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Interview de Kowalski: A pop band named Desire

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Dr. Javnaire: We have seen you just made your first European tour in France and Germany (tonight was the 16th date), how do you manage it?

Louis: It's very lo-fi. We've been playing in cafes and small venues. The tour itself wasn't book until about a month until we came on here. So it pretty rushed. But it has been a lot of fun, you know. We just take every days and shows as they come...

Tom: Every show is completely different. For example we played in a jazz cafe last night, we played in a boat, we played in a squat...

Pierro: Do you think it was very different from Northern Ireland?

Paddy (the pianist-guitarist): Well, yeah. The crowds are more enthusiastic here.

Louis: People in Europe are just up for listening to music and they don't really care whether you're cool or, you know, what label record you're sign to. They're just happy to listen to some new music and just clap and dance if they like it...

Dr. Javnaire: And for how long do you play together?

Louis: All three, me, Paddy and Tom (*ndlr. the vocalist, the drummer and the bassist*), we have been playing together for five years in **Kowalski**. And Paddy (*ndlr. the keyboarder and second guitarist*) joined us in October last year. We knew him before he came in the band. In fact, I already played with him when I was fifteen.

But now, since he joined we just got a lot better, a lot tighter and writing better songs. So, things are going up.

Pierro: Is Belfast a town where all the new bands know each other?

Louis: Oh yeah! Everyone knows each other in Belfast, because it's a very tight-neck community of music. When a new band arrives on scene, everybody knows it.

Pierro: And do you basically know all the bands in Belfast?

Louis and Tom: Pretty much, yeah.

Pierro: Well, Belfast is also the town of Two Doors Cinema Club. Do you know them?

Paddy (the drummer): Yeah! My brother is in so...

Paddy (the pianist-guitarist): We just went on tour with them, before we came to Europe, supporting them. But it's funny because it's started with **Two Doors Cinema Club** supporting **Kowalski** and now it's the other way round.

Dr. Javnaire: And to come back to Kowalski, where does your name come from? We know that there are some movies where the heroes are Kowalski, for example *Vanishing Point* (Richard Sarafian, 1971), *Gran Torino* (Clint Eastwood, 2008) or *A Streetcar Named Desire*...

Tom: ...Yeah, yeah, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, it's where it's from. I was studying the play in school whenever we formed the band and we just picked it like that.

Louis: And it's also a very angular word which sum up the music quite well, energetic and spiky...

Dr. Javnaire: And how would you describe your music? You just said "spiky"...

Louis: It's, yeah, spiky mixed with dream-pop, and electronica. It's a quite hard thing to sum up because we always try to keep it new, fresh and different. But we like having a solid rhythm section (like dance beats) with dreamy vocals and guitars, and also electronic organs.

Pierro: And which bands inspire you?

Louis: From the beginning we were influenced by bands like **Arcade Fire**, **Broken Social Scene**, **Death Cab**, **Beach House**... But currently, we are more inspired by **Grandaddy**, **Caribou**, and stuff like that.

But I think the one band that comes closest to that would be **The Arcade Fire**, like it was the band that gave me the desire to be in a band.

Dr. Javnaire: Are you writing a new album or do you just concentrate on your tour?

Louis: Whenever we finished this tour, we'll go back and record some singles and see how they go in term of response in England and Europe. But maybe after that we might do an album; but we don't want to do an album until people want to hear an album from us.

Tom: As far as writing goes over next few months, we may try to record singles and almost build what might become an album. But we don't have any plans to make an album at the moment.

Pierro: Is there a question you would like to be asked?

(Laughs)

Paddy (the pianist-guitarist): Why are you so great? (*laughs again*)

Dr. Javnaire: So, why are you so great, Kowalski?

Paddy (the pianist-guitarist): We just are!

Dr. Javnaire: And, finally, what could we wish you for the future?

Louis: We just want to keep making music that we enjoy making and not make it for anyone else because they say “you have to make a song like this or a song like that”. We also love to make shows where people dance and we have to keep that in mind...

Tom: ...We also hope that the band can stand on his own and that we could one day quit our jobs.