

"Definitely with the first album, because we didn't have a clue. We just walked in off the street. With this album, he helped us as well, but he lets you do most of it and he'll be there to keep everything going, to keep the band charged. We come in with a song and play it, and he never changes it, never says: 'Well, do this.'"

Was it fun to record at [legendary English studio] The Manor?

"It was great, a really beautiful place. Spent three weeks there and got most of the album recorded. It was in the country, so there's nothing else to do. If someone else was putting something down, you'd just watch TV. It was our first time in a residential studio, where you live and eat there. We loved it. If you got hungry in the middle of the night, you could just go help yourself!"

What is the songwriting process within the band?

"There are two different ways of doing it. One is that I get something on guitar and bring it in to [rhythm section] Mike and Feargal. If Dolores is around, she'll take it home and write lyrics and a melody, and she'll go: 'Change it here, put the chorus there.' When I do it, I don't know where the verse and chorus will go because I don't have any lyrics. I'll give her 30 odd bars here and there, so she'll have loads of space to figure out what to do. The other way it's done is if Dolores comes in with the melody and lyrics done, and we'll add in. But never does it happen where one comes in to the others and says: 'Well you do this,' or, 'you do that.' Otherwise it wouldn't really be a band. It'd be like session men."

Have you ever suggested changes to her lyrics?

"Never. They're her lyrics. She's the one that has to stand there and sing them, so far be it from me to tell her what to say."

You've had such a strong response to 'Zombie'. Did you anticipate that?

"Yes, it was different to anything else we had done, or have done after it. To us, it's just a good song, and you don't really worry about anything else. People outside the four of us tend to worry more about those things than we do. The response has varied. It's a song about Ireland, but you could apply it to a lot of different situations. A lot of people get that, but others think it's like 'up the Irish' — that it's a big rebel thing, and it's not. You try to beat that into people's heads [unfortunate imagery]. The video was banned by the BBC and [Irish TV network] RTE. The video they show has the bits of us playing, and that's all there is."

That must have been frustrating.

"The video actually has something to do with the song. Like, the next day the record company are trying to change it. We were saying: 'This is it,' but they insisted we do an edit. We said we didn't want to, but they went off and did one, then came back. We said it was crap but knew we were fighting a losing battle."

Was that a difficult lesson learned?

"Yes. It's just really stupid. You can't smoke in a video, or drink. You can have a cigarette or drink in front of you, but you can't touch it."

Do you ever find it overwhelming, coming so far so fast?

"For us, it happened slow. It's been four years now. We were around for three years and we played every dodgy club in England. Did seven or eight tours of England alone, then a tour of Europe last year that wasn't much better. So, we've been to all those places. To us, nothing was happening at all. This was just before we broke in North America. After touring like eight times and feeling we'd come no further than when we started two years earlier,

seen as 'culchies' — as useless. We were just generally slagged off — 'get rid of them' — because we weren't hanging around in Dublin in the right clubs. A lot of that goes on. So we were annoyed with that long before we had even released an album. But at least we can say we did what we wanted. We never compromised. We never had to go to the clubs that everyone goes to. We all still live in Limerick. It worked out for us, and it was great to be able to go back and laugh at these people. We do go as far as to say: 'No, we're not doing an interview with you.' You don't forget what they do to you, instead of giving us a break when we needed it. Then, in London, they took to us first, then kind of got sick of us. They give you the hype first, then cut you down. Even when we had quite a lot of press early on, we weren't really selling anything. No-one was coming to the gigs. It didn't mean anything."

Irish bands always had to move to London. Is it hard to operate from Limerick?

"I think it's very important, to us anyway. If we wanted to move to London we would, but none of us really like it there. We just told our managers and record company. We were going to stay there. They all accepted it, but they had no choice! We told them: 'There are phones there!' I live at home with my parents, and I tell them to say I'm not here if people call!"

Were your parents supportive?

"I've gone through many jobs. I left school when I was 17. Had one year left, but I never went back after the summer holidays. Got a job in a bar. I thought: 'Great, I've got money now.' I soon realised I hated the job, but it was too late. I worked myself through another few jobs before ending up on the dole. I thought: 'Oh no. What am I going to do now?' But, with the band, they never said: 'Why don't you stop and get a real job.' I think they thought I'd just do this for a few months, then go on to something else."

How did the first line-up of the band, without Dolores, differ?

"A lot. We borrowed instruments and didn't know how to play. We met this guy we knew who said he could sing. He'd show us a chord, and he'd wait over it. We used to have a good laugh. Wasn't serious in any way. We were 17, so it was just ridiculous."

It sounds like something out of *The Commitments*.

"Yeah. He was with us a few months but, as the weeks went by, we realised we were doing something we didn't really love. So it was kind of coming to an end when he said he was going to leave, down to the three of us. That's when we started writing. 'Linger' was the first thing. I just had a few chords on the guitar and the others added to it. We had that one for ages, till we met Dolores. That was the first song we did."

If someone said it would be a hit, would you have laughed them out of the room?

"Very much so. We just played it in this little room. Never thought it'd get played around the world."

Do you have any favourite guitarists?

"Johnny Marr is probably my favourite. I was really into the Smiths. He really stands out. I came close to meeting him a couple of times. Probably better off I didn't, in case he turned out to be horrible, or you just won't say anything. Even meeting Stephen was weird. I didn't know how it was going go, but it was fine."

Have you played with any Irish superstars?

"I've met Bono, and I met Sinéad O'Connor very briefly. I met Bono at these awards in Ireland last year [93] — that's about all. Did a tour with Hothouse Flowers, and they're really nice guys, but haven't met Van Morrison or any-

We do go as far as to say: 'No, we're not doing an interview with you.' You don't forget what they do to you, instead of giving us a break when we needed it.

you kind of wonder if it's ever going to happen. When we released our first album at home, we didn't expect it to do well, but thought it'd get our name known at least. But we were playing clubs to 14 people, so that plan wasn't working."

Are you bitter it took American acceptance first?

"Yes, it's a bit annoying to practically travel to the other side of the planet to get noticed. In Ireland they still slag us. We live in Limerick, which is about 120 miles from Dublin. In Ireland, that's a very long distance. We were

thing."

Do you have any theory about Ireland producing such great singers?

"Singing is such an important thing in Ireland. Everyone is encouraged to sing growing up — somewhere or other you'll have to sing. That goes back years and years. You can go into a pub and there'll be a guy who just starts singing after two pints!"

I gather you can't see yourself leaving Ireland?

"For now, as long as I'm left alone, it's fine."

KERRY DOOLE



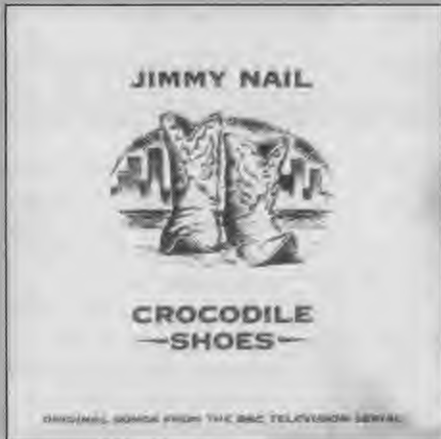
VAN HALEN BALANCE

BALANCE IS THE LONG-AWAITED 11TH ALBUM FROM VAN HALEN, THE WORLD'S PREMIER ROCK GROUP. RECORDED AT EDDIE VAN HALEN'S 5150 STUDIOS, BALANCE IS A COLLECTION OF PUMP-ING, SOLID ROCK TUNES, AND A WHOLE NEW CHAPTER IN THE VAN HALEN SAGA. FEATURES THE NEW SINGLE 'DON'T TELL ME.'



WENDY MATTHEWS THE WITNESS TREE

THE WITNESS TREE IS WENDY MATTHEWS THIRD SOLO ALBUM, AND IS A MAGNIFICENT MASTER-PIECE: EXQUISITE BALLADS AND BIG DANCE GROOVES SIT PERFECTLY WITH CLASSIC GOSPEL NUMBERS ON THIS STUNNING NEW RELEASE. THE WITNESS TREE FEATURES THE FIRST 2 SINGLES 'STANDING STRONG', 'LOVE WILL KEEP ME ALIVE' & THE TIM FINN PRODUCED 'STAND BACK'.



JIMMY NAIL CROCODILE SHOES

AUF WIEDERSEHEN PET'S JIMMY NAIL RETURNS WITH HIS SECOND ALBUM, CROCODILE SHOES. DISPLAYING NAIL'S PASSION FOR R&B, BLUES, SOUL AND ROCK, CROCODILE SHOES WILL BE ONE OF THE FINEST ALBUMS YOU HEAR THIS YEAR. FEATURES GUEST APPEARANCES BY GEORGE HARRISON, GARY MOORE AND PINK FLOYD'S DAVE GILMOUR. LOOK OUT FOR THE TV PROGRAMME 'CROCODILE SHOES' STARRING JIMMY NAIL COMMENCING SHORTLY.



STILTSKIN THE MIND'S EYE

FORMED IN 1989, STILTSKIN ARE MOST FAMOUS FOR THE TRACK, 'INSIDE', THAT WAS FEATURED IN A LEVI'S JEANS COMMERCIAL. WITH THE MIND'S EYE THEY PROVE ONCE AND FOR ALL THEY'RE MORE THAN ONE-HIT WONDERS. BOASTING A MIXTURE OF ANGRY SEARING GUITAR, AND MORE MELLOW ACOUSTIC TRACKS, THE MIND'S EYE WILL BE THE ALBUM TO OWN IN 1995.



JAMES REYNE THE WHIFF OF BEDLAM

THE GENIUS BEHIND AUSTRALIAN CRAWL IS BACK WITH HIS FIRST SOLO ALBUM IN THREE YEARS. JAMES REYNE'S THE WHIFF OF BEDLAM SIGNALS THE RETURN OF ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST RESPECTED SONGWRITERS. RECORDED IN LA, THE WHIFF OF BEDLAM FEATURES THE STUNNING NEW SINGLES 'RED LIGHT AVENUE' AND 'DAY IN THE SUN'.



KULCHA KULCHA

TEEN SENSATIONS KULCHA, WHO HAVE HAD THREE HIT SINGLES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, HAVE RELEASED THEIR DEBUT ALBUM ON INTERACTIVE CD ROM. THE CD FEATURES THREE NEW TRACKS, A CD BIOGRAPHY OF THE BAND, AND THE FIRST EDITION OF DOOM, THE MOST POPULAR PC GAME IN THE WORLD. LOOK OUT FOR THEIR NEW HIT 'SOUL FEELING' ALSO ON THE ALBUM.



MINISTRY JUST ANOTHER FIX

AUSTRALASIAN TOUR SOUVENIR EDITION
THIS LIMITED EDITION RELEASE OF JUST ANOTHER FIX CONTAINS THE CD PSALM 69 PLUS A BONUS LIVE CD.