* was an excellent release in its own right, both members of Paragon Cause believe they have stepped up their compositional skills, their desire to be more experimental and their thematic focus to an all-new level with *What We Started*. The songs are infused with a sense of urgency, an unmistakable heightened level of energy and fire – a delightfully jagged edge that comes from an open and spontaneous songwriting process.

“Most of the songs were written and recorded that same day or the day before, and all of them were based on just one little idea that we ran with. So, this album is very spontaneous, that’s why there is a lot of energy. Songs like “See You Suffer” and “Time for Action” were literally written the night before we recorded them,” Bonaparte explained.

“This album was an amazing exercise in pure creativity which, we think, is what this album represents as a statement of who we are as a band – no second-guessing, following our inspiration, not being afraid to be who we are and say what we needed to say. Even though the album sounds very produced, it all happened very quickly because we wanted to capture that powerful vibe, and not worry too much about doing 100 takes, looking for perfection,” added Opthof.

The first single for the album, *Lost Cause*, is the perfect example of this edgy and more instinctive approach to writing, as it began with Opthof noodling

around on a piano, while Wagner and Bonaparte were out of the studio. They returned and encouraged her to keep developing the unique riff into a full composition. She later added parts of lyrics that she had rolling around in her head for some time, brought a powerfully compelling melody into the mix and a potential hit was born.

“It’s a song about the end of a relationship and coming to the conclusion that the other person is a lost cause. Sune loved the song right from the beginning, and once I started working on the lyrics and melody, it just came together super fast after that. I guess I was just in a mood,” Opthof said with a chuckle.

Thematically and sonically, Paragon Cause’s form of pop music is expressive, but often of emotions and experiences that lean towards the darker, grittier and less rose-tinted version of the human experience. Opthof admits that writing is a way for her to process and expunge her darker thoughts, and express sentiments that may not always be happy, but are ones that most people can identify with – exactly the purpose of good art.

“I feel like the album represents an evolution of understanding your place in the world and how much you can restrain yourself and how much you can get away with, how you respect yourself. A lot of it comes from what was going on in the news at the time and the incorporating my own experiences,” she explained, adding that the songs “Harder and Harder” and “See You Suffer” were her own interpretations of what she saw on the news and what was happening in the world, through her own distinctive lens.

The freedom exhibited by Paragon Cause and Wagner bore wonderful fruit with the song *Silent Prayer*, a more experimental track that features a more obviously modern pop vibe, to go along with Opthof’s moody storytelling.

“We felt so much freer to try different things on this album and it led to some wonderful surprises. With *Silent Prayer*, we said, ‘let’s try to make a song with loops.’ Michelle played a little piano line and we started looping it and experimented with other sounds and bringing in different genres like electronica and hip-hop into the production. The three of us have very diverse influences and for this new album, we weren’t afraid to bring those into the recording. There were times when we tried something really bizarre and when we listened to it back the next day were like, ‘ah, I think we went a little too far,’ but we were okay doing that. We got some amazing ideas out of that process,” said Bonaparte.

Paragon Cause is also exploring a cutting edge way to bring their music to the masses. As well as performing live in clubs and other concert venues, they have also started streaming performances live on YouTube and Facebook.

“The first time we did it, it was just an experiment, but we had Americans watching it, people from Europe and from all parts of Canada – and we didn’t really promote it. But it worked and it was amazing. So, we are going to incorporate that sort of show into our model of promoting our music. We think it’s the way of the future, especially for indie bands, to leverage the technology and the reach of social media,” said Bonaparte.

Music with depth, music that explores the complexities and contradictions of our lives, our experiences and our emotions – this is what Paragon Cause does so well. By enveloping these sentiments and ideas in music that is compelling, memorable, hypnotic and superlatively crafted, there is little doubt that there is still so much more intriguing, enigmatic and potent music yet to come.



[paragoncause.com](http://paragoncause.com)