



## The Screaming Jets

“**E**verything’s rolling again,” says Screaming Jets vocalist Dave Gleeson with a happy sigh. And indeed, things are rolling again for the band. Album number six, ‘DoYa’, is their first release in eight years, and was recorded at the end of a two year break for the band and is already proving to be something of a breath of fresh air.

They’ve never been short of an audience – three gold records and a platinum plaque are proof of that – but there’s a loss of momentum that just can’t be helped with that sort of hiatus. Mindful of that, Gleeson’s ready to get back into the thick of things in the same way the band has previously – by touring around the country, taking in dozens of shows every month.

“We can’t wait to get back to where we’re doing four or five shows a week,” he enthuses. “That’s when you know you’re touring again. Every time we’re out there we hope that something will catch on, and we can get more and more people again. We know that if we get in front of more people, they’ll be blown away by guys on stage who’ve been in bands for 20 years.”

It’s not just the time off that’s given the band a new lease on life, though – there’s also a change of management, a change of record label and a change of personnel, with long term guitarist Grant Walmsley leaving a year and a half ago, just

after the album’s recording had been completed.

“All that behind the scenes nuts and bolts crap takes up a lot of energy,” Gleeson admits. “Grant had recorded the album by the time it was time for him to go but any time you get a new member, although it is a bit of a pain in the arse because you’ve got to rehearse and teach them all the songs again, it does bring a new energy to the band.”

“The great part is,” he adds, “we don’t have guitar wars on stage any more. We used to have two guitars where, if one was on 11, the other would have to go up to 12. Everyone’s kinda playing together. I often like to equate us to a footy team, so now everyone’s playing for each other.”

But even before Walmsley’s departure, there

was something different happening with the group – the writing for ‘Do Ya’ changed from being focused on Walmsley and bass player Paul Woseen to becoming a process involving the band as a whole.

“Grant was one of the principal songwriters, and so is Paul, our bass player. They’ve definitely written most of the songs people know, like *Better* and *Helping Hand* and *October Geay*. That means a lot of the lyrics people like, and say, ‘oh mate, I love that lyric!’ I have to say, ‘yeah, me too, but I didn’t write it’. It’s been a great asset for me to have people who’ll come in with material and I can just say, ‘yeah, I’ll sing that’, but we definitely sat down and tried to make this album a more collaborative effort and have written all the songs together. Something like 60% of the songs are written by two members or more.”

Even if the lyrics aren’t Gleeson’s own, he notes that the sentiment behind them is one shared by the whole band. “I think everyone in the band has a pretty healthy social outlook, and we all like to take notice of what’s going on in the world,” he muses. “Even with the other albums, it’s always been about situations that we’ve been in, or seen friends in, or things like that. It’s never been an over-the-top Midnight Oil kind of ‘give it back’ way, but it’s in an observatory way that we’ve tended to look at the world around us.

“I think having the time off between the last album - when we’d been on the road for 13 years – helps,” he continues. “It starts to become very insular – you write about how the record company pisses you off, and how it’s hard to be on the road in a Tarago with five other blokes, and it starts to appeal to less and less people. I think by having a little break – we had two years and got jobs and hated that enough to want to get back on the road – we definitely got to live life again, which was important before writing this album.”

And it seems to have worked. “We’re stoked,” grins Gleeson. “Without blowing my own trumpet – if you listen to the start of the album without saying, ‘wow, that’s a fucking rock record’, then I’m not here.”

**‘DoYa’ is out now through  
 StockXChange. The  
 Screaming Jets play at  
 The Gov on Fri 25 Jan**



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Page 2 of 2

