

All fires begin with a single, unassuming spark, and such was the subtlety surrounding Snarky Puppy's first overseas endeavor.

It was 2010. We had been grinding it out on North American highways for almost 7 years, slowly amassing a word-of-mouth fan base and making slow, but steady, improvement through relentless (and incredibly unglamorous) touring. We had just received a major boost in buzz (and morale) with the spread of our first live DVD, *Tell Your Friends*, across the internet's various social media platforms, but still had no idea whether music lovers across the pond(s) actually cared about us or not- or if they had really even heard of us, for that matter. Other than the occasional email from a music professor in Basel or a radio DJ in Cardiff, our reputation abroad was completely unknown to us.

I was visiting Bill Laurance (our English keyboardist) in London and received an online message from a young music student named Floyd Elgar. He had heard I was in town and wrote that I should come down to the club Dingwall's in Camden that evening- Jamiroquai's rhythm section was giving a masterclass care of the Institute of Contemporary Music, of which he was a student. First off, I should be clear in saying that it was the first time I had ever received a message from someone I didn't know requesting my presence somewhere due to the fact that I "was in town." Basically, it made me feel cool. Really cool. I grabbed Bill and we shot down to the club, only to find ourselves waiting in a 200-deep line of young music students outside of the entrance. Bill and I were mid-conversation (most likely about something either nerdy or crass) when the 19 year-old girl behind me tapped me on the shoulder and asked, "I'm sorry... are you in Snarky Puppy?" I looked at Bill, then at the girl, then back at Bill, and murmured something indicating a yes. She let out some kind of adorable British squeal and proceeded to yell to the 30 people behind her that the "guys from Snarky Puppy" were there. Within 10 seconds, Billy and I were encircled by blood-thirsty students asking us for autographs. I almost punched my friend in the gut. Practical jokes are a refined art form in my band, but this one seemed to cross the line into the realm of humiliation- salt in a wound, so to speak. It wasn't until a professor from the school (my now-very-close friend Atar Shafighian) came and rescued us from the signing session that I started to think that the whole thing was actually for real. I probably wouldn't have punched Bill anyway- he's too nice. Maybe just shaved his eyebrows in his sleep or something. But now I couldn't do either, because I was mid-conversation with the head of the Institute, planning a clinic and concert in one of Shoreditch's nicest venues for the following season and having all of my over-priced drinks paid for.

To put this into perspective, the week before all of the autograph-signing and college faculty-schmoozing, I was sleeping on a hardwood floor in Lafayette, Louisiana, as Snarky Puppy did almost every night on tour in the U.S., with my alarm clock in the form of an overweight cat licking the soles of my feet in order to get me out of its favorite living room lounge space. Needless to say, this London thing felt really good.

I took a big, BIG chance and booked a tour in the UK by myself (with the help of incredibly generous people via online networks), hoping for the best. We showed up to the first gig in London, scared out of our wits after seeing the massive size of the room, only to find that it was sold out- 450 tickets in advance. Once again, for perspective's sake, "sold-out" was a term that we had only previously heard at the bar- generally after a night of long sets and underwhelming ticket sales in our homeland. The tour was an astonishing success, and we went back to America feeling like the ship we had built over 7 years hadn't completely sunk.

[It is worth mentioning that upon our return to the U.S.A. after this amazing first European tour, we played a show on my birthday to 4 people at a club in Arcata, California. The states have come around since then, thankfully, but our success overseas at this time was an isolated incident.]

It was a similar story in the mainland.

In Holland, the instigator was an unassuming sound engineer working for the Radio 6 music show "Mijke's Middag Live." He recommended us as potential guest artist to his musical director, who emailed me and hunted down a booking agency to try to pad our trip with some concerts around the Netherlands. [As a side note, that agency, the two-employee-deep Good Music Company, set up the sessions and handled the logistics for the DVD you are about to watch.] Much like our experience in London, the band was in disbelief at the fact that our first show in the country was sold-out (unlike the bar, which was well-stocked with Belgian ales) in a 600-capacity venue, Rotterdam's beautiful Lantaren Venster. It was also that evening that the band became hopelessly addicted to stroopwafels. Holland has become a home-away-from-home for us since. All this because of a sound engineer.

In Germany, it was a middle-aged hotel manager named Thomas Dirks and a young keyboardist named Hendrik Theis.

In Belgium, it was a local drummer named Julien Beghain.

In Switzerland, it was a former classical percussionist named Stephan Diethelm.

In Scotland, it was a local drummer named Calum McIntyre.

In France, it was a local bassist named Sabrina Boudaoud.

All of these previously impenetrable markets were opened up to us by a single person, starting with a single email. A little spark to ignite a small flame, to grow into a full-blown fire with the help of some careful fanning and kindling. To me, it's a sign that there is an underground scene larger than the mainstream. And not just larger- but more powerful, faster-moving, and with the ability for a normal person, an average music listener who manages a small hotel or plays weddings on the weekend, to make an unknown band into a household name in their country, simply on account of the music being interesting. No photo shoots, publicists, A&R people, or record labels necessary. Just music, listeners, and an internet connection. As a music lover, you should feel empowered. As a group of musicians who finally feel as though their 10-year investment may actually yield a lifetime of music instead of outright failure, we should feel grateful. And we do - more than you can probably imagine.

So, although this particular album is centered around our European experiences, one could take the last word of the title to mean not just a physical continent, but state of comfort, joy, and excitement for the future. We like it here. And you all are to thank for it.

Dank u wel / Vielen dank / Grazie / Merci / Sağol / Gracias / Obrigado / Takk / Achoo / Thank You / Mulțumesc / Exhalisto !

**MICHAEL LEAGUE** ELECTRIC BASS & MOOG KEYBASS

**BILL LAURANCE** ACOUSTIC PIANO, FENDER RHODES, & KEYBOARDS

**JUSTIN STANTON** FENDER RHODES, KEYBOARD, & TRUMPET

**CORY HENRY** HAMMOND B3 ORGAN & KEYBOARDS

**SHAUN MARTIN** MOOG & KEYBOARDS

**BOB LANZETTI** ELECTRIC GUITAR

**MARK LETTIERI** ELECTRIC GUITAR

**CHRIS MCQUEEN** ELECTRIC GUITAR

**CHRIS BULLOCK** TENOR SAX, BASS CLARINET, & FLUTE

**BOB REYNOLDS** TENOR SAX

**MIKE "MAZ" MAHER** TRUMPET & FLUGELHORN

**JAY JENNINGS** TRUMPET & FLUGELHORN

**NATE WERTH** PERCUSSION

**LARNELL LEWIS** DRUMS

**YANNICK HIWAT** VIOLIN

**TESSEL HERBACH** VIOLIN

**MARA TIELES** VIOLA

**SUSANNE ROSMOLEN** CELLO

**JULIO PIMENTAL** PERCUSSION (ON TRACKS 4 & 7)

**STEVEN BREZET** PERCUSSION (ON TRACKS 4 & 7)

PRODUCED BY **MICHAEL LEAGUE**

ENGINEERED BY **ERIC HARTMAN**

RECORDING ENGINEER ASSISTED BY **ROY VAN ROSENDAAL, MIKE HARRISON & COLIN BENDERS**

RECORDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANT **ROEL SNELLEBRAND**

AUDIENCE MONITORING BY **MIKE HARRISON**

MIXED BY **ERIC HARTMAN**, AT **BOUDIN BOWL STUDIOS** IN DALLAS, TEXAS

MIX ASSISTED BY **NATHAN FORSBACH**

MASTERED BY **SCOTT HULL**, AT **MASTERDISK NYC** IN NEW YORK, NEW YORK

PHOTOGRAPHY DIRECTED BY **ANDY LAVIOLETTE**

INTERVIEWS IN LONDON CONDUCTED BY **ANGELA COLES** AND FILMED BY **COLIN CUNNINGHAM**

INTERVIEWS IN THE NETHERLANDS, NEW YORK, AND TEXAS CONDUCTED AND FILMED BY **ANDY LAVIOLETTE**

INTERVIEWS IN NEW YORK CONDUCTED BY **MICHAEL LEAGUE** AND FILMED BY **SIMON C.F. YU**

TOUR FOOTAGE FILMED THROUGHOUT EUROPE BY **COLIN CUNNINGHAM** / PARIS SHOTS BY **STELLA K**

VIDEO EDITED AT **MR. MAGIC PRODUCTIONS** IN DENTON, TEXAS

RECORDED AND FILMED LIVE WITH NO OVERDUBS AT **KYTOPIA STUDIOS** IN UTRECHT, NETHERLANDS

ARTWORK BY **EMILIA CANAS MENDES**

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