

# A musical athlete & world class entertainer

## Gonzales

It must be said that Gonzales is an interesting man; a bit of a mystery, a slight enigma—always the guy behind the guy, but with the recent success of many of his collaborators, such as Feist, Jamie Lidell and Peaches, Gonzales is on the radar. He is well known for helping to kick-start the careers of the above and even collaborating with Bjork and Daft Punk. He says, “Every project is different, I organise it by doing the minimum so that the person is doing their best. Other members of the team can handle the rest. I am not a sound guy or a mixer; I am there for the music and psychology.”

Gonzales is a true musician. Classically trained as a pianist, he is a Grammy nominated producer, or sometimes known as a Canadian prankster. “I always link the idea of music with entertainment — with the idea of pleasing people. It probably started with my family and moved on to my friends. In my early teens, I displayed a natural gift for piano playing. I moved on from being a junior entertainer to a musical athlete. I would be up against much better piano players, but because I had the experience of being the family entertainer, I realised that winning people over is a matter of psychology, and musical technique is nothing if it does not communicate anything to anybody. That revelation spurred me onto my career now. I still consider myself more of an entertainer than an artist. I like the idea of music being a competitive pursuit. It’s in my blood, for better or worse. There is a winner and a loser in every musical performance and sometimes I am both.”

Gonzales is a true entertainer. He left Canada in 1998 after a failed major label deal served as a crash course in the reality of the music industry. They wanted to drop him, but he hired a good lawyer and



they eventually paid him to leave. Eventually winding up in Berlin, it was the start of something great, with the release of *Gonzales Uber Alles* in 2000, which was a record of cross-pollinated genres, which eventually lead him to Paris.

In 2004 he released *Solo Piano*, an album made up of 16 melancholic piano instrumentals, which was a complete U-turn from his previous tongue-in-cheek lyrics.

Summer 2008 sees Gonzales releasing *Soft Power*, which once again, is unlike any of his previous records. Inspired by 1970s smooth rock and pop ballads, starting with the upbeat handclap driven single *Working Together*, this is the first lyric-based album from Gonzales in five years.

*Soft Power* is an exciting album and pushes the boundaries of the current musical aesthetic. Check out Gonzales on [www.gonzpiration.com](http://www.gonzpiration.com).

Shirley Stevenson

## Awesome Color

Electric Aborigines

*Ecstatic Peace*

Following a successful debut album on Thurston Moore’s *Ecstatic Peace* and in between skateboarding adventures across the US and musical tours with Dinosaur Jr., Radio Birdman, Be Your Own Pet, and Tall Firs, *Awesome Color* have put together an impressive second album, *Electric Aborigines*. The album is true to their growing reputation as an original and talented power trio of noise provocateurs with a flair for adventure.

The three band members are originally from Michigan, but



managed to run into one another again while skateboarding in New York. Since they began playing together they have given birth to a sound that is a surprising mixture of punk, blues, and impressionist surreal hard rock.

The songs on *Electric Aborigines* are varied, but all of them are reminiscent of the musical language often associated with urban experience. In other words, the songs are full of electricity that is simultaneously volatile and tightly organised. The songs on *Electric Aborigines* are experimental and improvisational, but well-informed and grounded in a serious rock tradition.

To learn more about this inspired group of musicians check them out at [www.awesomecolor.net](http://www.awesomecolor.net) or visit [www.ecstaticpeace.com](http://www.ecstaticpeace.com).

Belle Crawford