

BIG SHOT

Issue 25 / DJ Music / 200 Reviews / Gear



A young band of working-class kids from Castle Donington, England take the dance-rock world by storm.

Words: Darren Ressler
Images: Alex Cao

You always remember your first time. In a few hours, English band-of-the-moment Late of the Pier, a four-piece composed of lanky twentysomethings who've set dance floors and concert halls ablaze across the UK courtesy of their energetic sonic pastiche, will make their US debut at the

Music Hall of Williamsburg in Brooklyn. The band's members— Sam "Jack Paradise" Potter, Samuel "Samuel Dust" Eastgate, Andrew "Francis Dudley Dance" Faley, and Ross "Red Dog Consuela" Dawson—are sitting in their dressing room, casually nursing bottles of Budweiser.



They've already played over 200 shows and graced the cover of *NME*, but they're excited and confident about tonight's gig. And well they should be: The band's first album, *Black Fantasy Channel* (which was finally released in the US in January), is one of 2008's most compelling releases, namely because it answers many of the questions the nu rave revival asked and failed to answer.

Aside from Potter's childhood vacation to Florida, America is an unknown entity to these whippersnappers. They have a lot of questions about the US, and they ask *Big Shot* to explain things like the difference between red and blue states. Paging Keith Olbermann!

"The earliest seed of the band was planted about five years ago," explains Potter. "That's when I was 16," adds Dawson. "Now I'm 21. So we've been at this for a while now." The band's members grew up in the same village in Nottingham, but they were never friends. However, they all shared a passion for "music, art, and general weirdness"

and gravitated toward each other. "We were all outsiders within our own groups," admits Eastgate. "Then we decided to make our own group to be even more outside the group."

While teaching themselves to play instruments, Eastgate waited tables and saved up

music was far more rebellious."

"We didn't want to follow the same route everyone else was taking—either leave school at 16, work in a factory, be a layabout, or never leave school," adds Dawson. The more they wrote and played, the better their songs sounded. "We work really strangely," explains

enjoying success on the under 18 band circuit. Nowadays, their funky, off-kilter tunes attract ravers, indie kids and "old people." *Ahem*. Dawson says the shows often go "fantastically right," but Potter says sometimes they "go very wrong or ways we never expect. We're all quite sensitive and wear our hearts on our sleeves."

While some bands their age might start believing the hype, LOTP seem grounded, and their working-class roots allow them keep their ego in check. "We're a young band, and we're still learning. Everything we do isn't definitive—it might work or might not work out, and that's kind of exciting," says Dawson.

Potter puts down his beer beside him, leans forward and wants to sum up it all up. "I think what people find attractive about us is that we don't know who we are, and we don't want to say who we are. We almost don't want to find out who were are just yet. We want to be in this exciting, wondrous stage forever." A band who balances talent with humility? The time is definitely right for Late of the Pier.

"I think what people find attractive about us is that we don't know who we are, and we don't want to say who we are. We almost don't want to find out who were are just yet. We want to be in this exciting, wondrous stage forever."

enough cash to buy an MPC. The relic sequencer became an integral part of LOTP's sound, which they use for textural purposes. Meanwhile, Potter discovered a new musical world thanks to Napster. "It was magical to sit down and burn a new CD every day. Everyone at school was into Green Day, and I thought that was bollocks. I discovered John Coltrane, Squarepusher, and Aphex Twin. To me, all of that

Potter. "Sam is the main writer and lead vocalist. The [songs] go through a lot of processes. So now we have final album versions, and while we're a new band to you, we're actually quite an old band."

Once Potter got his driver's license, LOTP began gigging and accepted every offer over a one-year period. Embraced immediately by the London scene, they soon found themselves with a record deal after