



 Madrid

The original hipsters

Ahead of their upcoming European tour, The Dandy Warhols' lead singer Courtney Taylor-Taylor talks travel and why he loves European crowds

Words: Darren Loucaides

Listening to *Distortland* – The Dandy Warhols' first LP in four years – you'd never think it was the US four-piece's eighth studio album. As many of the glowing reviews point out, the Dandies sound anything but staid after two decades in the game. "We don't put out anything that sounds like other current bands," reckons frontman Courtney Taylor-Taylor. "And that's how music should be. It should be fresh."

Back in the 1990s and early 2000s, The Dandy Warhols were the darlings

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of the indie and pop music worlds, with a string of big hits like *Bohemian Like You* and *We Used To Be Friends*. Their formula of contagious riffs and sardonic lyrics, plus effortless cool on stage, won the Dandies legions of fans all over Europe and beyond.

More than two decades on, The Dandy Warhols are still doing what they do best – mixing catchy alt-rock grooves with sharp satire. *Distortland* is peppered with wry observations about the gentrification of their hometown of

Portland, Oregon. That's not to say they don't like hipsters. "I used to refer to us and our scene in the '90s as hipsters," says Taylor-Taylor, "because we were hippies, but we dressed like Buddy Holly – with army boots. No one else was saying 'hipster'. Back then it wasn't a dirty word."

There will be plenty of those original hipsters in the audience come the Dandies' tour in February and March. Indeed, Taylor-Taylor says he loves how diverse European crowds are: "They

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really vary from city to city, even inside the same country," he says. "No matter how they dress – whether they are 65 with a long grey ponytail or 14 with a Mohawk – they all seem to have this artistic awareness about them. They're informed and they're intelligent, and we like them a lot."

Some stops on the tour will be hosting The Dandy Warhols for the first time in more than a decade, including Rome and Copenhagen. Taylor-Taylor is particularly excited about revisiting the Czech Republic: "We've played Prague a couple times – we love it," he says. "We have really good friends there."

While the Dandies have kept plugging away over the years, countless other bands have formed, broken up and even gone on reunion tours in that time. Taylor-Taylor's advice to the up-and-comers is to "truly love it" and be unique. "I'm so impressed when we get to Europe and see young American bands that are really stoked to be there," he says. "That's really inspiring to us. So I would say to young bands, use this to travel and to grow. Europe is such an amazing and exotic place. I would hate to have never been able to go there."

See *The Dandy Warhols live in Madrid, Barcelona, Geneva, Rome, Milan, Prague, Berlin, Copenhagen, London and Paris.* dandywarhols.com ■

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