

The British Are Coming

By Spencer Dukoff

Pictured from left to right: Simmons, Smith, Farquarson, Wood



Photos taken from DIT Magazine

We talked with front man and principal songwriter Dan Smith about how Bastille has grown from a bedroom laptop project to a bona fide, globe-trotting arena act.

When was the last time you were in New York?

The last time we played in New York was a little show with The 1975 and also a show at The Bowery Ballroom in December last year. Before that, we did Radio City in 2014. That was our last proper, part-of-a-tour gig. So it's been ages. This is our first proper headliner show in the U.S. for the first time in a while.

What is the best thing about playing in New York and what is the worst thing?

It's the same in London, where I'm from. Peoples' expectations are quite high and there are so many amazing things happening every night. So I think maybe people are a little bit harsher (laughs). We'd come to the U.S. the first time and were playing shows, and crowds here, all across the country, can be so enthusiastic. We started playing the show and people were being quite reserved and I tried to make a joke about everyone being too cool to be there. It went down so badly (laughs). But all the shows we've done in New York have been very fun. We're very lucky with our fans. They are generally there to hear everything. It's a city we genuinely love to visit, and love to hang out in. The last one that we did at the Bowery was f---ing awesome. We did this tour last year where we played our whole new record from start to finish in venues across the country that were the first places we ever went to when we came to the U.S. So it was amazing getting to revisit those places, but it was also great to

indulge ourselves and play to hardcore fans the whole new record from start to finish.

You recently finished a tour of Eastern Europe. How was that?

It was so interesting. I think it was an interesting "knock-back" of our preconceptions. Fans there were amazing. So enthusiastic, so excited we were there. The shows were awesome. It was amazing meeting fans who said that they'd learned English so that they could understand what we were talking about in our songs. And that's hugely flattering, so I don't hope they were disappointed with what we had to say (laughs). One of the best things about being in a band is that we're so lucky to be able to travel the world. It takes us to all these cities that we've never seen before. And that part of Europe has so much history even on a superficial level. Like, the architecture is amazing and it's so varied and it's so old and it's so different than the bit of Europe that we come from. It was really eye-opening.

You've been at this since 2010. How has Bastille changed since you first got together and started making music?

I made a lot of the first album on a laptop in my bedroom after college and after work. We all had at least one or two jobs each. We used to rehearse at night, and we used to have to drive ourselves around the country. So we were quite DIY when we started out. I made the logo for our band in Microsoft Paint. And we made all the videos and recorded our own music. We were friends. And I think being in a band, it's very hard work. I think anyone who starts a band from scratch will tell you that. We used to drive ourselves up and down the country, not get any sleep, play to nobody. I think because of that, and because we came up through the London scene, but with absolutely no hype whatsoever, we accumulated this amazing fan base because of all the shows we played and because of the internet. We never

really set our sights that high. We were just always so grateful that we got to do what we got to do. And it still kind of blows my mind that we've been able to travel the world. "We all had at least one or two jobs each," Dan Smith says about Bastille's humble beginnings. When the first album was blowing up and "Pompeii" was doing well all over the world, it was such a mad, indescribable time when we were always traveling and doing TV shows and promo. At the same time, we were always

exist once. We're super proud of this show and we're excited to play in front of these huge screens. But we like knowing that this is a tour as its own thing rather than a perpetual series of gigs. We will do this campaign and then it will go away. For us, that's really fun and exciting. **How has your sound evolved from the first album?**

I'm obsessed with film and cinema. The first album was very indebted to David Lynch and his aesthetic and film noir. It was all about

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traveling and doing TV shows and promo. At the same time, we were going to all these cities and places that we never imagined that we'd get to go to. I think there were times when it was really fun, and there were times when it was really knacker. But I think it made us better friends and showed us how lucky we are. We always said we'd feel super grateful if we'd get to keep doing it. As a band, we've become more collaborative and way more patient with each other.

How is this tour different from your previous touring?

We wanted to put together something that felt fitting for the album that we made. Something that felt impressive and slightly provocative and unusual. We could've easily just gone and played our gigs. We could've just played in front of pictures of our faces. But we chose to film an hour and forty-five minutes worth of film that add a whole other dimension to the songs. And hopefully it's thought-provoking and is a spectacle in and of itself. For the first album, it was just one perpetual tour that continued and continued. We never got to see it as a self-contained thing. With this tour, we wanted to make this thing that will only ever

With this album, there's elements of that, but it's much more about 2016, 2017. What's happening in the world, and looking at it from a flawed, human perspective. We're reacting to things you see on the news and also how to get your head around it. And we definitely don't have the answer, but there are songs about losing yourself in relationships and friendships. Going out to distract yourself and reacting to opinions that you hear that you think are really abhorrent. We wanted to reflect that in the tour. It's more grounded in news media and the present day.

I really like that you use your social media to shout out other artists and creators. What music have you and the band been listening to recently?

Laura Marling has a new album out that I think is brilliant. Super excited about the new Gorillaz and new Lorde album. I love Mura Masa. In the U.K. we have this rapper called Stormzy who's smashing it. The new xx record. I listen to unhealthy amount of Kanye. The Fugees. Also "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill." This guy Rationale supported us around Europe and he has an incredible voice. He's really someone to listen out for. I've got this

Pictured from left to right: Farquarson, Wood, Smith, Simmons



Photos taken from DIT Magazine



Their debut studio album "Bad Blood", hit number one on the UK Albums Chart, and spent three non-consecutive weeks at the top.



Smash hit, "Pompeii", peaked at #5 on Billboard's Hot 100 in March 2014. It is currently a 5x Platinum single in the United States.

little indie label that I set up with my friends and the first album that we released is this guy Rag'n'Bone Man. Always need to give him a shoutout. I love the Solange album, Kaytrana-da. Francis and the Lights' album. And, of course, "Blonde." I'm massively obsessed with Frank Ocean, so it's always great when he decides to release music. With every Friday, if you subscribe to any of the music screening services, you have on your phone a whole wealth of new albums. I've always been obsessed with new music, but it means that you listen to so much more. You discover so much more. I think the music industry is still trying to get their heads around it. But I think it's an amazing opportunity. And, yeah, some stuff might get lost, but I think you discover so much that you wouldn't listen to otherwise.

What are some things that you haven't accomplished yet as a band that you really want to get to?

I'd love to do a soundtrack to a film. That's something I'd love to do. I know there are places that we haven't played that I'd love to get to. I'd love to go to India and play some shows there one day.

Who is BASTILLE?



Dan Smith

"Bastille" comes from Bastille Day, a turning point in the French Revolution, which happens to be Dan's birthday, July 14th.



Kyle Simmons

Kyle plays the piano, keyboard, bass, guitar, and provides essential backing vocals. Kyle also loves cats.



Chirs Wood

Along with being the band's drummer, Chris "Woody" Wood can also DJ. Wood is also an avid soccer fan.



Will Farquarson

He was raised by hippie parents and, during his childhood years in England, he lived on a boat.

