

Jane's Addiction's Relapse



Perry Farrell

Perry Farrell opens the door to his hotel suite at the funky/chic Chateau Marmont.

IN THAT MOMENT I HAVE LEFT THE INFAMOUS SUNSET STRIP IN WEST HOLLYWOOD (WHERE THE HOTEL IS SITUATED) AND I'VE ARRIVED ON PLANET FARRELL. THE HOTEL, PROBABLY BEST KNOWN AS THE PLACE WHERE JOHN BELUSHI DIED OF A DRUG OVERDOSE IN 1982, IS AN APPROPRIATE VENUE TO INTERVIEW ONE OF THE MOST OVERTLY POLITICALLY INCORRECT DRUG USERS OF OUR TIME. WALKING NERVOUSLY FROM ROOM TO ROOM, FARRELL IS DRESSED IN A CRIMSON SATIN VEST, RUMPLED KHAKI SUIT AND A BLACK BOWLER HAT.

"DO YA WANNA HEAR THE NEW SINGLE?" HE ASKS EXCITEDLY, SOUNDING LIKE AN ENDEARING SEVEN YEAR OLD. I SIT DOWN AND LISTEN TO AN ETHEREAL, MORE SUBTLE JANE'S ADDICTION. DARE I SAY — A MORE MATURE JANE'S ADDICTION.

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Drummer Stephen Perkins is sprawled on the couch, not sure if he's here as Farrell's moral support or to be interviewed as well. He urges Farrell to stop moving around and to sit down next to him. Room service waiters stroll in and out with trays of food, ignoring the two roaches in the ashtray and the pot scattered across the coffee table.

Six years after their demise at the height of their career, the Jane's Addiction 'relapse' has come about following a year of the individual members playing together on various projects, culminating in their joint decision to have a go at Jane's Addiction once more (original bassist Eric Avery was asked to be part of the project but declined). According to Farrell, "you can't call it a reunion without all original members," hence the project term 'relapse'. Completing the line up of Jane's Addiction is guitarist Dave Navarro, and fellow Chili Pepper Flea joins on bass. A new Jane's album, *Kettle Whistle*, (mixed by Andy Wallace — Nirvana, Rage Against The Machine, Jeff Buckley) accompanies the relapse. It consists of rare, previously unreleased tracks, live recordings, demos and the new single, 'Kettle Whistle'.

Lighting up a Marlboro and sipping a glass of red wine, Farrell settles back in his seat. On Planet Farrell, I quickly learn that this will not be a regular interview, but rather a maze of words that may or may not be relevant to the question. But hey, there are worse ways to spend an afternoon in LA.

How did this relapse come about?

SP: "Well, after we released the song 'Hard Charger' for the Howard Stern movie [*Private Parts*], we had Flea and David come play with us. And when you have those experiences, you have some good friends, some great musicians, and the final product we all really liked, so we thought, let's make some more music like this. And what's most exciting is the song, 'Kettle Whistle', it's what happens. You go in and you make new music, and that was really the goal."

When you split up did you have any idea that you might get back together again?

PF: "I had no thoughts. I mean of course I stayed friends with the fellas and always had a relationship with them but it wasn't in my mind to make music with them again."

Why did you split up in the first place?

"Okay... well, I feel like I'm a musical bachelor,

a musical playboy. I get excited at the newness of new relationships. Too often I find that people are shallow to the point that you can figure them out somewhat quickly, the more depth a person has makes them more attractive simply by the fact that people can't figure you out. And this is the human dilemma, to discover or uncover; this is what we live for. I felt like Jane's Addiction was losing its license to search, even now I'm recording these records there's an incredible pressure to go with the formula or the mould. And I feel the pressure even now, like seven years later, so the main reason was, I didn't want to be creative in a pigeon hole, and it gave us a brand new license to experiment. It was almost like we were expiring in Jane's Addiction. We had a license, but it was about to expire."

It seems that once you became commercially successful you weren't interested in Jane's Addiction anymore. Is it hard to stay creative and achieve mainstream success simultaneously?

SP: "[Pause] No, I think it's a challenge to stay creative, but you know, I said to someone today, no matter what's happening outside, as soon as you get into the studio, there's nothing on tape until you've made something. It's just you four fellas or three fellas whatever's happening. So success is nice, it's really up to you in this room to come up with something creative or beautiful, and I always put that pressure on myself, in a garage, or a thousand dollar a day studio, you know? I'm trying to be creative, and I'm not sure what's happening around me on the outside, I'm not aware of it at the moment. It's a very small world in a studio; you're this close to each other you know you're trying to make music!"

PF: "Names don't last, DJ Simpson, Richard Nixon, it's your actions that last. They go longer than a name, so I agree with Steve. When I go into a studio with Steve, I'm nauseous, because I don't know if I can uncover the unimaginable! And that's where creation begins — in the chaos of not understanding."