



IN THEIR WORDS

JIMBOB ISAAC (VOCALS / GUITAR)

Your second album and a second Album Of The Month in Rock Sound – feel honoured? “Of course, it’s very flattering indeed. We’ve worked really hard in the rehearsing and writing of these songs, and generally just keeping the band together in some ways over the last two years. So your esteemed praise once again helps to make all the hard work worth it.”

Moving from Wales and living in London seems to have inspired your lyrics on this album... “Yes, my move to London has been an eye-opener. The place is so full of extremes, it can’t help but inform my lyrics. The album opener ‘Hex Breaker’ is directly aimed at the fashionistas, hipsters, sycophants and too-cool-for-schoolers that London is rife with. ‘What The Crow Saw’ is written from a (Dawn Of The Dead director) George A Romero-influenced angle of paranoia in the big city. The album title itself is broader, and reflects the all-encompassing fallacies in modern life, adulthood and big business the world over.”

How would you describe the mood of the record – positive or negative? “Like ‘...Roma’, and all of our previous releases, I’d say there’s a good variety of moods on this one. There’s never any set plan to how we write a song, or construct an album. The artwork and title is definitely sinister, but I think we’ve tackled it in quite a theatrical way. Lyrically and musically we’re constantly ebbing and flowing between light and dark, and all of the grey areas in between.”

There’s a lot of riffage and time changes going on with this record – it’s almost like Taint have become the Mastodon of stoner rock... “We grew up on riffs, as young rockers in the 80s, and we have always championed the deployment of hearty riffs. We’re evolving all the time, so perhaps we’ve locked in together even more rhythmically since ‘...Roma’. I’m not really sure what ‘stoner’ rock is these days, but a comparison to Mastodon is certainly a compliment. Though I’d be more inclined to put it down to a steady diet of NoMeansNo, Yes, and Dizzee Rascal.”

You worked with Alex Newport again; is this brotherhood coming on here? “Yeah, I think so. Fudge Tunnel are a really important band to me, and influenced us a lot when forming Taint back in 94. Getting to work with Alex again is very special for those reasons. It’s heart-warming that he’s into what we do, and we’ve built up a good working relationship since he worked on ‘...Roma’ with us. Alex rocks.”

TAINT [8]

‘SECRETS AND LIES’ (RISE ABOVE)

As the charging attack of ‘Hex Breaker’ kicks off proceedings on Taint’s second full-length beauty, it is immediately clear that this is an

album you cannot ignore. It’s a full-force riff-tastic angst-ridden gem, that in four and a half minutes illustrates just how impressive Taint are. Inspired by the fakeness and smell of bullshit that hangs in London’s air and surrounds the music industry, ‘Hex...’ is a vitriolic yet honest look at London life through a Welshman’s eyes. It sounds effortless in its delivery, such is this trio’s musical confidence, and mixer Alex Newport (Fudge Tunnel) has once again caught something special on tape here.

The good news though is that Taint’s musical excellence isn’t just captured in their opening song, because ‘Secrets And Lies’ is a whirlwind of riffs, venom, prog-esque time changes and sheer distinction in terms of musicality and songs. There are moments on this album when Taint embrace the Mastodon school of thought whereby their songs are so jam-packed with riffs, it’s just overflowing with ideas that your ears cannot ignore. Take ‘Corpse Of Love’ and ‘Born Again Nihilist’ as two

choice examples. And yet this is a band that never sound contrived, and have simply created their own firebrand of hardcore, stoner rock and balls-out groove to craft a sound that is uniquely their own. Frontman Jimbob’s hardcore rasp is as strong as ever, his fingers have never sounded so eager to jam, and combined with the backbone of solid rhythms, Taint are a true tour-de-force in modern rock.

Elsewhere, the instrumental-led ‘Goddamn This City’ is a slow-paced beast before it kicks in with another look at London life from Jimbob’s Valley perspective, and the crème de la crème lies in the finishing songs: namely ‘Mass Appeal Sadness’ and the juicy ‘hidden’ extra ‘I Fulfil I’. ‘Mass Appeal...’ feels totally climatic in its dynamics, while ‘I Fulfil I’ (which originally featured on a long-deleted split with Black Eye Riot as well as on a Rock Sound covermount disc) is a choice toke-friendly cut. It also testifies to the progression in Taint’s sound over the past couple of years, and how the potential has clearly come to fruition. America may have given us Mastodon, Baroness and Clutch, but in Taint we’ve got a band to fight Blighty’s own corner with ease.

FOR FANS OF: High On Fire, Mastodon, Baroness, Knut

www.taint.co.uk

DARREN SADLER

