

Something for the Weekend

I try to stay brave and not shy away from impulses

"LONELY I, I'm so alone now", sings Lykke Li on new single No Rest For The Wicked.

There is a veritable sob in her voice, over a stark backdrop of an old-school hip-hop style piano loop. I Never Learn, her third record, is a break-up album. Its nine sparingly produced tracks tinged with a beautiful sorrow.



LYKKE LI | I Never Learn

3.5



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

- TRACKLIST**
- 1. I Never Learn
 - 2. No Rest For The Wicked
 - 3. Just Like A Dream
 - 4. Silver Line
 - 5. Gunshot
 - 6. Love Me Like I'm Not Made Of Stone
 - 7. Never Gonna Love Again
 - 8. Heart Of Steel
 - 9. Sleeping Alone

Again working with fellow Swede, producer Bjorn Ytling (of Peter, Bjorn and John), Li also brought in American Greg Kurstin, who includes Beyonce, Britney Spears and Lily Allen among his production credits.

While there is certainly a poppy tilt to Li's melodies, this is far from a conventional pop record. The production is often deliberately raw and tinny, and the intimacy of Li's almost child-like voice can err on the uncomfortable.

Love Me Like I'm Not Made Of Stone epitomises the tone and atmosphere of the album. Emotion rings from every pleading, heart-rending note and the voice is very much at the forefront of the cracked acoustic arrangement.

Here, **SFTW's POPPY COSYNS** catches up with multi-talented Lykke Li...

WHERE did you make the album and what was the recording process like?

I recorded in both Los Angeles and Stockholm for this record, my two homes. The process was long and nomadic. Challenging and dramatic.

I really love to change places because it also changes your perspective. Some places make you more brave and some places more introvert. The album was made over two years, in pockets of inspiration and pockets of frustration.

Have your songwriting techniques evolved?

Change comes naturally and it happens to all of

us. I just try to stay brave and open and not shy away from impulses.

I got one foot leaning into blues and one bordering on psychedelic. Just as it should be. I want it to always be a true confession mixed into dream.

What was it like working with Greg Kurstin?

Wonderful, he is a real gentle kind soul and a real music nerd and shares the same fascination for old gear as I do.

I'm particularly happy he showed me the Rhythm King drum machine from the Sixties.

And he also introduced me to some great books like John Fante's Ask The

Dust which really inspired my poetry!

Did you plan a trilogy or did the first three albums just end up feeling like a coherent body of work?

I signed for a three-record deal when I was 21 so I knew that I would spend my twenties recording and figuring out myself and the search for love, through the valleys of shame, desire, lust, hope and desperation.

You have said the pop industry has developed a negative image. Has it got worse in the wake of Miley Cyrus/Blurred Lines, etc?

I am so lucky to be involved in music and arts where, thankfully it has never been lesser to be a woman.

I am more worried

about the message that the media keep sending to young women about the need to be perfect.

Youth is really wasted on the young.

Songs like Sleeping Alone and Love Me Like I'm Not Made Of Stone are so raw. Was it emotionally draining to record the album?

Love Me Like I'm Not Alone is the actual demo take and when I'm singing it for the first time in its full form its like I'm still trying to make sense of it, like two bodies making love for the first time.

It was only when I listened back to it that I realised the emotional weight of it.

It was fully cathartic but as you can hear in the bridge, it really gets to my soul and heart.

Love ain't easy.

You appear in the film Tommy this year – will you pursue an acting career?

I'm more in charge when I'm making my music but that's also what's interesting about acting, that I have to put myself in someone else's hands.

I can get so tired of myself so it's wonderful to be able to be someone else. Yes, I'd like to do more.

How do you feel your music has developed since your debut in 2007?

I've become a woman.

Do you have a list of people you'd like to work with?

I love anyone who "started at the bottom now we're here" type of thing.

I think the reason I like hip-hop so much is that it's urgent and contemporary and it's all about the struggle and the rise and fall.

I have lots of hip-hop artists I would love to work with. And directors! My dream is to work with Jacques Audiard and Lars Von Trier.

Are you most comfortable writing sad songs?

My songwriting is always a reflection of how I'm feeling and what I'm going through and I can't always tell what feeds what. I think it's the cycle I've created for myself as an artist – one that I would be happy to break. I must admit.

This album is all about getting over a break up – do you think your next one will be lighter and happier in tone?

One can only hope!



NEW MUSIC
By JIM GELLATLY

NIGHT NOISE TEAM

WHO: Sean Ormsby and Fabien Pinardon
WHERE: Edinburgh
FOR FANS OF: New Order, Hot Chip, Phoenix

JIM SAYS: Edinburgh's Night Noise Team release their third album Réver Electrique on Monday.

They've come a long way since I first saw them live in the capital a number of years ago. The immediate reference point then would have been Joy Division.

Certainly, with the new record, they've broadened out the sound. It's a selection of songs that veer from indie-pop to electronica, and even a tiny touch of country with one of the stand-out tracks High Line.

The brilliant current single The Enemy, Time has more than a hint of Daft Punk.

They do recruit other musicians for live performances, and sometimes for recording, but it's essentially just the two guys in Night Noise Team. Frenchman Fabien and Sean, from Northern Ireland, arrived in Edinburgh around the turn of the Millennium.

Originally playing together in a band called Kilo, they bonded over "a love of ambitious, melodic pop music" and decided to form Night Noise Team.

Live performance has been key to their development. Fabien said: "The first album Ronde de Nuit was a DIY pop



album, the sound of us learning to work together. Playing live more meant working with a regular drummer and guitarist. This led to the second album Slow Release sounding more like a rock band.

The third album is back to a DIY approach but more expansive. We played on 90per cent of the album."

Sean added: "It's a game of two halves. An upbeat, electronic-based first side with a more acoustic guitar-driven second. The ambitious, melodic pop album we always wanted to make."

Réver Electrique translates as 'to dream electric'. Fabien explained: "This catches the poetic aspect of the writing and digital approach to production.

"Organic but precise. It could be the soundtrack to an imaginary French science fiction movie.

"The final song is actually called 'Theme from Réver Electrique'. It is both nostalgic and futuristic, which reflects the usual blend of styles in our music."

But Sean insisted: "Maybe a nod to Giorgio Moroder's 'Electric Dreams' soundtrack too".

Réver Electrique is released Monday as a download, and also limited edition vinyl. I'll be playing The Enemy, Time today on XFM.

MORE: nightnoiseteam.com

● Jim presents Drivetime on XFM Scotland, Monday to Thursday 4-7pm. xfm.co.uk/jimgellatly.com

Photo credit: E Le Coz

Listen to the band at: thescottishsun.co.uk



By CHRIS SWEENEY

ONE2WATCH



ROCKERS Culann went from hometown Irvine in Ayrshire, to tiny Ardgour in the Highlands.

And their next destination is topping the charts.

The boys are winding up for a serious crack with new single All Reverie.

Frontman PJ Kelly said: "There's a lot of bands who paint by numbers in terms of music and don't want to tick people off, so they won't write about certain subject matters.

"But risk-taking is vital, especially if you're trying to be original. Our music is original as we take risks and people can hear that."

And there's no better place to hear it than on the single. The video features Scots actor Rab Affleck – who's been in movies like Gangs of New York and also plays loveable hardman Mick in Still Game.

And they have a string of dates to show it off next month – taking them to Perth, Stirling, Thurso and Kilmarnock.

Culann were also one of the few unsigned bands asked to play at The Clutha tribute at Glasgow's Barrowlands recently. PJ, 27, said: "It was special to be asked to play at that."

On top of their grassroots

Taking risks is what we do

following, the band are racking up radio airplay and also scooped a Scottish Alternative Music Award last year for their debut album – recorded up in Ardgour.

And it's all been down to their hard graft. But now they reckon it's time to think bigger. PJ said: "I want everyone to hear this new single and watch the video. Labels have spoken to us but it's not happened yet. We'll see where we end up – but we've definitely got something to offer."

● **For tour dates and to hear the single – go to: www.facebook.com/culannband**

ONE2HEAR

THERE'S more awards in music now than cans of lager in a boozer. But the Scottish Album of the Year seems to be one of the best received.

Now in its third year, it's just released its long list. On there are Biffy Clyro, Chvrches and Frightened Rabbit, plus a load of others – and that will be whittled down by public voting to form the short list. Go to: www.sayaward.com

ONE2HEAR

McBUSTED are packing out giant arenas all across the UK right now.

Meanwhile, the man who sang all Busted's big hits is on his jack jones. Charlie Simpson is having another bash at a solo career.

And he kicks off a small tour to showcase his new stuff at King Tut's in Glasgow on May 12.

Tickets at: www.charliesimpsonmusic.com

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