

WE ARE THE CITY

For the members of We Are The City, the four years since 2009's *In a Quiet World* have been filled with radical change, both personal and musical. They've undergone lineup alterations, relocated from Kelowna to Victoria to Vancouver, reached their 20s, built up a fan base across the country and painstakingly honed their sound. All of this experience, both good and bad, went into making their sophomore album, *Violent*, out June 4 through Hidden Pony Records. High school friends Cayne McKenzie (vocals/keyboards) Andrew Huculiak (drums) and David Menzel (guitar) began plotting this album almost as soon as the first one was done. Their future looked bright, as they won \$150,000 in January of 2010 by placing first in 102.7 The Peak's prestigious PEAK Performance Project contest.

"This is the album that we've wanted to make for a long time — for four years or even longer," observes Huculiak. "We've been in this purgatory, where I knew what I wanted to create with Cayne and David, but how did we get there? Now we've finally gotten there."

Produced once again by Tom Dobrzanski (Said The Whale, the Zolas, Hey Ocean!) at his newly constructed Monarch Studios, *Violent* is an album of soaring highs and hushed comedowns, with dense syncopations going toe-to-toe with noise-soaked crescendos and delicate pop melodies. "King David" moves from aggressive distortion to gentle acoustic plucking to swirling ambience, while "Bottom of the Lake" places marimba tinkles atop a gritty guitar backdrop, and the cerebral "Baptism" builds towards the album's most thunderous climax.

Huculiak explains, "What we're interested in is contrast. Musically contrasting hooky, poppy things with very experimental ideas." McKenzie adds, "Ups and downs, lous and quiets. Negative and positive themes."

It's this sonic roller coaster that inspired *Violent's* multi-faceted title. The title's implications are both positive and negative, straddling the line between the beautiful and the abrasive and encompassing the full scope of We Are the City's musical maximalism. Menzel observes, "If we're choosing synonyms for 'violent,' it would probably be 'intense.'"

Violent will be followed by a feature-length film — as-yet-untitled — written by We Are the City and filmed by Vancouver's Amazing Factory Productions in Norway. With a script penned entirely in Norwegian — despite the fact that the band members don't speak the language — this subtitled film is a companion piece to the record; the score utilizes melodic motifs from the songs, while the story shares themes with the lyrics. "The film goes as a companion to the record, but it's not a must-have," McKenzie notes. "They both stand alone."

We Are the City's restless sense of artistry has led the musicians through years of self-discovery as they have continued to strive for the next creative peak. Now that they've finally arrived with *Violent* and its accompanying film, there's no question that the journey has been worthwhile.

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Recent & Upcoming Shows

28/04/2014 – Munich, DE – Hauskonzerte
29/04/2014 – Dresden, DE – Societatstheatre
30/04/2014 – Nurnberg, DE – MUZclub
02/05/2014 – Reutlingen, DE – Kulturzentrum Franz. K
03/05/2014 – Cologne, DE – Artheatre
04/05/2014 – Berlin, DE – Privatclub
05/05/2014 – Munster, DE – Pension Schmidt
08/08/2014 – Squamish, BC – Centennial Field



Select Festivals Played

Squamish Valley Music Festival (2014)
SXSW (2014)
Winterruption Festival (2014)
Celebrate Stanley Park (2013)
BC Day – Victoria (2013)
Sing It Forward (2013)
Wapiti Fernie Music Festival (2012)
Keloha Festival (2012)
Sled Island (2012)
Rifflandia (2011)
Celebrate Vancouver (2011)
Rifflandia (2010)



Shared The Stage With

Shad, Aidan Knight, Said the Whale, Hannah Georgas, Born Ruffians, Jordan Klassen, Royal Canoe, Hey Ocean!, Yukon Blonde, The Zolas, Wintersleep, Oh No! Yoko, You Say Party



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In The Press

“Friends Hurt” is filled with spacious enduring simplicity, which reveals something special about these Canadians. They’re thoughtful, creating a warm belief system that you yourself wish to join.

Ryan Boos, Hazy Acres

What was most striking About the performance was the sheer precision with which all three members moved. This isn’t to suggest they’re automatons – rather, with every move, whether it was pounding a drum or strumming a cord, the guys made it seem like that note would be the last.

Michael Thomas, Exclaim!

A single listen is simply not enough to grasp the full scope of what the band has accomplished. Violent is almost a defiant request to step inside McKenzie’s head, and by the time you emerge from underwater after the catharsis of Baptism and the solitary Punch My Face, you’ve encountered a band that dares go where many will not.

Francois Marchand, Vancouver Sun

On the whole, Violent is a remarkable listen: masterfully arranged and impeccably mixed, but with enough unsanded corners to ward off accusations of overproduction. The songs are melodic and listener-friendly without ever really swimming very far in the direction of mainstream.

John Lucas, The Georgia Straight



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