

One Bad Son Interview – Kurt Dahl discusses Life on the Road

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Kurt Dahl, Drummer for Hard Rock band One Bad Son from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Interview July 23, 2013

This summer One Bad Son will be doing some shows and how far are you travelling?

Looks like we're heading to Ontario and back, which will be great. What makes this tour really special is that we're stopping in the middle of nowhere in Ontario and shacking up in a cabin in the woods for a week, to write songs for the next album. No TV, no phones, just songs. I can't wait.

How was it filming the promo video It Ain't Right?

It was a real treat. We did all our parts in one day, in the hot Vancouver sun. It was a major contrast to shooting the Scarecrows video, which was over 3 days in the middle of a Sask winter in -40. But both were amazing experiences, and wouldn't change a thing about either...but it was like, the cameras were freezing up on the Scarecrows shoot. You can imagine what our bodies were doing. But it's a badge of honor...you're not a real Canadian band til you shoot a video in -40.



How often do you write music and do you do it on the road?

We're always writing. That's what I love about this band; creativity is always flowing. Hopefully that never changes. We write on the road, at sound check, individually at home on the acoustics, whenever. We all come to the jams with ideas, and they go through the OBS meat grinder. Sometimes the grinder is ruthless.

What do you think of promo videos nowadays with everything going on YouTube?

Well that's exactly what they're for...YouTube only really. We never have the goal of getting on Much or MTV or whatever...if it happens like with It Ain't Right, that's just a bonus. But not the goal. People listen with their eyes, so having some cool vids that represent the band and what we're about is so important...it is how most people are introduced to the band, their first impression. Whether people label you the next Pearl Jam or next Poison depends on your video even more than your sound. I assume it's clear which one we'd rather be.

What equipment are you currently endorsing, etc.

For me on the drums, D'Addario has hooked me up with Evans skins and Pro Mark sticks. Gibson has been great to us, as well as Sennheiser microphones.

Without Social Media, could bands today manage to survive?

That's a good question. Sometimes I think so many bands would be better musicians and better writers if they spent less time on social media, and more time playing their instruments and writing songs. It's like, what would Keith Moon or Jimi Hendrix or John Lennon be doing if they were around today...trying to change the world with their talents, or tweeting for new followers? Sure these tools help get your message out, and that's great, but it seems like the tools themselves have become more important than the message. Maybe I'm just old fashioned. What I do know is most young musicians I meet on the road are great at social media, and not that great at their instruments. Then you meet a guy that's been doing it for 30 years and can't tell you the first thing about Instagram, but can play circles around anyone in the room. I want to be that guy.

So I guess the answer is: social media is a double-edged sword...and for many bands, a crutch rather than a tool. We should probably spend more time at social media, but we'd rather be writing rock and roll songs.

What were your earliest influences in life?

Musically or life in general? Let's assume musically, or we'll be here all day. I got into Pearl Jam in high school and they changed my life, without a doubt. I was an insecure teen until I found rock and roll; and then I was an insecure teen who'd found rock and roll.

What would be some of your main influences today?

On the drums, the usual suspects Keith Moon and John Bonham are major influences, and guys like Matt Cameron are really inspiring. But when I get home and put on some vinyl, it's usually Neil Young, Dylan, Warren Zevon, the Kinks, etc. Some would say I'm stuck in 1971. They may be right.

What could we find interesting in your music collection at home?

I find it all interesting...but you might find interesting stuff like Captain Beefheart, Big Star, Television, T Rex, Hall & Oates, The Clash, maybe Cindy Lauper.

Could you describe what goes on in a day in your life as a musician on tour?

On the last tour, it was something like this: get up early after 3-4 hours of sleep after last night's show, have a quick shower, hop into the van and drive 2-3 hours to the radio station in the next town to do an interview and strum a song and meet all the radio people, grab something to eat, take a nap or work out, head to the venue for sound check for the next 2 hours, eat a meal courtesy of the venue (which is either exceptional or the exact opposite), warm up on your instrument for an hour, play a one hour show to a packed house (unless we're in London, then it's to 7 people), the one hour is the most enjoyable and exhilarating hour of your life, hang around after the show meeting new fans and making new friends, talk with them about how real rock and roll in the vein of Zeppelin and the Who and Alice in Chains and Pearl Jam is about to make a major comeback, drink some beer courtesy of the venue (which is either unlimited or extremely limited), walk to the hotel room and crash, wake up 3-4 hours later and do it all again. And we wouldn't have it any other way.

Where do you see Music in 100 years from now?

I'd be a fool to guess...but hopefully the human element that makes rock and roll so sacred is still there. Otherwise it's just aspartame.

Extra questions for One Bad Son drummer Kurt Dahl

Life without music would be: like Van Halen without David Lee Roth; tolerable, but uninspiring.

Favorite movie: The Big Lebowski

Favorite sport: drinking white Russians whilst watching The Big Lebowski

Favorite drink: nice red wine

Favorite saying: Dude abides

Favorite book: The Catcher in the Rye

Favorite band: of all time...The Who

Star Wars or Star Trek: Big Star

Check out One Bad Son online <http://www.onebadson.com/>

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