

By  
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Features Writer

**RAPPER Machine Gun Kelly is still reeling from the death of Linkin Park frontman Chester Bennington.**

The US hip-hop artist was due to support the rockers on the American leg of their tour – but Chester tragically took his own life just a week before the first show.

Machine Gun Kelly (MGK) – a huge huge star across the pond with three top ten albums – paid tribute to Chester, saying: “I am still just sad about what happened. “Still sad for music, sad for everyone that was going to see that tour – Europe got to see some of it, it was feeling really good.

“Now I do a tribute every night to him with their song Numb and it’s a magical moment.

“Linkin Park’s Hybrid Theory was the first CD I ever bought and it’s sad to go back and listen to it.”

The cover tribute is a change of direction for the star whose rapid rapping style earned him his stage name.

### “People just love to sing along with you”

And MGK explained how vulnerable he feels when he swaps fast and furious raps for slow and sensitive songs.

He said: “I took a bold step by singing and playing guitar on the new album and people want to see me do it live.

“It’s very scary when it’s just me and a guitar about to sing.

“And sometimes I’ll tell the crowd that my nerves are going and they need to sing that part extra loud.”

Changing his style has enabled the rapper to collaborate with singers Camilla Cabello and actress-turned-pop star Hailee Steinfeld on top ten hits Bad Things and At My Best.

MGK, whose real name is Richard Baker, said: “Those singalong songs are incredible – you forget that people just love to sing along with you.

“A lot of my songs are complicated and very lyrical with so many words and I never got that magic.

“But when Bad Things came out people were on each other’s shoulders and just singing every word – I realised then.”

The 27-year-old may not be a household name in the UK but that didn’t stop fans lining up for hours outside the O2 Academy in Glasgow for his gig last month.

He said: “This is the only other city besides London that I have been to twice.

“I came here two years ago and

# My sorrow over death of Chester



**HEARTACHE . . .**  
MGK, main pic, is mourning Chester, above. Inset, MGK with our Anna

the ticket sales have tripled this time.

“There are so many flash-in-the-pan artists so there is nothing better than hearing that not only do people still want to see you – but three times as many.”

Fans were treated to a showcase of tracks from the rapper’s latest album Bloom. MGK said: “I saved so many of the album’s songs for this run in Europe.

“I decided not to do so many

when I was in Europe two months ago and the fans were like ‘Why aren’t you playing this song?’.

“I think that’s why we are seeing so many people come out to the shows – they just want more.”

MGK, who was once a heroin addict and even spent time living on the streets, explained how his success has changed people’s opinions of him.

He said: “All my friends are in the band and on tour with me.

“I think a lot of people think that I have a million dollars to spare and a lot of them have their

f\*\*\*\*g hands out. People have to learn that if someone made something of themselves, congratulate them and don’t try and get a piece of it.”

MGK, from Cleveland, Ohio, is also breaking into the movie world with a role alongside John Goodman and Vera Farmiga in Captive State.

But he is still focused on rising to the top of the music industry which means non-stop touring, opening for bigger artists and slogging it out on the festival circuit

MGK said: “When I am opening

or at a festival, the performance is hungry and savage and it’s rare to see that in an artist that is established.

“We have been in this for seven, eight years, gone platinum with singles, two gold albums but it’s like the first gig every time.

“None of us feel like we have made it because if that moment had happened we’d be in arenas.

“There is still that giant hunger in me, I hate that I am not on the main stage or I am not headlining – hate is a bad word but it is inspiring.”



## EDGAR ROAD

**WHO:** Mark Conti (vocals/guitar), Simon Watterson (guitar), Michael Byiers (bass/vocals), Magdalena Wellenger (keyboards/vocals), Allan Hall (drums).

**WHERE:** Elgin, Moray

**FOR FANS OF:** U2, Deacon Blue, Marillion

**JIM SAYS:** Melodic rockers Edgar Road played a blistering set at The Liquid Room in Edinburgh a couple of weeks ago for a battle of the bands.

Held in aid of the Scottish Association for Mental Health, the event raised over £10,000 for the second year running.

Elgin hasn’t really featured on the musical map in recent years. Back in the 60s the town hosted many of the greats including The Beatles, The Who and Pink Floyd at The Two Red Shoes ballroom. Aside from that, Elgin doesn’t have many musical claims to fame.

Edgar Road could change that. Soaring anthemic rock, coupled with more tender moments, they create a delightful sound. Formed in 2013, they take their name from a local road. They couldn’t think of anything better! They have



## NEW MUSIC

By Jim Gellatly

played the Belladrum Festival and showcased at XpoNorth in Inverness, but the SAMH Battle of the Bands ranks high in their achievements so far.

Singer Mark Conti said: “We love hearing new Scottish talent and enjoy meeting new bands and sharing information and experiences. We were honestly not expecting to win. There were other bands we felt might be more current than us, but a great night and a bonus that we won!”

Of the back of that success Edgar Road played their biggest headline show to date last night at Elgin Town Hall. The Kinks once played there, and I remember seeing Goth band The Mission at the Town Hall in 1989. Billed as the Edgar Road Extrav-

aganza, the band pulled out all the stops to create something a bit different. Guitarist Simon Watterson said: “We went with the theme of silent movies from late 19th Century which tied into the theme of our last EP Looking Glass. Mixing the old with the new, we wanted to host a night of all-round entertainment. A mind-reading magician, comedians and bringing it up a level by involving a local orchestra. We were so happy that the event sold out. We were very nervous about being able to sell that level of tickets.”

The band hope to venture to the US, where I’m sure they’d go down a storm. Mark said: “Performing live to a crowd is one of the best things for us and then getting to meet them afterwards. It’s all about the fans and watching them singing your songs back to you on stage is truly amazing.”

Edgar Road play Nice N Sleazy in Glasgow on December 2.

**MORE:** edgarroad.com

● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio Sundays 2-4pm.

amazingradio.com  
jimgellatly.com

▶ Watch a video of the band playing at: [www.thescottishsun.co.uk](http://www.thescottishsun.co.uk)