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SPECTOR

After stylishly making their mark on the indie scene in 2012, it was a long, arduous three year wait between Spector's debut and this summer's Moth Boys. Now re-energised, revamped and embarking on yet another tour, we caught a few words with ever-acerbic frontman Fred Macpherson, Sheffield's own Danny Blandy and guitarist Jed Cullen just hours before they graced the Leadmill stage.

Words by Benedict Tetzlaff-Deas — Photography Harley Kate Young — Design by I am a graphic designer

An Inspector Calls

HOW'S IT GOING?

Danny: Very well, we're about halfway through the tour, and it's I think been it's been the best tour we've ever done.

Fred: I think we're playing better than we ever have played, so hopefully you'll see that tonight.

TOURING ASIDE, WHAT'VE YOU BEEN UP TO?

Danny: We went to the cinema last night, and I went swimming and to the sauna yesterday. I was at the football today, Sheffield United vs Millwall, we lost 2-1. And we've just done a sound check.

Fred: I went to a horror festival at The Showroom this morning at 10am, and watched two feature-length films and three short films, alone in the dark, eating a chocolate croissant.

HOW HAVE YOU FOUND THE GENERAL REACTION TO YOUR SOPHOMORE ALBUM MOTH BOYS COMPARED TO YOUR DEBUT?

Danny: I think with three years between them, with that long wait, it's good that people still come back to listen to us.

Jed: Really good. A lot of people seem to have said it's better than the first one, which is what we were hoping for. A few people have said it's worse, but those who have been vocal about it say they prefer it.

WOULD YOU SAY YOU PAY MORE ATTENTION TO CRITICS OR FANS?

Danny: I'd say I used to pay more attention to critics than fans, but now I pay more attention to fans. Definitely.

Fred: That's a really good question. If a critic from a really big newspaper said the album isn't as good as the first you're like "oh, okay", but it's more cutting if a fan says it.

Danny: It feels worse, really

Fred: Yeah, it does feel worse.

YOUR NEW MATERIAL IS PERHAPS MORE NUANCED THAN WHAT CAME BEFORE.

HOW DOES THAT TRANSLATE ON STAGE?

Danny: Yeah, anything that wasn't vocals, bass, drums or guitar was on an iPod.

Fred: You're giving away the secrets of 2012! I think nuance is a lot harder to translate live, you can't fake nuance, whereas if you're making a loud clatter then that's quite easy to deliver. Nuance has to be nuance, and I think you have to learn that. We're only just starting to develop that now, we're just beginning to have that approach.

Jed: Less general noise, really. I think we've just had to make the setup a bit... nicer. Before we basically just had an iPod as a backing track.

DANNY YOU ARE, OF COURSE, FROM OUR STEEL CITY. WHAT SIGNIFICANCE DOES THIS DATE TEND TO HOLD FOR YOU?

Danny: All my friends from school come along, and my mum comes down, which is nice. When I first played in Sheffield I actually got quite embarrassed about it, with my mum being there, but now I'm fine with it. And she likes it. Which is good.

**I REMEMBER SEEING YOU PLAY HERE FOR
TRAMLINES IN 2012, A FEW WEEKS BEFORE YOUR
DEBUT CAME OUT. WHAT'S CHANGED SINCE THEN,
AND WHAT'S STAYED THE SAME?**

Jed: What's changed? Well, you play the keyboards now. (looks at Danny)

Danny: Yeah, I play the keyboards now. I used to be on drums, but now that's Yoann. And Chris has left, so there was two guitarists, but now there's just one, Jed. Jed: And we have a new album of course. Danny has longer hair now, Fred's got long hair. And Fred's got new glasses. Fred: Yeah, new glasses, write that down. Yes, your trademark glasses, where are they now?

Fred: They're on the shelf at home. There were two pairs actually, a thinner pair and a thicker pair, but only an eagle eye would've spotted the difference. But the old ones looked weird with long hair.

Danny: They looked weird with short hair too!

**HOPEFULLY NOT A SORE SPOT, WHAT EFFECT DID
THE DEPARTURE OF CHRISTOPHER BURMAN HAVE
ON THE DYNAMICS OF THE BAND?**

Jed: I think we've come together a bit more actually. You know when there's a funeral and you have a nice chat afterwards

Fred: Yeah, or if you've ever had a nice steak and there's been a bit of a fatty bit and you've had to cut it off (laughs) No, we're still good friends. In reality we needed something to change for us to be able to inspire a shift in the music, and I think he left because he knew it'd be the right thing for the band. And it was the right thing for the band.

Jed: He also came last in the public vote, so we had to get rid of him. We'll be doing the same thing at the end of this tour.

“We’re definitely going to be looking to record an album next year”

WHAT'S ON THE RIDER?

Fred: Tonight's actually a bit different, usually it's kind of safe, sometimes we get Pret a Manger sandwiches if they have them in that city.

Jed: Hummus, ginger, lemon and cucumber, which is actually a really useful combination of things. Also tea, things to make sandwiches, Lilt...

Danny: And carrots.

Fred: And a bottle of water, mixer, beers. So nothing interesting. Oh yeah, and we'll usually have three packets of supernoodles, then we mix in the ginger and cucumber. It's really good actually.

**SO, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM SPECTOR
AFTER THIS TOUR?**

Danny: New music, sooner.

Fred: Yeah, and some more touring.

Danny: We'll be going to America and Mexico soon. The plan is definitely for the gap to not be as big as it was.

Fred: We're in Mexico at the end of November. But I also think we want to find a more interesting way to develop as a band than just 'album, tour, break'. I think we want to try to find a better way to develop albums and touring alongside each other, so we don't get in that rhythm of it always being one or the other.

So I think next time we do an album it won't have as many singles before it's out, we'll do a single and an album much quicker.

We're definitely going to be looking to record an album next year, so touch wood we can think of some good songs.

No plans for Spector to return to Sheffield any time soon, but you can catch all the latest info on their website and social feeds.

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