



OH SEES

NEVER STOP MOVING UNLESS YOU ARE DEAD

Who counts the releases anymore? The Oh Sees, The Oh Sees, The Oh Sees or just OCS. More important: there's a new one! After a few re-releases of early days material "Face Stabber" is about to be released these days. A monster of a double album, including the longest track to date accompanied by ultra-fast 2-minute smashers, twitchy ear catchers, and extensive sound gadgets, eclectic as never. Above all, the band around mastermind John P. Dwyer is a sensational live act, to be experienced these late summer dates. We got in touch with him before for a bunch of questions.

Interview: Ulli Revolver

TFRB: There's always change in the Oh Sees. Is permanent reinvention part of your self-conception?

JPD: Of course. Never stop moving unless you are dead. It's tough getting older and not getting boring. So we try new things and hit it hard to keep it fresh for us and the audience.

TFRB: So there were many changes of the band's name. What's behind that? Does it mark different phases of your work?

JPD: Nah. It's a non-news item, really. I run my own label so we just do what we like. Although it has been entertaining to watch blogs and publications latch onto the most inane thing possible when talking about us. Classic.

TFRB: With "Memory Of A Cut Off Head" there was a change from Oh Sees to OCS and back to Oh Sees again after that. Or was it a coexistence of both incarnations at the same time?

JPD: That's two different bands, so 2 names.

TFRB: Besides shorts and haircut, your typical guitar playing became a trademark. How did this evolve?

JPD: Shorts cuz it's hot on stage; hair, why to mess with a good thing... ha; guitar I have no idea just kept at it for 20 + years and play every day if I can.

TFRB: A bunch of re-issues of older records came out lately. How do you feel about these recordings today?

JPD: I feel fine about it. I stand by all of my old material but the next one will always be the best.

TFRB: The last few regular records came out as 45s, most of them as double 45s. What's the idea behind it?

JPD: 45rpm sounds just better than 33rpm.

TFRB: Although the better sound - doesn't implicate it the risk to fragment the entire recording (especially if there are two songs left on side c)?

JPD: Nah, we make it work.

TFRB: Especially the latest records appear like a total work of art with the beautiful arrangement, the stunning inner sleeves, photos, etc. How important is that for you?

JPD: It's very important. BUT the new one is 33rpm!

TFRB: At those records, the front cover artworks go more and more into Metal aesthetics. What's behind that?

JPD: I think metal just happens to lean towards fantasy and sci-fi. So do I all the way back to when I was a kid.

TFRB: Parts of "Smote Reverser" appear like a big session where all possible instruments were used and themes and rhythms change within the same track. Was this intended or did it just happen during the recordings?

JPD: A lot of that I think anyway was improv.

TFRB: Brigid Dawson is not an official member of the band anymore. But she's present in different ways. How's your relation with her nowadays?

JPD: We write together and work together all the time just no real touring. I love Brigid. I always will.

TFRB: You write the songs, play many of the instruments, have a big influence on the artwork and co-own the record label. How important is it for you to have control over all this for your creative freedom?

JPD: 100% of everything belongs to the band. I think the precedent of labels owning the master side is horse shit and just designed to make them more money for songs they didn't work on. It's sort of revenge for them having invested in you. So, I own my label and we don't own any of the rights of the music we release. So we make no money, haha.

TFRB: While you have most of the creative process in your hands - how much influence have other members or collaborators on the recordings? (in other words: how much difference does it make who just works with you?)

JPD: The band all works together these days. We write as a team.

TFRB: With Tomas Dolas you're a five-piece now and - you've got a keyboard again in the band (even with poison!). How came that up?

JPD: He's a dominator. It was necessary. We met when I saw his amazing band Mr. Elevator play a few years back in NYC and I loved his playing.

TFRB: The announcement for the new record sounds like a challenge to various modern-day crap. Do you see your work as a sort of mission or fight for real music (...art, life, etc.)? Or is it already doomed anyway (especially for guitar music)?

JPD: Hmm, that's a tough one cuz I wouldn't build myself up like that. But life these days feels like riding in the back of an Uber, listening to someone terrible music a lot. You just need to keep yer head clear of all the webs and try to innovate.

TFRB: How did it happen to relocate to LA and how much did it influence your life and work?

JPD: My girl moved here to go to school and I lost the great house I lived in for years in SF. So I moved. LA is great, so is the lay out of SF. BUT they are very different. 🖱️



SLEAFORD MODS

The anger is still there

The Flying Revolverblatt

The Mystery and Madness of Old-fashioned R'n'R



Extrablatt
4
30. Aug. 2019
free

Ahead of their upcoming live dates, Jason Williamson speaks to Matthias Hufnagl about Boris Johnson, the recipe for a Sleaford Mods track and what music he was listening to in his teens.

TFRB: You once were kicked out of school because you were caught trying to pierce a mate's ear?

JW: Yes. Got kicked out for that. It was shortly before summer exams. They were just thinking get rid of him early.

TFRB: How much did music help you grow into the person you are today?

JW: Saved my life. It wasn't even so much an escape. I really liked the idea of music. I would be infused about bands I liked - buy everything, try to learn what they were like as people, how they had created the band and what influenced them. To me, it was a really good job. A job I wanted.

TFRB: What were your favourite artists when you were sixteen or seventeen?

JW: I was into HipHop then: Public Enemy, LL Cool J, Run DMC and then I moved into Indie and going to the Stone Roses or The Wonder Stuff - bands of the time.

TFRB: Your current record is titled 'Eton Alive'. Why is Eton as an elite place such a problem?

JW: You hung up with many people there who then go on to government politics. A large proportion of people who attend that school are under the impression that they are better than the rest of the country. We all know where that leads. The world corroded under the way of the elite.

TFRB: Shouldn't they know better?

JW: They do know better. They've become so brainwashed by the extreme wealth that it walks their mind. It's an issue and we are literally been eaten alive - being brainwashed by a small sect of people who aren't that encouraging. They are manning the ship.

TFRB: What is your main fear with Boris Johnson being PM now?

JW: I have got no fears I just think he's a twat. He's an idiot. A weak sick buffoon. He's embarrassing. He is going to pull our country apart. Not that it will take that much but this country that is quite a privileged and rich is going to be reduced to a shithole.

TFRB: Is the growing racism in Britain a consequence of Brexit or is Brexit the

result of everlasting racism within British society?

JW: It was there before. Brexit helped it along to buy the idea of one nation, being that nation and excluding anybody who isn't comfy with it. Patriotism, the solid gender roles and all that. Man does man thing women do women things. But racism has always been there. It's just a tool they are using to rule us. It's a distraction from the truth. The truth is they are just extracting more and more freedom from us.

TFRB: Is there some strict recipe for a Sleaford Mods song?

JW: It's just naturally how it comes. We don't have big discussions about it. We just get together and work on the new stuff that Andrew has come up with.

TFRB: Were you nervous how hardcore fans would react to you singing on the song 'When you come up to me'?

JW: I'm still not sure about that song but it had to be done because we need to move forward. And I'm not saying that we will carve out a lot of songs like that next time. It's probably a one-off that song. But who knows? You got to keep yourself happy with it.


TFRB: How strange is it being now invited to the award shows being surrounded by famous people?

JW: It's nice a bit. It's normal now. I feel like I've earned my place there now. I can sit there with these people who sold some records because the band I'm in is just as good. I don't feel out of place anymore. But it's never enough. You want more: more attention, more awards and you ask yourself why wasn't I mentioned in that article? You've got to overcome that and often I don't. I have a real problem with professional jealousy and pettiness.

TFRB: Have you become softer criticising people in their face?

JW: Yeah, you do. You mellow and you grow mature. You realise to be like that all the time isn't right. There is a lot of anger from the early years. I don't think I've mellowed but I've grown into myself.

TFRB: Is it hard being more settled and maintain the anger?

JW: No. As we go on as a band you have to think more about the songs because you want to write different ones. The anger is still there. It's a part of me and Andrew. He is probably even worse. 

V.i.S.d.P.: M. Hufnagl, Pariser Str.11, 10719 Berlin, info@flying-revolver.net, fb: Flying-Revolver.net.



SLEAFORD MODS

SPECIAL GUEST: RVG*

10.09. BERLIN – FESTSAAL KREUZBERG (ZUSATZSHOW)*
~~11.09. BERLIN – FESTSAAL KREUZBERG – SOLD OUT*~~
 12.09. LEIPZIG – CONNE ISLAND*
 16.09. MÜNCHEN – BACKSTAGE WERK*
 18.09. HAMBURG – REEPERBAHN FESTIVAL*
 19.09. ROSTOCK – MAU CLUB
 21.09. KÖLN – LIVE MUSIC HALL*
 22.09. HANNOVER – FAUST*

sleafordmods.com meltbooking.com
 radioeins™ Byte™ musik express taz# MELT BOOKING