

# MALCHICKS

A few things have changed in the Malchicks camp since their formation in 1989. Drummer Lorna Kittel has been replaced by 18 year old Jason Ennor. Bass player Coralie has changed her hair colour from peroxide blonde to brunette as she finishes her studies at teacher's training college and (they agree as we munch nachos at the Mexican Cafe) their sound has evolved.

"We're taking time over it now instead of just throwing together songs and assuming that they're going to sound as we think they're going to," explains Matthew, one of the band's two guitarists, "We're spending more time on each part and a bit more on the arrangement. The theory is that the songs get better."

And more complex?  
"There is that tendency. It's a bit of a danger with a lot of

If you thought the Malchicks have been lying low these last six months you'd be right. They've been waiting for their new EP to "happen" but *Lotus* now awaits its public, with a spanking computer graphic cover and distribution courtesy of Christchurch-label Failsafe.



sound thus: "Really loud fuzzy guitars, floaty vocals and funky drums."

When asked if they're susceptible to influences, Matt says yes and Coralie says no (although she likes the

**"YOU TALK TO A LOT OF BANDS AND YOU FIND THAT THEY'RE ALWAYS ARGUING... WE DON'T," ADDS SIMON, "WE'RE ALL WATER SIGNS,"**

bands who try and do something new and put a bit of originality and complexity into songwriting. It tends to go off in that prog direction."

Or into dreamland, which is closer to Malchicks territory. Although it's pernicious to form equations between one band's work and another's, listening to the Malchicks is, at times, like listening to the reverberations of a head-on collision between My Bloody Valentine and Sonic Youth; guitars are noisy and dissonant or mournfully harmonious, while Coralie's delicate voice flutters in and out of the soundscape like a lost butterfly. Jason describes their

Smashing Pumpkins).

"I get absolutely sick and tired of some comparisons made by some people who are just way off the line," she says heatedly. She adds that when she is playing on stage she has to be on a certain plane where she doesn't think too hard about what she is doing.

"If you're distracted, you start to lose it. I don't interact with the audience that much. I'm not trying to get it on with everybody in the audience. I'm doing my own thing."

What is the Malchicks' dynamic?

"Very amoebic," says Coralie which she demonstrates with a

descriptive hand movement.

"You talk to a lot of bands and you find that they're always arguing and that's where they get their dynamic from. We don't," adds Simon, the band's other guitarist.

You're a harmonious band, then.

"We're all water signs," continues Simon, "it's really weird. Except for him."

He points to young Jason but no, Jason reveals to the table that he is in fact an Aquarian. Well how do you like that!

There is something watery about you, I volunteer.

"You mean wishy-washy," says Simon.

No, more calm and ripply, I reply, hoping I haven't said something rude. A gentle, wavy feel. Uh... back to the *terra firma* of favourite types of music.

"I'm into strings," reveals Matt, "any kind of interesting string music, whether it be fuzzy guitar based or classical. Harp-sichord music's really cool. Anyone who is doing anything interesting with guitars, whether it be the Gordons or the Birthday Party or Band of

Susans. And some of the New York guitar experimentalists like Glenn Branca. I've got a Glenn Branca symphony and there's one movement of it which is about ten minutes of just one constantly rising note. It's so discordant most of the time but when it finally hits a true harmonic note it's beautiful!"

The Malchicks are not exactly prolific (a discussion ensues over how many songs they have written this year. Simon says four, Matt says seven, they agree on one a month) but they are very happy with the sound of *Lotus*, only their second foray into recording after the inclusion of BFM Alternative Top Ten hit 'Vanilla' on last year's *Freak The Sheep* compilation.

As for making a dent in the international scene, well, the Malchicks are already being played on radio in Moscow. That's right. A friend of Coralie's who did a masters degree in Russian is now resident in the onion-domed city, hosting a radio show and involving himself in the underground music scene and he's playing their song. How's that for Perestroika!  
**DONNA YUZWALK**



Lita Ford is on her way to New Zealand later this month to do Clinics for Crate amps — Auckland November 29, Wellington Nov 30 and Christchurch Dec 1. *Rip It Up* spoke to the former star of late 70s all-girl rock band Runaways, and successful solo rocker, early one Sunday morning about life in the fast and loud lane.

Ford is between tours, between record contracts and is writing with a new young band.

"They are excellent players, they're helping me write the next album and they'll be performing on the next album and tour with me."

There are rumours of a Runaways reunion?

"I'm trying to reach Joan Jett. She's not very good at returning calls. It wouldn't be a Runaways reunion, it would be something that her and I do, maybe a one-off song and a quick tour together."

"I think Joan is very talented and I'd like to do a song with her but it's a matter of her schedule and if she's into it."

Do you pleased to see more women rock players?

"Yeah, there's quite a few when I've been doing Crate clinics. A lot of female bands have given me their t-shirts and their tapes. I just hope that more break through."

With your albums there's been a "sex symbol" approach to marketing. Is this how you want your record sold?

"RCA have never been really great at marketing rock & roll. But there's nothing fake there, what you get is what you see."

Lita is looking forward to seeing Australia and New Zealand.

"The weather, it's pretty shitty over here, between the heat and the smog it makes it real hard to breathe, it's not good."

How do you approach a clinic?

"A Crate rep usually talks about the equipment and they push all the buttons while I play, showing people all the different sounds the amp does. I play guitar for a while and then I sign autographs, do photos and talk to everyone. That's about it really, pretty simple."

Then it was Lita's turn to ask questions: What will the weather be like? What clothing shall I bring?

The clinics take place Auckland's Gluepot Sunday Nov. 29 2.30pm. Tickets \$10 from Rockshop, Go West, Mainline, Musical Sounds and Trutone stores.

Wellington's clinic is at the James Cabaret (Hania St) Monday Nov 30 at 7.30pm. Tickets at Northern Music and Rockshop.

The Christchurch clinic is at Southern Blues Bar (198 Madras St) Tuesday Dec 1 at 7.30pm. Tickets at Rockshop and Mac's Sound M.C.

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