

ROYAL REPUBLIC

New Album: *Weekend Man* **Release: Early 2016 / Vertigo Universal**

If the abundance of explosive alternative rock thrillers on Royal Republic's third album seek to remind us of anything, it's this: Rock 'n' Roll was never meant to be clever. That's why "Uh Huh" speaks caveman, not Latin. That's why "When I See You Dance With Another" begins with kamikaze drums and a man howling like he's caught his fingers in a mousetrap. You won't need a black belt in poetry to appreciate "Kung Fu Lovin'", either. A brilliant and gloriously silly song comparing love-gone-wrong to a martial art, it lands its sonic drop-kick right on target.

Though the gutsy, fireball energy and sheer cockiness of 2010's *We Are The Royal* and 2012's *Save The Nation* put Malmö, Sweden's Royal Republic on the map in some style, their latest opus *Weekend Man* is a bolder statement still; one that marks a great big 'X' where the treasure is buried. "Hearing these songs come together was a constant high", says the band's lanky, moustachioed frontman, Adam Grahn. "It took a little while, so we're still processing the fact that the album's actually done!"

Together with fellow guitarist Hannes Irengård, bassist Jonas Almén, and drummer Per Andreasson, Grahn hatched *Weekend Man* in Berlin, Germany. The group also recorded *Save The Nation* there, so the city, says Adam, is their "second home by now; our base of operations."

This time out, dynamic German production duo Christian Neander and Michael Tibes oversaw recording at Fuzz Factory Studios in the city's Kreuzberg district, the kind of neighbourhood where strange and wonderful things happen after dark. "Basically, it's a safe haven for whatever crazy shit you're into", says Hannes. "You can walk around dressed as a UFO and nobody will even notice you crossing the street."

Though Royal Republic's Facebook page attests to their near-constant craving for Bratwurst while in Kreuzberg, each day, they would only indulge after they had ensured that another song's chorus was killer. Hunger is clearly an energy; the kind of spur that can help a man desperate for a sausage deliver a bludgeoning guitar riff or killer drum groove with complete conviction.

"When Jonas first put the fuzz-bass on "Uh-Huh", that was pretty bad-ass!", recalls Per, asked about a high-point of the sessions, "and I think there was only one night when we had a total band meltdown and started yelling at each other."

"We needed Christian and Michael to set the rules", adds Adam. "I loved their

personalities, because they're not megalomaniacs, you know? Whatever the missing ingredients were, they helped us to find them within ourselves."

"Also, it's kind of an inevitable when you're making a record that, just because you hear the stuff over and over, you sometimes think, 'Man, this song sucks!', but Christian and Michael kept us at it. Suddenly it would be like, 'Wow! This is amazing! It was reassuring to know that our first instincts were correct.'"

To fully understand Royal Republic's drive for rock 'n' roll redemption, you have to go back a bit. Before forming late in 2007, all four members studied at Malmo's prestigious Academy Of Music. As Adam points out, this has ensured that the communication between them "is like lightning", but for all their musical sophistication, there's another key reason why Royal Republic rule: each member is one-hundred-percent in touch with his inner Viking.

"My whole education at university was about holding back", explains Per, who has a masters degree in classical percussion. "It was always: 'keep it down'; 'cherish your sound', but I just wanted to hit things harder and louder. When Royal Republic came along, it was a great release."

"And the same for me", says Adam. "After years of having to be perfectly in-time and perfectly in-tune, being in this this band has helped me to drag out all the grit, all the real emotion."

One can certainly hear that on "Walk!", another of *Weekend Man*'s plentiful stash of potential singles. Adam clearly relishes wrapping his tonsils around the song's insistent command to, well, Walk!. With its ballsy, thrill-a-second riffing, you could say the song is a masterclass in simplicity. "We had to tread carefully so as not to stomp all over its initial genius", says Hannes. "Is Walk! particularly smart? No. Is it freaking awesome? I'd say so!"

Listening to *Weekend Man*, you will also notice Royal Republic's keen understanding of all that is great about pop music. Hooks abound, and no matter how gritty or guillotine-sharp the music, every melody has been designed to wrap itself around your heart.

"Personally, I'm a big Max Martin guy", says Per, flagging -up the Midas-touch Swede's productions for Britney, Katy Perry, Kelly Clarkson and all.

"Yeah, songwriting-wise, I'd say one of the strengths of Royal Republic is our healthy lack of respect for genre boundaries", adds Hannes. "Whether it's a Taylor Swift song or Led Zeppelin one, we draw on what we like and try to make it our own."

Given that each member of Royal Republic is more than capable of bringing a finished, high-quality demo to the table on their own, there was no shortage of material to choose from when it came to deciding what to record for the new album. Using the studio "as an instrument" more than they ever had before, the Swedes stretched-out a little this time, spreading their wings.

"We enjoyed making something that was a dynamic journey", says Adam, "So you have these new adventures, these great little wild-cards along the way, stuff like "Any Given Sunday", "Follow The Sun", and "American Dream."

"Some songs fall into your hands out of nowhere", and "Follow The Sun" was one of those", he adds. "I guess the words are open to interpretation, but to me the message

is crystal clear: It's easy to have unrealistic expectations for your life, so every now and then you just have to stop and appreciate what you've already got."

Asked about just how far he and his bandmates have come, moreover, Royal Republic's frontman sums-up nicely: "When we started out, it was almost laughable how different the four of us were. I'd be like "Hey! Did you guys see the game last night?', and they'd go, '[*Quietly*] No. We don't watch football...' Today we're a family - with all that comes with that - and I don't think any of us would change it for the world. We've made a really strong Royal Republic record that's totally true to ourselves, and we can't wait to take it on the road."