

Talking with Superfriendly Matt Murphy

The SuperFriendz have been making music together since 1993 and since the release of their first full length album, *Mock Up, Scale Down*, last June they have garnered critical praise and moderate fame in Canada.

Since their humble beginnings, the Friendz have lost many a drummer, but are now in a solid line-up with Matt Murphy (guitar, voice), Drew Yamada (guitar, voice), Charles Austin (bass guitar, voice) and Lonnie James (drums). In the past few months, this Halifax band has released an EP, *Play The Game, Not Games*, and their rendition of "Blue Tattoo" was the first single from the *Tribute To Hard Core Logo* album. With a new album set for release early next year, these guys are set for stardom.

Recently I had the chance to chat with Matt Murphy in a technologically impaired (wrought with phone problems, to say the least), yet very informative phone interview.

PP: Could you give me some info on your new album?

Matt: It's called *Fin Du Monde*. That's french for 'end of the world.' It's got fourteen songs on it and we recorded it in Toronto in April and July with Eric Masunaga from the Dambuilders. The band from Boston. Anyway, we did about two weeks in April and another week in July. It looks like first single is going to be "Up and Running."

PP: How did you come about being on the *Tribute to Hard Core Logo Soundtrack*?

Matt: BMG gave us

\$4000 to record a song. We did one, but they didn't think it was recorded well enough so we did it again to satisfy them. I think the second version is better. All together the two versions cost a thousand bucks to do. We did that with Brendan McGuire who did our first album and then they liked it and they put it out as a single. They gave us the words to the song, and we provided the music. It turned out pretty well, considering.

PP: Did you guys have a say in how the video was

shot?

Matt: A little bit. Not as much as maybe we would have liked, but it turned out pretty good I think. They wanted to have us appear in *Forrest Gump* style into the movie. I thought that was kind of silly. I thought maybe a few scenes would be good, so we compromised there. We did a bit of that and then they wanted us playing on a stage or something. I think Colin, our manager, suggested we play in a van instead -- to pretend we're touring. So we compromised on all sorts of things. We gave them a bunch of little ideas that we

thought would be cool, like playing on the flat bed [at the end of the video.] It was just kind of weird going up to Toronto to do it and not having control over stuff. Not that we're total control freaks, but we have, in the past, known the people doing our videos and we know kind of what it's going to look like, whereas with Andrew Hunt we didn't really know him and we weren't sure what it was going to look like. But it turned out pretty good. He did a great job in the end.

PP: Does that sort of thing kind of dissuade you from wanting to be on a major label?

Matt: Yeah. It does. Well, there were a few things, you know? Just dealing with a bigger company just for this one song was eye opening. With Murder everyone sees eye to eye. Everyone has the same objectives and making money is just a part of it, not the only thing, I think. The decisions we make are a little more artistic oriented here, as opposed to what will get played on the radio which is what they do. I mean, they chopped the ending off the song on the radio edit completely. [That is] what makes the song different from any other. The best part of the song was the ending, you know? That is the most original and it just seems silly to cut it off, but on the other hand we weren't really going to fight about it. As long as there is some of it in the video. But even in the

video I would have liked to have seen it faded out or something. I mean, there's three versions basically of that song -- one's the radio edit, one's the video edit and the other one's the album edit which is the

one we recorded which just ends naturally. I think that's the best one. It's not that big a deal. We got along

well with the people at BMG and stuff. It was just kind of

different from what we're used to.

PP: What do you think is the most important thing about the aesthetic of your music? The actual music writing, or the lyric writing? Or do you think the live show is more important?

Matt: Well, the live show has had a pretty big effect on the song writing, I think. We've been playing lots of live shows, so you sort of start thinking in that mind set of what will make the crowd excited, what gets people going. I think it's pretty hard to recreate a live sound on an album -- an exciting live sound. And sometimes live songs aren't the best studio songs. That's something I give a lot of consideration to -- how I am going to get people excited. Whatever gets me excited, I want to be able to

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Various Artists

A Tribute to Hard Core Logo
Hard Core Logo Music / BMG

Were they real or fictional? That is the question most asked about the band Hard Core Logo. Well, that's really neither here nor there. It doesn't matter. What does matter is that there is a fifteen track tribute album out thanks to Bruce MacDonald's critically acclaimed film.

Starting off with a track from the Headstones (who'd have thunk it? Hugh Dillon only stars in the movie.), the album sets the fast paced punk based style that Hard Core Logo is about. At least that's what you'd expect. Sure, there are lots of neo-punk songs offered from the likes of The Pursuit of Happiness and 54-40, but there are also pop tunes from the Super Friendz and Cub, and even some folkier tunes (The Lugen Brothers), some ambient pop (Son), and some hip hop/R&B (Dream Warriors).

The soundtrack is pretty good. Rusty, who I don't like on an everyday level, contributed a catchy rendition of "Let's Break Robert Out Of Jail," and Cub's "Who The Hell Do You Think You Are?" is pretty cool, but on the whole I wouldn't be able to listen to this album non-stop. The first problem is the repetitiveness -- "Blue Tattoo" is done three times, and "Son Of A Bitch To The Core" is done twice. Sorry, but that's a no go in the what-makes-a-good-record.

I would have to say that it is about a 50/50 split in good tracks versus not so good ones. All in all, a pretty good job.

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