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Screamfeeder

Screamfeeder have reactivated to tour their 1996 album *Kitten Licks*. Frontman Tim Steward explains why

By Andrew P Street



Am I right in thinking that the idea of playing *Kitten Licks* start to finish started as a hometown one-off? Yeah, Kellie [Lloyd, bassist/singer/co-founder] and I were just chatting about it one day – you know, we should milk our back catalogue and do some gigs [laughs] – and we looked at each other and went "well, that's not such a bad idea...". And we tossed it around for a couple of months and then we approached [Brisbane venue] The Troubadour and they said "yeah, that is a great idea!". And then one by one all the other cities came on board: Sydney came in, Melbourne came in, Adelaide came in, Perth came in, it all just fell into place. That's been the motivating factor, that fact that everyone is so into it.

Is it gratifying or is it slightly weird when people are saying "yes, *Kitten Licks* is your masterpiece: you know, the thing that you did over a decade ago..."? It's lovely, you know? When we were doing it, when we were touring the album, it was always such a rush: we never really had time or the inclination to stand back and go "look at this, look at what we have done". So it's lovely that now, 13 years later, people are still listening to the album. It's a real compliment.

The album's getting a reissue too, right? Yeah, we are putting ourselves in conjunction with Low Transit Industries. It's got all the b-sides on it and everything like that.

Going back over the songs, are there any that you just can't stand? No, there are none that I have a problem with or am embarrassed by or think are cringeworthy or anything like that. There are about two songs out of the whole collection that I can't really feel anymore, that I can't really relate to, where I don't really know what the song was about at that time. The rest of them I can really slide into and be that way again and experience and feel it, which is really nice.

What songs do you not really feel? Let me think... possibly 'Gravity'? Kell and I wrote the lyrics together and out of the whole album I would say probably it's the least resonant songs for me now, but at the time I think possibly it could have been as well. But then there are songs like 'Broken Ladder' which lyrically and musically just really drop me back into to that mind of the mid to late 90s, when it was about all those slow bands like Seam and Codeine. It's nice to sort of hear and remember those influences as much as anything else.

Are there any rediscoveries? 'Pigtails on a Rock.' We never really played it live because it was long and slow and it's just awesome to play: I get to do all this stuff on the guitar and there's a big jam-out with the saxophone at the end and it's just so much fun. And songs like 'Explode Your Friends' and 'Dead to the World' – we've always done those because they're so much fun. And digging things up like 'Ant' is fun because we haven't played it in ten years, and we just went "one two three four" and *s/am*, we still knew it. It was brilliant!

Is this tour a one-off, or are you guys thinking of reactivating Screamfeeder as an ongoing creative unit? The bottom line is that Kellie and I will know after we have done this tour if we are going to do something else together. We're going to know whether it is worth the energy to get together and write and record a CD. That's the easy side of it. The hard side of it is committing to touring but I think that we are older now and we all have to sort of really feel it – and if we do, we'll do fine, you know?

Screamfeeder play *Kitten Licks* at the Annandale on Sat 30 May.

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