

The Death Set serve up dance floor magic

By Matt Dixon

The Death Set are an energetic punk rock band originally from Australia but now residing in Baltimore via Brooklyn. They'll be playing a show in Charlotetown on the Nov. 23 alongside new wave scene icons Windom Earle, and local heroes Smothered In Hugs and The New Royalty. But don't expect this one to be going down at the notoriously inebriated & violent Wave. Instead, this show promises to be negativity free! and will be sure to be an epic dance party happening in a little house on Hutchinson Crt. Everyone is welcome but please remember to leave the bullshit at the door! For more information and directions please visit <http://www.mattbff.com>.

I recently conducted an interview with Beau Velasco of The Death Set to talk about his band and why so many should fear The Death Set!

Please introduce The Death Set and give a brief history.

The Death Set is from Australia originally but moved it's silly self to Baltimore via Brooklyn about two years ago to play as many shows with as many rad bands as possible. We have definitely done that and it is super fun and rad and will continue to do so.

How would you describe your music to someone that has yet to hear you?

It's above all very very spastic energy wise. We play guitar and sing over electronic backing tracks. But kill me before calling it dance punk.

What were your original goals of the band? How have they changed?

There have been so many stages and crazy challenges that the band has gone through to get to here so I guess the original goal was to come and tour the states. Then it was to stay and continue to play. Now it is changing labels to a much bigger one which will make shit get even more crazy. So it's been a whole bunch of baby goals resulting in our first full length coming out early next year.

What are some of the things you try to communicate through your music?

First and foremost, I want people to get psyched and have fun. For

me that is what it's all about. Some of the songs are that solely whilst others are more personal and honest. I'm not scared to write both. But overall it definitely has an underlying sense of positivity.

Do you think it's necessary for independent musicians and bands to have a form of ethics?

Of course. Though I think to be militant either way is ridiculous.

You've moved from Australia to Baltimore. How does the Australian DIY scene differ from the Baltimore/U.S. DIY scene? How are they similar?



The Australian DIY scene is awesome, however small. It is really limited though by the geography of the country. To tour there means traveling about 800 miles between only four or five cities which one can hit. So it's less of a network by default but still very rad.

It would be an understatement to say that you've toured quite a bit in the past. What is your favourite show situation (type of venue, crowd, bands, etc)?

Yeah, I've tried to get out as much as possible. The best show for me is playing at a house or DIY space where the promoter knows what's up. A lot of people have good intentions but don't know how to run a show. For example passing a hat for donations after a show is bullshit. A show needs to have a door price for it to be valued in a punter's head. But... phееeww... Now that's off my chest. I love playing house or warehouse shows where the kids at the show know or have looked up your band and sing along and smile and it is just so much fun. Certain cities like Kalamazoo, Michigan where people would laugh at you when you

tell them that their scene rules so much harder than D.C. because they all really care and are the best. I love playing with my friend's bands first and foremost, of course. Particularly my friends bands from B'more and Brooklyn.

Any interesting road/tour stories you'd like to share?

Tour is very much more a kind of work horse more than a Red Hot Chilli Peppers style girls and drugs type thing. We rely on ourselves only out on the road so we have to keep it on a sustainable level. I do love to party though and love hanging out and meeting new awe-

some people. I love sleeping in the Detroit Scrummage blow up castle they inflate for us every time we visit.

Oh, I guess here is one. It kind of happened just before tour though.

I almost died in a bicycle accident last year. My friends found me face down, Jesus Christ pose with blood oozing out of head. It was pretty bad. I was so concussed and my friends were freaking out but instead of keeping me awake they gave me a bunch of sleeping pills. When they realized I should be kept awake they stayed with me all night (bless 'em) and they said I would only stay awake if they played The Clash and if they even turned it down a little I would freak out.

My face was so busted up and I had to go on a month long tour in a week or so, so I wore a bandanna and all our crew at the send off show with Spankrock wore one too in support. It was pretty awesome. I got a gold tooth out of it.

Who do you consider your current contemporaries?

In Baltimore... Ponytail. Dan Deacon, Double Dagger, Ecstatic Sunshine, Video Hippos, Cex and

Thank You are very badass. I, of course, love the Brooklyn bands like Matt and Kim, High Places, Parts and Labor, Aa, and Japanther. Best Fwends from Austin, Juiceboxxx from Milwaukee and XBXR and Hawney Troof from the Bay Area are awesome. Right now I am excited about "The Smell" L.A. bands like No Age, Mika Miko, Health etc. Die! Die! Die! From New Zealand are very rad and I also love club music so Spankrock and Bonde Do Role are definitely in there.

Favourite dance party song?

I know it's cheesy but I can't stop listening to that Swedish Pop song "young folks" by Peter, Bjorn and John.

And, of course, see the bands I listed above.

Dance party song... B52's always get people moving.

What does the future hold for The Death Set?

There is actually a ton of stuff about to come out.

We are releasing a 12" version containing both of our EP's coming out on three different labels all with different artwork. One each for the U.S., Canada and Japan. Two of the releases have artwork by Ben Frost and the other by Beau Velasco.

We have a remix 12" coming out January 2008 on Australian label Bang Gang 12".

Our full length is finally coming out early 2008 on an exciting new label and the change has been the reason for the delay.

We are off to Canada to tour in November and Europe February with U.S. stints in between.

So, pretty busy.

How can people contact you?

thedeathset@gmail.com
www.myspace/thedeathset
www.thedeathset.com

Labels...

U.S. CD and label - Morphius Records
U.S. 7" - VLXO / The Arm NYC
U.K. 7"- Modular UK
U.S. 12" - Impose
Japan 12" - Every Conversation
Canada 12" - We Are Busy Bodies
Australian Compilation - Modular
U.S. Compilation - Mauled By Tigers

Final words?

Cheers