

PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES

Words – Marcus Barnett

On August 24th 2004, A little known band from Seattle called “Pretty Girls Make Graves” came to the UK to play a four-date tour. Well, by little known I meant they hadn’t had a hit single to sell out every single show...anyway, we turn up outside the Manchester Roadhouse pretty early, and the van isn’t there. So after seeing some tramps washing their feet in the water, break dancing in the middle of the road and running into cars, eating bad pizza and the owner of the roadhouse treating us like dirt and calling us ‘retards’, the van carrying PGMG pulls up next to the roadhouse and they begin to unpack everything. Andrea and Derek walk past carrying some mic stands and amps and they politely greet us then carry the stuff in. A few moments later, they come back up and Derek goes to get a box of t-shirts and Andrea starts talking to us, and tells us she remembers that she met us last time in February, when they came to the Manchester Academy 3, and we arrange an interview for later on. Before the interview starts, we discover the gig is 18+, and the band was confused because they were never told about it. Here is the result of the interview -:

What is the current line-up of the band, and why did you decide to form?

Andrea: I’m Andrea, and I sing, this is...

Nick: I’m Nick. I play the drums.

Andrea: Derek plays bass, Jay plays guitar, and we have a member who might be joining called Leona, who might be playing keyboards, and we all just wanted to start something new.

So Nathan Left earlier this year...how did you genuinely feel about it?

Andrea: Well...we were all very very sad and disappointed to see him ago...

Nick: Yes.

(Andrea laughs)

Nick: But, he’s raising a family, so for putting all his time into running the family, I have respect for him.

Andrea: He’s being a good Dad. He’s starting to play music too with his wife, and they are starting a band.

His wife is the Your Enemies Friends ex-keyboard player right?

Andrea: Yeah.

So, you’re a four piece now?

Andrea: Well, for this tour. However, Leona will most probably be playing keyboards with us. She just couldn’t come on this tour, and we haven’t really played much either, so we are going to play together a lot when we get home.

Is it a totally new set, or are you still playing stuff off the old records?

Andrea: We're definitely playing some stuff from the old records; we are playing 5 new songs that we have written as a four piece.

Has there been any difference on this tour compared to the others?

Andrea: Well, we are getting a couple more days off on this tour which is pretty cool!

Nick: Our German shows went well, which is surprising for me, because they usually don't respond so physically, and they did this time around so I was quite impressed.

Andrea: Yeah, I was too.

So, tell me about your new 7"...

Andrea: The one on French Kiss Records? Well, we haven't recorded it yet. We are hoping to record it while we're in New York recording our album, which we are doing in September & October. Out of that recording we could end up with something that could go on it.

What does the reduced line up have on the sound?

Andrea: Hmm, hard question!

Nick: Well actually, it's a bit less convoluted...you can hear everything, and everything sounds a bit more distinct, because there isn't that much guitar work going on...it's hard to get a good sound out of it in a live situation.

Andrea: It seems to make everything else more apparent.

Nick: Yeah

Andrea: It's more effective, perhaps...

When can we see a release date?

Andrea: Well, if we get it done by September, probably. January or something?

Nick: Yeah, something like that.

Do you feel sorry for the people who bought the "Good Health" 3X7" box sets on ebay for \$200?

Andrea: Yes. (Laughs) I told people not to spend that much money on them, but I have a friend who bought it for that much on ebay, which makes me feel terrible! But, it's not like we can make people stop them buying it. It's a collector's thing, and my friend wanted it because it was a collector's thing. I'm glad we do have a 12" of "Good Health" coming out on Matador now, that way at least it isn't an import or if you want purely the songs on vinyl you don't have to get the box set.

Nick: I don't feel bad for anybody who pays that much money for it...if they want to pay that much money for it, then that's fine by me. It's their choice.

What are your feelings on Rick James' passing away?

Andrea: Very Sad...

Didn't the Murder City Devils meet him in a hotel once?

Andrea: I've never heard that! Did they?

Nick: SAY WHA?

Andrea: Did Murder City Devils meet Rick James in a hotel once?

There was an interview with them on Buddyhead, and that's what they said!

Andrea: Hmm...they could have been drunk...or lying.

Nick: Yeah, I dunno.

Andrea: I guess it is possible! I'll have to ask Derek when he pops his head out here. I've never heard that story!

Have you stopped getting At the Drive-In comparisons?

Andrea: Sort of...

Nick: Well, we haven't been getting as much press recently...

Andrea: Still, not as often as it used to be.

When are the Paul Frank wallets coming?

Andrea: We have no idea, because we keep writing to them asking them when it's happening.

Nick: We've seen what they look like

Andrea: Oh yeah, we saw the prototypes.

How did it come about anyway?

Andrea: We have a friend called Austin Bro-hey you! *Derek walks through the roadhouse's doors* There's a question for you.

Derek: For me?

Andrea: Yeah – Did Murder City Devils ever meet Rick James in a hotel once?

Derek: Oh yeah, No it wasn't me. It was just Dann & Nate.

Andrea: Really? That's crazy, I never heard that story!

Derek: Yeah, I don't remember it really.

Andrea: So is it true?

Derek: Oh yeah, they really did!

Andrea: Incredible...so anyways, We have a friend called Austin Brown who is a really cool guy, and he's a big pretty girls fan, and he works for Paul Frank. He always comes out to our shows all over the place because he travels around the world a lot...Anyway; he suggested we have the wallets made. I don't know when they are coming out, but we did see a prototype and they look great!

OK, these questions aren't mine so don't shoot the messenger...

(Andrea & Nick Laugh)

Nash asks - Do you prefer Morrissey or The Smiths?

Andrea: The Smiths.

Nick: The Smiths. Only because I haven't heard much of Morrissey, and I don't really like a whole lot of The Smiths either.

Kelvin Asks – Do you drink tea and eat scones when you're in the UK?

(Andrea laughs out loudly)

Nick: What?

Andrea: Well, I drink tea, but I don't think I've ever eaten a scone in the UK.

Nick: I'm routinely disappointed by scones, they get talked about a lot, but they're not anything special.

Tori/The Relaxo Squad asks – What happens to ugly girls?

Andrea: What was the question?

Nick: The uhh...the what?

Andrea: What happens to ugly girls...erm, is this a joke? (Laughs)

Nick: I...don't.... know.

Any words you'd like to pass on to anyone?

Andrea: Uhm...Muscle!

Nick: What?

Andrea: It's a word I learned in French Class. It's French for "Muscle"

Nick: And it's pronounced "Musically"?

Andrea: No, It's like *puts on French accent* "musayklay"

Nick: And...?

Andrea: Well, I think it's a pretty funny word to pass along! (Laughs)

Nick: Oh right!

Andrea: Pass it along, baby! Keep on truckin! ...We're tired.

Nick: I know what to pass along!! Check out Mahjongg...and check out the Playwrights, they are a great band! Thanks!

Shortly after this, Derek walked down the roadhouse stairs, and asks what the age limit is again. After we tell him, he tells me the place sucks anyway, and it has terrible sound and it's really hot inside. He then tells me that he is going to sneak us in by flashing his pass at the doorman (who, incidentally was the guy having a go at us earlier), so Derek and Nick surround the door, while Andrea opens it and we sneak through. The Playwrights were an amazing art-punk band, familiar to Art Brut. Seachange were good this time too. Pretty Girls Make Graves were amazing and the new songs surpassed anything they had ever done before. They even dedicated my favourite song "Speakers Push the Air" To "Our buddies in the bloodloss collective", which was nice despite the fact we didn't even ask them.

www.prettygirlsmakegraves.com (official site)

www.pretty-girls-make-graves.com (fan-site)