

GET IN THE VAN...



COLA WARS

by Rob Lyon

Cola Wars are an exciting new prospect with a very familiar face, featuring Cam Baines of Bodyjar fame. They're heading to Adelaide to play at Enigma Bar with Saving Savannah and The Battery Kids and Cam sheds some light on to the band, which has been his main concern in recent times.

One of the noticeable things on *Invader* is the vocal interplay between Mikey [Juler, guitar], Mark [Brunott, bass] and yourself.

"That's one thing we thought we needed to do to set ourselves apart a little bit. It's great that we've got three singers and we've all sung in bands before so we may as well use that aspect of it. I think it's cool having someone sing the verse and someone sing the chorus as it gives us that point of difference."

Do you think you could see Cola Wars slotting in just nicely on a Soundwave line-up?

"That would be our dream gig, I reckon. They don't tend to have to many Australian bands on it do they? I reckon that's a bit shit, takin' a lot out of the scene and not really giving anything back, hey? But it would be great to play that sort of festival with so many good bands."

Does it feel weird fronting a new band?

"It is as it's a lot different now as we don't headline many shows as we're usually the support. Nowadays we're lugging our own shit around and organising everything ourselves. In a way it is more satisfying as well and it is like a dose of reality again. Bodyjar had a few employees on the road to help out with a lot of shit but with Cola Wars it's back to basics again. But that's cool and exciting as all the other guys in the band are really excited and it's starting to rub off on me."

Were you particularly conscious not to sound like Bodyjar?

"Definitely! When we were writing I think whatever we were going to do would be instantly compared to Bodyjar because I'm in it. We really wanted to be judged as a normal band but you can't help but have a little bit of that in us as my idea of a good riff is still the same. And having a good vocal melody or whatever. Having the input of two different people has also changed it up a lot compared to when we first started."

"But after a couple of years of jamming we started to find our own sound and that's when we decided to do an album. We played the songs to a few people we respect and they said go for it as they thought we were on the right track."

"It just meant not playing a couple of songs and throwing away a few things that were a little too derivative of Bodyjar," Cam concludes.

Cola Wars will play Enigma Bar on Sat Aug 7 with Saving Savannah and Battery Kids.

KATE VIGO

by Samuel J Fell

The year so far has been a busy one for the startlingly-voiced chanteuse Kate Vigo. Since coming to the fore, most notably for selling the most records at the Melbourne Jazz Fringe Festival in 2008, Vigo has dug in and begun to make an impact, her jazz roots and ability to pluck something different from thin air standing her in good stead.

Since releasing her 2007 debut, *It Is Love*, Vigo has begun dabbling in pop and electronica, folk and jazz and whatever else can fit between. Her latest EP, *Someone Better*, and her performance during the Adelaide Fringe Festival are just two of her achievements in 2010.

"Festivals are great, I really enjoy playing festivals," Vigo says. Despite her appearances at festivals this year including the Port Fairy Folk Festival and Brunswick Music Festival in her home state, her biggest thrill so far has been winning the award for Best Video (for *The Way You Are*) at the Musicoz Awards.

"That was cool, we flew up to Sydney and did the whole red carpet thing," she smiles. "It was really great to have that support from the industry... and there were a lot of industry people there, so it was great to be a part of the whole thing and to have that support."

Things are really rolling for Vigo. Add this to her being a finalist in the New Artist 2 Radio competition last year as well as being shortlisted in the APRA Vanda & Young Songwriter Of The Year Awards (also last year), and you've got someone who's building themselves a solid base from which to branch out. Her debut EP (but by no means her debut release), *Someone Better*, definitely sees her trying to capitalise on her success to date.

"We started making the EP in December last year and finished in late January. It took a lot longer than we expected, but it was an interesting experience."

"I mean, recording to me is a bit of an enigma," she continues. "It takes such a long time, sitting there listening to all the frequencies and the bass drum over and over... I think I would go insane if I had to produce a track."

Luckily, she wasn't involved in production this time around.

"I think it's horrible," she laughs. "I just realised I just wanted to make up stuff, I want to create



music, spend time doing that and performing and writing. I would choose not to do recording."

Still, *Someone Better* has made it through the process, and shows how Vigo has evolved as a musician in the time since she released *It Is Love*.

"Last year I went over to India to study singing for a few months. It was pretty mega, I was singing for six hours a day. So since that, and on this EP, I sound like a different person. My vocal style has changed so much; one of the tracks that's on there, *The Way You Are*, that was recorded around a year-and-a-half-ago, and the difference on even that is huge."

Kate Vigo plays Jive on Fri Aug 6 (with The Finishing School and Jayne Anne Power) and the Wheatsheaf (with Cookie Baker) on Sat Aug 7.

BASEMENT BIRDS

FLYING HIGH

by Rob Lyon

Australia's new supergroup, Basement Birds, comprises Kav Temperly (Eskimo Joe), Kev Mitchell (Jebediah and Bob Evans), Josh Pyke and Steve Parkin. Kev Mitchell talks about their self-titled album and one-off tour after we begin by asking how the band got together. "Well, we obviously get asked that question often and all of us are really guessing at the answer a little bit," he responds.

"But I have a feeling that the original plan was hatched between Kav and Steve although we obviously all knew each other after having toured with each other, been in bands with each other or that sort of thing. I think that it all did make sense for the four of us to get together and that there was some motivating force at the beginning. All I know is that it wasn't me but I was more than happy to get involved as it sounded like an interesting idea."

Do you see yourselves as a supergroup?

"The word supergroup is an expression we find a little difficult to embrace. But a lot of people are going to use that term because it is a well-worn one and we're all musicians in our own right and blah, blah, blah..."

"The initial idea for things and the initial recording sessions were incredibly low-key and our intentions were also very low-key. Obviously, over time - and we started doing this over three years ago - when you start to finish and then decide what you're going to do with it, then management and record labels get involved. Before you know it, it has grown in to something much larger than you thought. That's cool, that's the business side of music."



How does the creative side work?

"It's been really simple and the process generally is that one of us will present a song to the other three, which could be completely finished or could be half a song, it could be one of my songs with half of it having no lyrics. Then the other three guys jump in with ideas and someone will come up with a chorus or a bridge or other bits that are needed. Everyone will have quite strong ideas about structure and all that kind of stuff then once that's all nussed out then the lyrics will get written."

"Often the lyrics would be written together and I guess that depends on how of the lyrics are formed. Everyone gets involved and *Bus Stop* was the only one that was a little bit different because it was written on the spot between Josh and I while we were recording."

Was there much debate about songs and direction they would take?

"No, not really as I thought everyone went in with the attitude, even before we started writing songs together we all agreed that if this was going to work that we needed to have a really relaxed attitude and let go of the songs once we threw them in the mix. Everyone was able to comply with that and it was all pretty easy."

How would you describe the album to people who may have been following your careers as individuals?

"It's an acoustic album with four-part harmonies sung by a bunch of ugly bastards from Perth, how's that? Our official bio would never describe us as four ugly bastards, that's all me!"

Would Kav take offence to that, especially with all his fancy waistcoats?

"Personally, I'd say those three are ugly bastards and I'm the good looking one. I can't really say that, can I?"

Will the live show pretty much cover the album or will there be a few surprises in there?

"We'll play some covers because we kind of have to. We'll play the entire album but we'll need some extra songs and those covers may or may not surprise people."

The meet and greet tickets, which includes a special intimate performance, are a great idea.

"It was just an idea that was floated to us and we agreed to it. At the end of last year I'd supported Keith Urban and every single night after sound check he would do a special meet and greet performance for a small group of 50 or so people. He'd play a few songs for them and depending

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on your attitude towards that sort of thing I think it's a pretty cool thing to do. Obviously the people involved in it absolutely love it and it's not a bad thing to do for your hardcore fans."

Will this be a one-off album and tour?

"To be honest with you at this stage it would be difficult for any of us to think about another album or tour or anything else. At this stage what we're saying is that this is the only album and tour we'll be doing. That's not to say we won't do anything else but it has taken three years to get this far and going on that schedule it could be a long, long time before anything else happens."

Is a new Jebediah album on the cards?

"Yep, it's all mixed and done. At the moment we're in very loose negotiations with the very few record labels we have any interest in. The rest of this year will be taken up with getting everything sorted and then the Jebes will have the first single out in the New Year."

Where does Bob Evans fit in the schedule now?

"I'm writing and doing demos, I have an idea of the record I want to make. I'll fit that in when I can fit it in but I'm keen to give my full attention to Basement Birds then Jebediah next year. After the last Bob Evans record I felt he needed a bit of rest but after doing a year of Jebediah I'll feel pretty refreshed to do another solo record."

Basement Birds play Fowler's Live on Thu Aug 12 with Old Man River. Basement Birds' self-titled debut is out now.