

# DIRTY VEGAS

words: Lindsay Bloemink



much that they put it in the movie and it's in the end credit sequence too."

While electronic music has generally been absent of vocals, Paul explains why they decided to revolutionize the genre. "It's nice to have songs that people can listen to and grasp the words; they have a lot of importance. A lot of dance music is very monotone, just goes nowhere. But a dance song with a good lyric means a lot of things, it becomes catchy." Ben continues by talking about the fusion of their music, "With some songs it could be a guitar riff, playing around on the keyboard, a melody line, a lyric idea or a drum beat or something like that, and it kicks it all off. All of these elements come into it eventually. We collect lots of club records, but we also like The Rolling Stones, Neil Young and David Bowie, people like that. We just thought, 'why not put it all into one sound?' Using our inspiration from these bands and fusing it with electronic beats and house music, hopefully that's what we've done now."

Has this influence inspired a new album? "We've been asked to write a second album and it just seems to be that if we sit down and get all our material together there's enough that we've done in the last six months to have enough inspiration to write a second album. It's going to be about meeting people, finding people...and also some of the clubber stuff. Club music is changing and evolving so you've got to dig a little deeper and find elements that you like and certainly some of the music that we're listening to, we'll probably take that to the drawing board for when we do the album," says Steve. The washer that wouldn't shut up has finally shut off. Paul smiles and relaxes to reminisce on past gigs, "James Beach in front of 22,000 people was just amazing, and at the Hard Rock in Las Vegas. We were there the week before The Who were performing and a week after

As nominations were handed out for the Grammy and The Dancestar Awards in the US, Dirty Vegas were either associated with 'Days Go By' or the degradation of Las Vegas. Now that they have played a few hands with their DJ set compilation 'A Night at the Tables', won a Grammy and three Dancestars, one realizes these boys have hit the high rollers.

Any confessions? "Wow, what a great start to the year," Paul laughs. Paul Harris, Steve Smith and Ben Harris have good reason to be struck speechless, they've recently completed a sold out headlining tour of the UK and are on to headline in the US in the coming months. As they settle into what could double as a high school play dressing room, Steve hangs up my coat as Ben sprawls over the antique furniture and Paul tries to focus on the interview, not the washer that keeps changing cycles in the background.

"To just be on stage and see people coming into the shows, and singing the words, it's nice to realize that anyone in this country actually knows who we are," grins Steve. This modesty is throttled by the mention of James Bond: Die Another Day, when Steve quickly jumps into talking about the excitement of working on the film's soundtrack. "I think, the first time we heard it [Madonna's 'Die Another Day' remix], as you can imagine, growing up in the UK, James Bond films have been a major part of us being kids. To then be asked to do this, as well that it was going to be a Madonna track we were going to be mixing was just fantastic. The first day I was in the studio, all three of us were there, and we just heard Madonna's vocals a cappella, and all the strings as part of the track that were very James Bondish; it was just so cool. We all got tickets to the Premiere and then we found out that David Arnold liked our version so

The Rolling Stones."

Ben interrupts this psychedelic nostalgia to let me know Paul's been around a long time. "Yeah, I've been performing since I was 17. It's been a good ride," Paul laughs. Ben goes on to recall a rather odd venue in the US, "There was this dug out place in Santa Fe. Our bus driver knew the guy that made this venue; it's literally a hole in the ground, with all these steps going up shaped with mud and covered with cement. It's like Luke Skywalker's aunt and uncle's house," he grins. "Last year you couldn't have imagined what's gone on, seeing all these places around the world," says Paul.

The bass propels itself through the door as their manager walks out to make the final touches before the show. Is Dirty Vegas ready for the big league, say Wembley? Steve almost chokes on his water, "We'll probably set up in the car park...if we brought my family I'm sure we could do it." Paul interjects, "whatever happens, happens." Win or lose, it's how you play the game and no matter what these electro-lads do, it'll be a game well played.

## VITAL STATISTICS

**Line Up:** The multi-talented Ben Harris, Steve Smith and Paul Harris

**From:** South London

**In A Nutshell:** Look, they remixed Madonna's 'Die Another Day' for chrissakes. Recommendation enough?

**Listen:** Start at 'Dirty Vegas' (Album) Out Now on Credence.

**Website:** dirtyvegas.com