

Album was reaction to the Paris attacks



HORROR . . . Paris terror attacks



by
**RACHEL
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FRENCH band Phoenix poured their heart and soul into hit album *Ti Amo* after the horror terrorist attacks in Paris.

Guitarist Christian Mazzalai told how their capital was rocked by three atrocities as they returned to the studio.

He said: "At the time when we were writing the album, there was some tension in Paris. *Ti Amo* became more of a subconscious reaction to what was going on.

"What we like is pure emotion in our music because that's a subconscious part of the way we are.

"We do not try to deliver messages, we prefer music that for us has a spark.

"We were just experimenting in the studio. We didn't know where to go or what exactly we wanted to write when we went to record. We were just looking for an exotic adventure.

"We didn't predict what *Ti Amo* would sound like at all."

The band, who are playing in Glasgow next month, are well known for bringing a continental twist to their indie pop rock sound and for their mix of English and French lyrics.

But the Versailles quartet are perhaps most known for their hits *1901* and *If I Ever Feel Better*.

Yet when it came to *Ti Amo*, Christian says they weren't looking to create another hit.

He said: "It's totally impossible to know how other people will



RISING UP . . . Phoenix are planning to tour after new album was launched

react. When we write songs it's about the four of us and we are totally separate from the outside world. It's about the link between the four of us. It's almost impossible to know if our songs will be a success or not."

Phoenix have been going since the early naughties but, unlike their last five records, *Ti Amo* was about more than just the music.

The band spent two and a half years writing and creating a bright pop-soaked album in 2014 brimming with summery synths and striking dance beats.

Last year marked the band's first world tour since that fateful year.

And Christian reveals that despite all their years on the road,

Phoenix still never know what to expect when they go on tour.

He said: "When we play a concert it's a challenge. But that's the beauty of a live show, it could be a brilliant night or a fantastic disaster. We just don't know.

"But we love the shows."

The band play the Barrowland on March 26 in their first visit to Glasgow for four years.

And they have a few surprises up their sleeves for fans.

Christian said: "We love to have guests in our shows, but they have to work with the sound. Anything is possible."

The band have played with fellow French hit-makers Air and Daft Punk in the past, so who knows what to expect when they come to Glasgow next month.

But if it's anything like what they've done before, fans are in for

a treat. Christian said: "We love Glasgow and the Barrowland is one of our favourite venues.

"So we're looking forward to the concert there."

The band may have only made their big breakthrough in 2009 with fourth album Wolfgang Amadeus Phoenix, but the group have known each other for years.

While bandmates Laurent Brancowitz and Deck D'arcy have remained in France, frontman Thomas Mars flew in from New York, where he stays with movie director wife Sofia Coppola, to write *Ti Amo*.

Despite the distance, Christian said Phoenix was as close as a family.

He said: "We've been friends for years and we have travelled to so many cities. We love music and we love making music together. This



is more than just a friendship." And their music is a good reflection of their relationship — a mash-up of the genres they have enjoyed together over the years.

But what's next? Christian said: "We are going on tour, playing some festivals in the summer, before trying to write some more songs.

"And we have some very special shows lined up."

●Tickets for Phoenix on March 26 are available at wearephoenix.com/live



FOLDA

WHERE: Edinburgh
WHO: David Ritchie (vocals/keys), Mark Morrow (guitar), Ewan Simpson (bass/keys), Steve Morrison (drums)

FOR FANS OF: The 1975, MGMT, Prides
JIM SAYS: Edinburgh producer Mark Morrow's a guy I've mentioned a lot over the past few years.

He's worked with some of my favourite emerging acts including Mt Doubt, Vistas, Noah Noah, Huxtable and Indigo Velvet.

He seems to be one of the "go to" names in the capital for getting great recordings.

I was excited to see what direction his own music would be going in when he got in touch at the start of the year to unveil FOLDA. He compared it to Everything Everything and The Japanese House, which further sparked my interest.

It's a different vibe to the music he and bandmate Ewan Simpson previously made as part of indie rockers The Winter Tradition. FOLDA give us some dark electro-pop that sucks you in from the first beat.

Guitarist Mark and bass and keyboard player Ewan are joined by drummer Steve Morrison, who played with Idlewild's Rod Jones in The Birthday



NEW MUSIC

By Jim Gellatly

Suit. Fronting the band is singer-songwriter David Ritchie, who also turns his hand to keyboards.

Ewan said: "David was the only person we wanted to front the new band. Mark had recorded his solo project a few years earlier and had been very impressed by his voice."

They had to re-educate themselves as the FOLDA sound developed. Ewan added: "All the bands we've been in previously have been heavily guitar based. Almost 100 per cent of our time as FOLDA has been spent in the studio, building songs up from scratch in Pro Tools. It's not simply a case of getting in a rehearsal room and seeing what happens. It makes playing it really exciting when

you eventually get to do it. When we first tried writing for this band it was very easy to fall back on our old guitar habits. We decided to try our hardest to make this something fresh and new.

"Guitars still feature in the sound but usually very subtly, rather than the driving force. Although the music is quite pop-based, we still want the lyrics to have some depth to them."

After teasing debut track *Aurora* in January, FOLDA officially launched themselves last month. The time spent perfecting their sound in the studio has paid off. The buzz is starting to grow with tastemaker blogs like Club Decade and Alive & Amplified getting behind them, plus support from Vic Galloway on BBC Radio Scotland.

They have just released their second track *Cassiel*. Another slice of edgy alternative pop, it's further evidence the band are set to make a major breakthrough — and the debut gigs shouldn't be too far away. Ewan said: "It's a bit of a learning curve using new technology, but it's all coming together nicely."

MORE: facebook.com/foldaband
●Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio Sundays 2-4pm.

amazingradio.com
jimgellatly.com

▶ Watch a video of the band playing at: www.thescottishsun.co.uk