



The album that 'had to be rock'

Self-financing your own album has its ups and downs. X-Static's LUKE SCOTT spoke to Screaming Jets' Dave Gleeson about the process.

Australian rock legends the Screaming Jets have used their own money to record and release their new album *Do Ya*.

There has been an eight year gap between the band's last release *Scam* and *Do Ya*, but the Screaming Jets are convinced they still have what it takes to deliver a blistering, powerhouse rock record.

The band's seventh studio album has been a long while coming for a number of reasons, according to Screaming Jets lead singer Dave Gleeson.

"It has been like an elephant giving birth," Gleeson said.

"The album itself has been about three-and-a-half years in the making - it really did take a long time.

"Mostly because it was self-financed - that and the fact that we changed managers, and sacked a long-time member of the band (guitarist Grant Walmsley).

"It is just awesome to be able to get out and play new songs."

Gleeson said the band had a clear idea of where it wanted *Do Ya* to go before writing even began.

"We sat down like businessmen after all these years and we just said 'look, let's make sure it's a rock album' - no matter what styles we approach on the album," he said.

"We just made sure that no matter what, the guitars were turned up and the drums were thumping.

"It had to be rock - especially in this time where bands that call themselves rock bands really aren't.

"We just wanted to make sure we stamped our mark on a rock album."

But Gleeson said the band also wanted to do things differently and explore some country and jazz influences.

"It's the first album we've ever really sat down and collaborated on most of the songs with each other," he said.

"In the past it's been our bass player Paul (Woseen) and guitarist Grant (Walmsley) who have written the lion's share of the songs and then others have got to put in little parts and little bits here and there.

"But with this one we all sat down, Grant included, before he went the way of all things, and made a conscious effort to write an album together, which is what we did."

Gleeson said the collaborative process had worked well, and that he believed the album flowed more consistently than previous releases.

"If you've got two chief songwriters who write in solitude and then they come in to the studio with the rest of the band, you can sometimes struggle with the cohesion between the songs," Gleeson said.

"Whereas with everyone writing together and the songs growing as we worked on them, it was a much more organic process that led to the songs as they are."

One of the biggest hurdles in recording *Do Ya* had been the financial challenges, Gleeson said.

"The main reason it took so long was because of the self financing thing," he explained.

"We got a bunch of cash together at the start and thought 'Right we're going to make an album with this'. We got into the studio and three

weeks later we thought 'Oh, we're gonna need some more cash'.

"So we had to book some more gigs which obviously you can't do next week - that's another couple of months down the track. It was much more drawn out than we would have liked."

However, there had been benefits to a longer recording process, including collaborating with different artists, technicians and producers.

"In the last six months of the process we got two guys from the US and Canada involved who I think made all the difference to the overall sound of the record," Gleeson said.

"So really, it all happened perfectly - as it should have."

The Screaming Jets will turn 20 this year, a feat most bands don't get anywhere near.

Gleeson explains the band's longevity simply.

"We just love it," he said.

"We love touring and playing - we've had our differences but the Screaming Jets have really become an institution in Australian rock and we're just swept along by it now.

"The fact we can still get out there and play gigs to full rooms . . . and all that stuff is testament to the fact that the Screaming Jets are in the national consciousness.

"We just really need to kick it over the line and have some big hits."

With *Do Ya* now out on music shelves, the band is embarking on a tour of the nation - Gleeson is excited about performing in Tasmania at the end of November.

"We tend to have a great time in Tasmania," he said.



"Last time we were there, there were all kinds of crazy goings on. I think most of the boys discovered the true meaning of the Jaeger bomb. Hopefully we won't be repeating that performance this time when we're down there."

★The Screaming Jets will perform at Wrest Point Casino, Hobart, on Friday, November 21, and at Country Club Tasmania, Launceston, on Saturday, November 22.

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