

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO INITIATE LOSTBOY! AKA?

I wanted to do something that involved beginning again, going right back to a new and fresh start and immersing myself in something with no history whatsoever. A huge part of Simple Minds is about revisiting the past. I am more than fine with that in itself, grateful in fact. It comes with the territory and it is something that is inherent to acts fortunate to have an audience that grew up listening to their music for many decades. However from another perspective, I was also craving a new kind of excitement.



WHY DO IT NOW?

Coincidences and the timing of them played a huge part. I had never desired to work outwith SM previously and there was always much still to do. That said, perhaps hitting the 30th anniversary of the band did impress on me psychologically more than I imagined. The idea occurred and the question arose where I thought, "This is a really great story to have helped create. But must there only be one story? Only one act in life?" The answer to that in my opinion is - not necessarily! If you have the desire it is possible to expand, to venture out from what some would decry as the comfort zone. I believe I possess the previous, I know I do in fact, and that made it difficult to suppress the notion that I might after more than 30 years working solidly with SM, now embark on a project of my own.

Timing also played its part in convincing me to really go for it when over a few months I met some exceptional writing partners who subsequently have enabled me to come up with the vision of what Lostboy! should sound like. Additionally, for the first time I was also free of binding contracts and that also worked as an incentive, as did the fact that SM were due to take a break in their schedule. That perhaps was the most important consideration in the end, as I would not step away from obligations with the band of course. It was about April last year when I decided that - based on the excitement of a number of demos of songs that had been created - that I was going to invest my time, energy, and finance into making Lostboy! AKA a reality.

SO WHO AND WHAT IS LOSTBOY! AKA?

To simplify, I recommend for the sake of easiness that you think of Lostboy! as a genuine alter ego of Jim Kerr (An alter ego (Latin, "*the other I*") is a second self, a second personality or persona within a person.)

I really did not want to form another group as I feel that I am already in one of the best that there is? A straightforward Jim Kerr solo album then? No, far too boring and very predictable!

It was not until I struck on the idea that Lostboy! could and should in fact be the music of a character that although is not me in total, is nevertheless a fundamental part of me all the same. I decided that perhaps I should try writing from the perspective of a person until now submerged within a person, or putting it plainer that I should write and sing from the point of view of an alter ego! Albeit an alter ego trapped within the spirit of the kid I once was, particularly when I first set out all those decades ago, believing that I wanted to create a world of music that I could in someway escape to. One that I could live inside and invite others to enter.

It is ironic to think that before I began my career that I spent night and day fantasizing about the creation of what was to become Simple Minds. That fantasy became a mesmerizing reality. Now out of interest to me and hopefully many others, I am turning it on it's head, and here I am 30 years later now part fantasizing about what music the spirit of that kid I was back then would now be making - had SM not taken over me. The answer to that I believe is Lostboy! AKA

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DOES THAT MEAN THAT LOSTBOY, AS A CHARACTER IS SEPARATE ENOUGH TO THE EXTENT THAT HE WOULD PERHAPS DO AND SAY THINGS DIFFERENTLY FROM JIM KERR?

We have a very different outlook in parts. As Jim Kerr I am what I am based on my years and those experiences contained. Whatever values I have or idealism also comes from those experiences, the rights and wrongs, the magic and loss, the ignorance and the wisdom. All of that and more made me now Jim Kerr.

Alternately Lostboy's theme - that I tune into - is of a sort of arrested development. Like JM Barrie's original LOST BOYS - he stayed young! Meaning among other things that his heart beats faster than mine, as does his music as it rattles along at a pace that is much more rapid than I have been used to. Above this he is, still hungry for recognition and screaming for his vision to be embraced. Getting involved in music in the manner that he did meant that he shut the door on just about all else. He is therefore self-centered with his goal of creating his own world through the songs that in turn become dreams in which he determinedly wants you and him to somehow live. In that sense, there is little room for anything with him apart from what is in his own head.

For instance he could not tell you what year this is, never mind what state the world. He is like an urban monk that set out deliberately not to engage with life's norms. Turning from a "world gone mad" is a romantic / spiritual decision that people have embraced through time. But the challenge of succeeding with that involves immense sacrifice, and the crux involved is the basis of many of the Lostboy! AKA songs.

In his defence, despite his aim he is neither completely remote or an entirely cold character, as is evident in the emotions behind the music that he creates. He hurts and wants to be understood as much as anyone, but in not knowing how, he will not concede. Really, the character of Lostboy! that I just described is not that dissimilar to who I was from the ages of about 17 - 23 years old.

HOW WELL DO YOU THINK LOSTBOY WILL BE RECEIVED?

Before anything has a chance to be appreciated it needs to be known. I don't think there are too many shortcuts in that challenge, least not if you want to do things the right way.

But I think there is a good audience out there for this music. It's the kind of record that people might unknowingly have been waiting on. I don't hear a lot of exciting sounds out there at the moment and I definitely don't hear many great new tunes. This is an exciting sounding debut and its full of striking tunes. What else can I say? I am taking an honest road and I am also throwing myself at it with all the conviction I can muster. To do that I must really believe in the music and the songs - that I do. I am convinced a great record has been produced. But I also know that there is a ton of mileage in terms of evolving further and that is where things could very interesting. With the debut album wrapped up I have spent the last fortnight kicking over ideas for the follow up, and already they are taking shape at an alarming pace. The plan is to record this summer for a release very early next year, after which all my effort will go into the new Minds album. By that time and with hopefully two quality albums to his name, and a fair amount of touring, Lostboy! AKA can be rested until some point in the future hopefully!

HOW HAS CHARLIE BURCHILL REACTED AND WAS IT STRANGE WORKING WITHOUT HIM?

Of course it was weird initially and certainly there were times were I wanted to call him up and get his input, but that's inevitable as we are so intrinsically linked in most of what we do. He is also a best mate and it's normal with your best friends that you chat a lot about what you are doing etc. However apart from telling him officially that I was going to release a record based on songs he knew I had been writing over the last decade or so - we never discussed it beyond me reassuring him that I would not let things get in the way of SM.

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Interestingly, I recall in the mid 80's encouraging both Mick Mac Neil and Charlie to pursue recording instrumental music under the name of Aurora Borealis. They seemed to love the idea but somehow never got round to making it happen. A pity really as they made stunning instrumental tracks, some of which SM released of course. I felt back then that venturing out would somehow result in feeding the main body as opposed to depleting it. I still believe this, Lostboy! AKA has been invigorating for me and some of that new excitement has already been channeled into Simple Minds. I do hope that this is how it will work out in future where Lostboy! AKA is expected to work in those cyclic periods when SM are resting or in a lull.

LOSTBOY AKA LIVE?

Lostboy AKA! will try to make its biggest impact by playing the most inspirational shows. Like with SM, I know that many of these songs can become "beasts" when they start getting played live. They are songs that can draw an audience in as well a sweep all away. It is a powerful and intense set. But it will take time to realize full potential! The only way to do that is step at a time and that is why I want to start in the smallest clubs and build it up. To coincide with album release I will do around ten dates in UK and Europe. Depending on the outcome I hope to do much more extensive touring later on in the year, more in UK / Europe but overseas as well hopefully!

WILL LOSTBOY! AKA PLAY ANY SIMPLE MINDS SONGS LIVE?

It already seems that many SM fans are willing to support LOSTBOY! AKA. Being so I would acknowledge them and show appreciation by perhaps playing a couple of very rare SM tracks. Ones that they may have never heard live. That seems just and fair to me should it happen!

Lostboy! AKA - Jim Kerr Q&A *(via Facebook & www.simpleminds.org.uk February 2010)*

Dennie Rijnsewijn:

Q: You did some stuff for/with other artist (MIR, Jam & Spoon, Battiato). Which artist would you like to work with on YOUR music if you had to pick?

A: *I do not have a list of artists that I would like to work with per se. I have sung with Lou Reed, Peter Gabriel, Bowie, Iggy Pop, and of course Bono. Can it get much better than that?*

Jennifer Gould:

Q: Will there be a single released in the UK/Europe other! prior to the album release in May?

A: *There will be an EP from Lostboy! AKA released a few weeks prior to the May release of the debut album*

Steven Outteridge:

Q: Is there a certain sound you have been striving for in your musical career that you didnt feel you could incorporate or fit into a Simple Minds record but could with Lostboy?

A: *Simple Minds have an amazingly broad expanse in their sound, never was I ever frustrated. However there are songs on Lostboy! that are different in nature to where Simple Minds are currently. The elements of Lostboy that might evoke Simple Minds, are elements that might recall SM of a long time ago. For one example, there is song called SOLOMAN SOLOHEAD that reminds of the vibe on REAL TO REAL CACOPHONY*

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Andrew Phelps:

Q: How will the fans be able to distinguish the Lostboy Style and Sound from Simple Minds?

A: *As you can imagine there is some crossover. My voice fronts both projects so obviously there will always be the instant connection. However this is just the first step for Lostboy! AKA and I am sure thru time it will find a much greater individual space, similar in a sense to how SM and other did eventually over the first few records. The SM vision is unique as is Lostboy! AKA. And on the subject of uniqueness, Charlie Burchill dominates the sound of SM of course whereas Jez Coad who plays guitar so inspiringly on Lostboy! AKA puts an original stamp all over the record.*

Thomas White:

Q: This is your first solo venture, what's been the highlight of making the new Lost Boy record?

A: *For the last 30 years I have been part of a group and I have adored it. But I also enjoyed calling all my own shots on this one, moving at a pace I wanted to move and doing things without thinking about what the reaction might be. The highlight has been how the songs have turned out.*

Géraldine Tuch:

Q: If you tour, which musicians will accompany you?

A: *I am working on that as we speak. The tour will kick off with some club dates around the middle to end of May!*

Andrea McKinnon Farrington:

Q: Just wondering if the fans are going to get a chance to preview the album before May release some short snip-its on the web-site at the very least? Also I'm sure many will be interested in hearing the planned tour schedule will it still be premiered as mooted in Glasgow? Exciting times I for one can't wait to hear it! :)

A: *We are working on all these things that you mentioned and hopefully a few good surprises as well for fans. Expect a fully fledged LOSTBOY! AKA site to go up around the start of April. It will provide details to all that you asked and more.*

Cindy Harney:

Q: Jim, you mentioned that there will be a Japanese version of which I will try to find and purchase and an iTunes version with an extra track. I live in the USA and we cannot download songs from the UK iTunes store. Will this iTunes version be available to purchase in the US iTunes store?

A: *I did not know that was the case Cindy. All will be done to make sure that people can access the tracks no matter where they live.*

Ignasi Calvo:

Q: I read some time ago on your tweets that, at some time, you were recording demos with Mac's GarageBand software. Nowadays, when you are about to record an idea that lives on your mind, how do you proceed? Which instrument, software or hardware do you use? Or you just rely on good musicians who play your ideas and then let the song expand for itself with their interpretation of it?

A: *I work in tandem with musicians always, we discuss a direction, an atmosphere, a concept for a song. Or, sometimes they throw things at me that are completely out the blue. With Andy Gillespie we had no idea what we were going to do and yet over a ten day period we wrote five complete songs that had us very excited. Earlier this year I went on holiday with a lot of instrumental ideas that various writers had supplied. I spent three hours early each morning listening to these ideas and was delighted to come home from the holiday with a handful of new songs complete. I do carry a small microphone that I use with GarageBand.*

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Stay Visible:

Q: I'm a fan of Simple Minds and would like to organize a concert for LostBoy in northern Italy in a castle, do you think that is possible?

A: *Concert promotions are serious business. We are only able to work with professionals who have long standing reputations in the industry. Thanks for the enthusiasm nevertheless!*

Deana Hunt:

Q: Will there be any chance that all of us adoring fans will get to see the "LostBoy" on tour? It's an excellent project.

A: *Lostboy! AKA main promotional thrust will be live shows and I hope to be given the opportunity to take it all around the globe!*

Thorsten Ortmann:

Q: Why is there a desire to go solo after such a long time in a band and how different will the songs be in comparison to Simple Minds?

A: *I think I may have answered that previously!*

Q: What were the challenges working on your own all of a sudden?

A: *I really was not working on my own. I had a team, albeit a different team from the usual situation. I had a fantastic amount of help with the execution of the vision behind Lostboy!*

Q: What are the other bandmembers feelings about the project?

A: *Andy and Mel contributed on having expressed a lot of enthusiasm once they had heard the demos!*

Q: Will Simple Minds profit from the solo effort or even suffer?

A: *Bands are a living entity and things are always occurring that can affect things. We have seen members come and go for example, but we go on always through whatever is chucked our way. I would not do anything that I felt could weaken Simple Minds. But SM is a proud and sturdy beast with a history that lasts for more than 3 decades after all. I reckon it will be more than fine!*

Q: Who else would he like to see to go solo? Bono?

A: *It's not something I consider to be honest!*

Peter Frantsen:

Q: Is Mick MacNeil going to participate in your project? And if - will he be touring with you?

A: *No. I was not aware that he was still making music or playing even. That does not mean he is not of course! In any case I don't want to be going back to the past. Lostboy! AKA Is about new happenings, new situations, new relationships, new ideas!*

Q: Will there be any concerts in Denmark?

A: *I have no definitive list of dates as yet!*

Lydia Dierx:

Q: Why the name Lostboy! AKA??

A: *Please see above!*

Lydia Dierx:

Q: On Facebook Lostboy AKA you say that during the last 18 months things are coming together. Is it because you were a while in Glasgow, your home town? Did you become aware of things you had forgotten? Did the spirit and ceativity within you have to come out, solo?

A: *I don't think I can attribute Lostboy! AKA to spending time back home, however I usually do feel energized when I am in Glasgow. Last time I spent a couple of weeks in the city I ended up writing a bunch of new songs with Andy Gillespie, some of which could feature on the Lostboy! follow up.*

Q: I'm curious about the reason why you feel the need to do this?

A: *Please see above!*

Stuart Holland:

Q: Is Charlie going to be involved in Lost Boy AKA !?

A: *Charlie is not involved!*

Q: I've been wondering what kind of artwork would be used for the cover of your new album and trying to think of a Lostboy! AKA & Simple Minds connection. I think the ideal image would be from the "Waterfront" Video, at the start there's a shot of a boy looking lost walking across the stage..... What do you think Jim??

A: *The boy you mention is my brother Mark! The artwork will be spectacular but in no way connected to Simple Minds.*

Pauline Hamers:

Q: Does the music for Lostboy AKA come from a different 'place' than the music of Simple Minds?

A: *The music for Simple Minds comes from Charlie Burchill mostly. Lostboy! music comes from a few different sources entirely. It has its own vision and its own way of saying things*

Q: Are you creating a different personality to perform on stage when you sing live as Lostboy??

A: *Well I wont walk on and say "let me see your hands", but as explained it is still me on stage - albeit a different part of me - and therefore probably with a different evolving emphasis.*

Many thanks to everyone that contributed questions via Facebook & www.simpleminds.org.uk and of course to Lostboy! AKA Jim Kerr for taking time out from his busy schedule to participate.

For further information please visit:

www.lostboyaka.com

www.simpleminds.com

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