

RedFOX

STRANGER LOVE

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Artist: J.F. Biron - Montreal tattoo artist

Bachelor of Fine Arts from Concordia University; Tattoo artist by trade for the past 13 years, JF Biron is heavily influenced by many genres of music, cultural aesthetics, and art, spanning the last 8 decades.

The concept for the album art was to have duality be the reigning constant through colour, composition, and emotionality. Much like two sides of a coin, you need both for it to be complete. Softness and intensity; haze and definition; dark and light; foreboding and providence; we are all bound by life's precarious and extraordinary cycle. This is our time and together we are the observers of this wonderful chaos.

Bio: The story of RedFox is as unique as the sound they produce. The group was formed when folk duo Jono Townsend and Tim Loten relocated to Montreal and joined up with vocalist/fiddle virtuoso Daphnee Vandal. After months of honing their sound and rehearsing in apartment living rooms, the band had a vision, but was having difficulty finding their missing piece. Determined, they decided it was time to expand. Hoping to achieve a broader, more dynamic sound, the trio reached out to experienced metal drummer and longtime university friend, Sam Neumann, to join on drums, as well as rock bassist Sam Robinson to complete the outfit. Their sound was transformed into the folky, ambient, high-energy experience that we come to know as RedFox, retaining their acoustic roots while also exploring and blending more electric sounds. The group can trace their influences back to bands such as Punch Brothers, Half Moon Run, and Paramore.

Since its birth, the band has released two EPs and three singles. The first self-titled EP features two popular songs, "Calling Out" and "Song for the Little Ones". The second, titled 'Recovery', was released in 2019, featuring "Hurry Up" and finishing with their powerful and emotional track "Stay". Despite the difficulties in 2020 for musicians, RedFox has pushed forward releasing 3 new singles, while writing and recording new material leading up to their debut full-length album for October 2021 entitled 'Stranger Love'. Kicking off the album's release with a new single and music video for the first track off of the album, 'Play', the band is excited to release their most important and comprehensive project to date, elevating the music of RedFox in the Canadian indie-folk music scene. Notable past performances include Kemptville Live Music Festival for two consecutive years (2018-2019). Opinicon Music Festival (2019) and Stewart Park Music Festival (2019).

Individual Musician Stories

Daphnee Vandal - I've been playing violin since I was 6 years old. From then on, I spent the majority of my young life playing with the Vermont Youth Orchestra association, and participating in various after school music programs. After graduating high school, I attended Bishop's University where I met Sam Neumann, our drummer, and Jono Townsend, the guitarist. We played in a few bands together, but nothing was too serious. After graduating in June 2017, I was contacted by Jono wondering if I would like to participate in his new bluegrass project. Having never learned to fiddle, I thought it would be a great opportunity to learn something new. We started RedFox with an upright bassist but after many rehearsals, we realized something wasn't working. We already had some shows lined up, so in a pinch we had to find a new bassist and the only person we knew who could make it work was our friend Sam Robinson, who happened to play electric bass. Bringing Sam into the group steered RedFox in a totally new direction, where we realized our sound would benefit greatly from a more sophisticated percussive element, hiring Sam Neumann as the final addition to the group. Since then, we have adapted and evolved to become the unique ambient, vibes-y, electric sound that we are today while maintaining our initial focus on indie-folk elements of our foundation.

Sam Neumann - After graduating from Bishop's University with both Jono and Daphnée, we all moved to Montreal with goals of starting our professional music careers. My immediate focus was finding a space to set up my drums and be able to practice, ideally playing with any and every other musician I could find. While I was setting that up, Jono and Daphnée had already begun the foundation of RedFox, starting as an acoustic trio with Tim on banjo. It wasn't until Sam Robinson was added on bass that the band was looking to include more involved percussion that I was invited to join. After I was a part of the group, we finally grabbed a rehearsal space together, and we began working on our debut EP.

Jono Townsend - I have spent most of my life playing "Country Roads" for drunk people in bars across Ontario and Quebec. When I am not working as your local bard at the Irish pub down the street, I am focusing solely on the Indie-Folk project that is RedFox. RedFox started in 2017 with the goal of trying to write good pop songs with a bluegrass ensemble. Daphnee's and Tim were both masters of their craft but we couldn't help feel that something was missing. Searching for that something, we found two good boys named Sam that just so happened to be the missing ingredient to our RedFox stew (probably doesn't taste as good as it sounds). Since the addition of the electric bass and drums our sound has exploded into something truly unique, mixing elements of the Punch Brothers and Mumford & Sons with elements of Paramore and Half Moon Run.

Tim Loten: Back in 2017 I was studying at Berklee College of Music in Boston, and was playing in a band with some of my best friends and classmates. We had recorded a bunch, had completed a few tours of the UK, and had a blast the whole way. Then on the very day we released our debut full length album I was deported from the US and banned for five years from even attempting to enter. I had gone home to visit family and when I tried to re-enter they found out about a gig I had coming up in Boston. This gig would have earned me at most something near 20 USD, but they considered it illegal employment anyway and sent me packing. It was totally devastating; I was all of a sudden cut off from all the connections, opportunities, and relationships I had spent three years building. I had no idea how to restart, no idea where to go or what to do. I briefly considered changing career paths all together, or studying a different degree. But it was a couple months down the road, I was back home with Jono playing "Country Roads for drunk people" as he puts it, and he was telling me about this band he was trying to get started in Montreal. He told me about this girl he knew from school, and sent me some of her stuff to listen too. Right away I knew there was an opportunity here, Daphnee was obviously a uniquely talented singer and I had always respected Jono's musicianship and work ethic. I knew with Jono that we weren't going to spend six months getting stoned every night jamming with hipsters from Hochelaga. It was going to be a committed endeavor, and that, coupled with Daphnee's creative talents, were going to get us somewhere. Four years later and here we are releasing our full length album after withstanding a global crisis. I think releasing this album has been a real triumph for us all not only because of the circumstances under which we've worked, but also musically. It's not always easy to make our various instruments and creative visions cooperate, but on just about every track I think we nailed it. We demand a lot of compromise from each other musically, and that really shows in these songs. What I mean is we have some outrageously skilled musicians in this band, each member is capable of some truly remarkable virtuosity. But when the five of us play together everyone gets it a little more under control, everyone starts playing in subtler ways, everyone's playing gets a little more purposeful. Listening back to it now, that's what strikes me about the album, there's some fairly sophisticated stuff going on, but it's always subtle. Everything coalesces and every part sounds like it belongs. It's a dark album, Daphnee has never been shy about writing real honest lyrics, but I think people will get a lot of meaning out of it. For the folks who listen all the way through I think they'll find that they keep it on the shelf (literal or digital) and from time to time they'll take it down to listen to just one song in particular, and catch themselves listening to it all the way through again.

Sam Robinson:

Description of Songs on the Album

1. Play

Kicking it off. Having fun. There are boundaries but they are mostly there as a light warning [inner struggle: the fight with my mind].

2. Sleep

Nightmares. They are oddly calming, but it's clear there is something dark clouding it all [first warning]

3. Shiver

Inner monologue happening again, but it's not fun this time. Is it about someone else? Or is it emotional, the temptation and the desire to give in to that which I know is bad? There is something wrong because it doesn't feel good [beginning to see the signs]

4. Mellow Out

Trying to feel normal; function in everyday life. But our good friend, anxiety, seems to be kickin' around every corner [it's fine].

5. Circles

The truth is, I know nothing about any of this is "normal". I acknowledge my introspective conclusion; my reality is a more pessimistic existence than I once imagined [insanity:repetition],

6. Runaway

Is this a sort of escape? I experience a happier side of self-realization. Again, I am faced with my own disappointments. But there's a potential to shed that which makes me unhappy, in all different facets of my life, whether it be physical, emotional or both [finding strength].

7. Try

This is the darker side of my self-realization. It's devastating; to give everything you have to something that inevitably doesn't work [acceptance of failure].

8. Hey Mister

A sort of daydream. When the clouds of my own haze and 'rainbow mood' part, I see that everyone else is struggling too [becoming free].

9. Can't You See

Acceptance of realization and the desire to make choices that move me forward [mental health].

10. Invisible

Experiencing freedom, doused in the memories of greater times [discovering my own meaningful meaninglessness].

11. Takes One to Know One

It all makes sense [I was never alone].

12. Sewn

Reflection: the sad but honest truth [we feel safe here].

-Every heart of gold, when put in your hands is light as the love you sow.