

NEW MUSIC By Jim Gellatly

STILLHOUND

WHO: Fergus Cook (vocals/guitar/keys), Laurie Corlett-Donald (guitar/drums/samples), Dave Lloyd (keys/drums/production)

WHERE: Edinburgh

FOR FANS OF: Foals, Tame Impala, Friendly Fires

JIM SAYS: Edinburgh's Stillhound have been on an interesting journey, which today sees the release of their debut album Bury Everything.

The electro-pop outfit first emerged as Discopolis around five years ago and their 2011 debut single Lofty Ambitions had an immediate impact.

Airplay on Radio 1 from the likes of Pete Tong, Nick Grimshaw and Rob da Bank set things up perfectly.

They later hooked up with Swedish House Mafia man Axwell's label and last year they re-emerged as Stillhound.

Laurie explained: "After a few years in various line-ups we felt that the project had turned into something that was no longer our former selves and so we were re-born as Stillhound."

Honeyblood's Cat Myers, who drummed with Discopolis, also features on the Stillhound album.

Laurie said: "We wrote the album over the last few years and it includes some reworked versions of some very old songs and also a lot of new ones."

"It was written by the three of us and also Cat, who was very much a part of the album."

As well as a reboot of Lofty Ambitions, other highlights on Bury Everything include the singles See the Unseen, Think This Way, Shy, Spring Conscious and their latest release Time Enough For Love.

Laurie reckons finally having an album out is a game changer. She said: "We feel like a real band! Just to have a body of work that we are all proud of is amazing."

"Obviously the way music is going means that albums may not be around forever, or at least not taken as much notice of."

"But for us growing up, albums were so important so to have one coming out gives us immense satisfaction."

"I think we have learned to be sure of ourselves more. When we were starting out we really didn't know anything about the music industry and we probably made some pretty bad decisions due to lack of knowledge."

"I think we feel a confidence that we didn't really have before. We are five years older now, and hopefully wiser as a result."

Following last night's hometown album launch at The Voodoo Rooms in Edinburgh, Stillhound appear tonight at The Torch & Claw in Inverness. Saturday they're at Aberdeen's Lemon Tree, and then Mono in Glasgow on the 29th. They've also been confirmed to play the Scottish Alternative Music Awards (SAMAs) at the Garage in Glasgow on October 12. Laurie told me: "It's a total honour to be asked!"

"The line-up is really cool as well, super diverse in a really good way. I don't think we have ever played an award ceremony in any shape or form before either so it's a brand new experience for us."

Stillhound's Bury Everything is out now through Lost Oscillation Records. MORE: stillhound.co.uk

Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio Sundays 2-4pm.

Visit amazingradio.com and jimgellatly.com

Photo credit: Benedetta Margoni

Watch video of band at: thescottishsun.co.uk



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word as it sounds potty. But when we wrote our first record, all we wanted to do was to play festivals where everyone remembered us.

"To do that we had to write what sounded to us like instant hits. And I'm not saying this feels like our first record again because you can never make your first record again."

"But I think somewhere along the way of our career we forgot this is what we love doing."

"So on this record we've gone back to writing songs that when people hear them for the first time they go, 'I know this and I am enjoying it and don't care who the band is. I like it.'"

While Brian Higgins might not be the first producer you'd expect the band to work with, both Ricky and Simon agree it was an unforgettable experience.

Curly-haired Simon laughs nervously when I ask what it was like working with him.

He takes a sip of water and replies: "Intense. But in a good way as he really knew our music – even more than we did at times. And he pushed us forward which was a real confidence boost."

Ricky adds: "His passion working with us was incredible. You can work with any producer in the world if you've got a big enough cheque book but we didn't even discuss payment or anything like that with Brian at the start."

"It was all about how I connected to the music"

"He was just so keen to work with us."

Simon, also 38, says Brian's way of working in the studio was "an amazing combination of magic and science".

He explains: "We'd be playing and jamming and as soon as he heard a few bits of magic he would be like 'Stop!' and we'd then start something new."

"The science came after we'd played some magic a few times and he'd have enough ideas and start putting the songs together."

Working in this spontaneous way was a new way of doing things for the band – and Ricky in particular.

The frontman explains: "He was like Dumbledore for us. He's a human computer. We did ten-hour days jamming, me in the kitchen singing and at the end we were all completely frazzled by it."

"It was very different but something that suited me a lot."

"I was singing in isolation and not writing a thing down."

"I was making it up there and Brian's ears would prick up when he heard something that sounded like a hit."

"It was all about how I connected to the music. He'd say, 'If Ricky's not connecting to it then it can't go on the record.'"

"We write anthems and he was the guy to bring that out of us."

Stay Together is an album of pulsating pop numbers with stand-out tracks including Happen In A Heartbeat and High Society, which Ricky reckons is "probably the most Kaiser Chiefs-like song in the traditional sense".

Then there's the Nineties dance-inspired Press Rewind (including a dramatic spoken word intro from Ricky).

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

We got three Brits but were p****d off it wasn't five SAYS RICKY WILSON



KAISER CHIEFS Stay Together

★★★★

1. We Stay Together
2. Hole In My Soul
3. Parachute
4. Good Clean Fun
5. Why Do You Do It To Me?
6. Indoor Firework
7. Press Rewind
8. Happen In A Heartbeat
9. High Society
10. Sunday Morning
11. Still Waiting

again and again and is now a real favourite.

Second single Hole In My Soul is already a live anthem with its Eighties synth and ridiculously catchy chorus.

Ricky says: "Hole has been amazing to play this summer. It's unusual to have singles out that people know and so at festivals like Boardmasters in Cornwall where we played Hole and Parachute, there were people jumping higher and singing louder than they were for (2007 No1 single) Ruby."

In 2012 Kaiser Chiefs lost their drummer and main songwriter Nick Hodgson.

The band admitted at the time it was tough.

Today Ricky says: "But we've always been fighters. And our last album (2014's) Education, Education, Education & War was

us finding our feet but it was a number one album. We were pleased with that."

Simon adds: "But that album then faded a bit whereas this record has more singles on it."

"With this album we've already had radio play and fans seem excited about the new songs."

Ricky adds: "We are very at home with this record. And we are very proud of it."

He also says he has no problem with Stay Together being a pop record and admits it's something he "bangs on about" on track Sunday Morning. The

"That is why we stay together as we want to make more music and do better."

"Even when we were at the Brits and we won three awards (in 2006) we were p****d off that we didn't win five." Simon says:

"I think we've always had to prove ourselves. We have to work and prove ourselves every time."

"But looking back we have had some brilliant times. Even if we can't always remember them."

"When we first went to the Brits we rubbed a lot of people up the wrong way by not taking it very seriously. We didn't ever write a speech."

And he admits that he was sometimes so blasé about it all that he has genuinely let some of the band's coolest moments slip his mind.

He says: "The other day my girlfriend was talking about Jay Z who she loves and I said, 'Yeah remember

when he came to our gig in New York and stood on the balcony?"

"Anyway I'd never told her as I'd totally forgot. She was going mad at me saying, 'How have you never told me this before?'"

In 2013 Kaiser Chiefs fans were divided when it was announced Ricky would be joining BBC1's The Voice as one of the coaches.

He stayed until the end of this year's fifth series.

Today Ricky, who now presents a Sunday morning show on Radio X, says: "I think The Voice was pretty important. Not just for me but the band."

"But I think if I hadn't done it we would have found something else to do in order to make what

happened happen. It seemed like a no-brainer.

"And you should never be scared to make a move in case it fails."

"Any career is based on failure because there are ups and downs."

"Doing The Voice I met (fellow judge) Tom Jones and he had decades when it wasn't going that well."

"But then he comes back fighting even harder because that is who he is and that is what he is made of. He's made of

strong stuff. He's a brilliant man."

"So we then realised that even when we were going through difficult times, and we didn't have a record that did as well as before, it's not a reason to give up."

"And that's why we are still here after a decade."

That's the attitude that the boys, who formed as Parva in 2000, are proud of. Ricky explains: "We just enjoy it and have fun together. And nothing is actually catastrophic has happened to us."

"We've done all right and we are still here and that's how we will continue. Just seeing what comes next."

● Kaiser Chiefs' album Stay Together will be released on October 7.

Looking back, we've had some brilliant times. Even if we can't remember them



Q & A PASSENGER

'I've busked all summer'

By JACQUI SWIFT

FEW Ivor Novello winners regularly go busking on the streets. But Passenger, aka Michael Rosenberg, is not like most other singer-songwriters. His single Let Her Go was a global hit and this, his eighth album, is his richest and most powerful yet.

Here he tells SFTW about recording in New Zealand, going on tour with a full band for the first time in five years and why there is nothing quite like singing in the streets.

How does this rank among your albums? I really am proud of this one. As a group of songs they are definitely my strongest yet and the production has stepped up a gear. We recorded in New Zealand at Neil Finn's Roundhead Studios. Such a perfect space to work in – lovely guys and fantastic analogue gear.

You worked with a group of musicians this time. It was much more collaborative. I took the songs to the band early on when they were just acoustic demos and we worked on the arrangements together. It's a bigger-sounding record. A lot of the songs felt like they needed a big arrangement.

It is five years since you played gigs with a full band... I'm massively looking forward to playing with the band again. I've held off because the solo show has a special intimacy. It's quite refreshing. These new songs feel so big that I don't know if I could do them justice on my own.

You still busk from time to time. What sort of reaction do you get? I've been busking all summer around the UK, Europe, even the US and Canada. People look at me like I'm insane when I say I still busk but I love it and miss it! There is something amazing about playing in the street.

Are you playing in your hometown of Brighton in November. Excited? There are so many places I love but Brighton will always be my home and base. The shows at the Brighton Dome will be really special.

Are you sick of playing Let Her Go? I still love playing it! The reaction wherever I am in the world is just amazing. To have just one song that goes around the world is more than I ever dreamed of.

What inspired the album's title? There is a theme of landscapes and geography. I recorded it in New Zealand and shot the videos and artwork in Iceland, so I feel like the title sets the listener up for that.

Tell us about working with Birdy on Beautiful Birds. She is amazing. Such a talent and so sweet. I've always been a massive fan of Birdy's voice. She came down to my studio in Brighton and we had a lovely day.

Who else would you love to work with? My heroes are Bruce Springsteen and Paul Simon. The chances of us collaborating are fairly slim but one can dream!

When We Were Young is a standout. Such a beautiful and simple melody. I wrote it on holiday in Ibiza, looking out at a beautiful view. It sounds cheesy but there was something about my surroundings that brought it out of me. It's a sentiment everyone can relate to and that's all I try to do with songs – say something that everyone feels.

The song Anywhere has a different feel to it, particularly the rhythm guitar and brass section. It's a surprisingly happy song for Passenger. It's not as deep and meaningful as some other songs but that's not to say it's not as important.

What plans do you have for touring? We're all over the place over the next 12 months – Europe and the UK before Christmas, then Asia, Australia and New Zealand, the States, Canada and maybe even South America. It's going to be mad but amazing.

● Young As The Morning, Old As The Sea is out today.



PASSENGER Young As The Morning, Old As The Sea