



A long way from home and heading for British charts

Born Ruffians

The irreverent Born Ruffians — Luke Lolonde, Mitch Derosier and Steve Hamelin, have just completed several tours in their native Canada and the USA, as well as just winding up 14 UK gigs, culminating with the launch of their debut album, *Red, Yellow and Blue*. We managed to snatch a quick word with drummer Steve during their flurry of publicity rounds, of which he insists, “it’s not crazy parties every night.”

Having formed the band as enthusiastic 16-year-olds, things really took off professionally with their decision to drop out of university for a six-week tour with Hot Chip in 2006. Steve cites Animal Collective as one band that influenced them in a big way, “They really excite us, and Akron/Family is a modern influence as well. We see what they do and we don’t try to imitate it but we go, ‘wow’, they’re doing something really interesting and it kind of excites us. We all have different influences, but we also have common threads. There are definitely key bands, The Strokes were a big initial influence.”

Luke penned all the lyrics on the current album, but composition is a collaborative process. “Luke has the main idea, be it a beat, a riff or the basis of the melody and we all sort of jam from there, but each song is approached in a different way.” Debut single, *Hummingbird*, has enjoyed repeated airplay on Radio 1. It is a catchy, euphoric anthem with a hyperactive beat and sunny overtones, “written really

piece by piece, one part at a time, and everyone got their part.”

The album incorporates a scope of musical crossings and moods, from the calming melody of *Little Garçon*, to the martial drum beat and Beach Boys-esque vocals of title track *Red, Yellow and Blue* — evidence of their diverse appeal. “There’s something for everyone, we’re like a buffet. We’re not strictly a party band, but we don’t want you to cry in your bedroom to our records.”

Steve is ambiguous about their recent appearance on *Skins*, and its effects on their fan base. “Time will tell if it makes a difference, but I guess we’ll see how this tour goes.” Born Ruffians have certainly been successful in producing an album worthy of exciting British interest, and they’ve already taken the initial tentative steps, “I don’t know if in the end it’ll be like that was the one thing that changed our career in the UK. It could be, there certainly hasn’t been enough time to see it through.”

The impression remains of a band on the cusp of something big. With an album of considerable variety, combining instrumental diversity, emotive vocals, and catchy melodies, Born Ruffians look set to continue their growing success. *Red, Yellow and Blue* is out now on Warp Records. For further information: www.bornruffians.com.

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