

## **Drivin' N' Cryin'**

### **Drivin' N' Cryin' -- A Brief History**

#### **1985**

drivin' n' cryin' plays its first show at the 688 Club in October, winning over skeptical Nightporters fans who wondered, "Who the hell is Kev(i)n and why is Tim playing with him?"

#### **1986**

688 owners love the band so much that they start a record label. *scarred but smarter*, recorded in five days with engineer George Pappas, comes out that fall and immediately causes a ruckus on the college radio charts.

#### **1987**

Island Records, trying to expand its U.S. A&R presence after its London office enjoys surprising success with The Long Ryders and The Rain Parade, signs drivin' n' cryin' and buys worldwide rights to *scarred but smarter*. Label executives immediately start complaining about the "confusing" apostrophes and lower-case band name.

That summer, the band records *Whisper Tames the Lion* in New York City with producer Anton Fier, who brings his own secret sauce (read "studio musicians) to the recording process. The result is a brilliant album that doesn't quite represent what the band was doing live.

#### **1988**

*Whisper Tames the Lion* comes out to widespread acclaim and college radio success. The band makes a video for "Can't Promise You the World" that gets played a couple of times on MTV's 120 Minutes. Results were promising, but not yet spectacular.

Everything changed when the band returned to Atlanta for a two-night stand at the legendary Cotton Club at the corner of 10th & Peachtree. Booked for a two-night stand in the 400-capacity club, response was overwhelming. The club ignored code (Atlanta fire marshals didn't make the kind of unannounced visits that were the plague of the LA club scene in the 80s) and crammed 1500 customers into the room over the two nights. Atlanta's long-term love affair with drivin' n' cryin' was officially on.

Still, Island wasn't totally convinced the band had a future. While the band continued touring in the South, no decision about a new album was forthcoming until fall when R.E.M. surprised the label by offering drivin' n' cryin' an opening slot the next spring's *Green* tour if the band also had a new album to promote. Suddenly very interested in the drivin' n' cryin's future, Island scrambled to find a producer who could record the album in time for a March release.

After the label rejected drivin' n' cryin's request to work with the not-yet-famous Atlanta engineer Brendan O'Brien ("why would we hire the Georgia Satellites' old piano player?"), the band instead recorded *Mystery Road* with the guy that Island had just hired to produce demos for Roving Boy, a band fronted by Chris Blackwell's close personal friend Kevin Costner.

#### **1989**

*Mystery Road*, featuring "Honeysuckle Blue" and "Straight to Hell," got a rapturous reception from the band's fans, although Island was incredibly pissed off when drivin' n' cryin' insisted on opening the album with the fiddle-heavy "Ain't It Strange." The R.E.M. tour was a great success and the band sold out Atlanta's massive Fox Theatre for the first time that July.

Despite some strong commercial airplay for "Honeysuckle Blue" in the South, Island still had doubts about its commitment to drivin' n' cryin's future. A compromise finally emerged: Island would allow Kevn to record a solo folk album if the band promised to severely curtail the "country shit" on its next album.

#### **1990**

Kevn Kinney releases *MacDougal Blues*, a solo album produced by Peter Buck that was chock full of mandolins, fiddles and acoustic guitar. Island executives are not-so-secretly relieved when Kevn and Peter's tour ends in April. Now it's showtime.

After an extensive producer search, the band settles on the legendary Andy Johns, widely beloved for his work with Television, Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones and secretly beloved by a faction in the band for his work with Rod Stewart and Cinderella. Ten days before the band was scheduled to begin recording in Memphis, Johns called with terrible news: he was incredibly ill and his doctor forbade him to travel from Los Angeles. Fortunately for Andy, he was able to recuperate that summer by lying on a sofa in the control room during the recording of Van Halen's *For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge*. Van Halen was so inspired by Andy's recovery that they awarded him producer credit on the album.

Scrambling now, drivin' n' cryin' had a stroke of luck when they hired the not-quite-as-famous-but-ever-more-reliable Geoff Workman (who had engineered Queen and The Cars for Roy Thomas Baker and later produced Ian McLagan and Journey) to produce *Fly Me Courageous*. After a summer-long recording session in Memphis, Drivin N Cryin agreed to capitalize its name and drop those damn apostrophes; the stage was set for a huge year to follow.

### 1991

*Fly Me Courageous*, loud, propulsive and remarkably free of that "country shit," was released January 8, 1991. "Fly Me Courageous" (the song) became a massive rock radio hit, in no small part driven by the (true) story that Navy pilots were listening to cassettes on the song in their cockpits as they bombed Baghdad during Operation Desert Storm. Both the "Fly Me Courageous" and "Build a Fire" videos were played in regular rotation on MTV and the album went gold on the back of a long tour that peaked with a three-night sellout of Fox Theatre back home in Atlanta.

### 1992

During the summer of 1992, Drivin N Cryin reconvened in Atlanta with producer Geoff Workman to record *Smoke*, a record written and recorded in direct response to the current vogue for "punk" music made by closet metalheads from the Pacific Northwest. Declaring "You want punk, you punk? Let's talk about the real junk," *Smoke* was a defiant howl of protest against the flannel plague. After years of getting asked when they were going to stop being so alternative and finally open the Aerosmith tour, now Drivin N Cryin was being told to go stand over there in music jail with Slaughter, Tattoo Rodeo and all the other metal bands.

### 1993

*Smoke* gets off to a strong commercial start but quickly fades. Extensive touring fails to revive the album. Since Island had been folded into Polygram Label Group, the band had few personal relationships at the label. By mutual agreement, Drivin N Cryin was off the roster by the end of the year.

### 1994

drivin' n' cryin' quickly reclaims its original spelling and signs to Geffen Records, much to the shock of everyone at Island. They relocate to California to record with John Porter, producer of the Smiths.

### 1995

drivin' n' cryin' delivers *Wrapped in Sky* to Geffen. Unfortunately, Kevn neglected to write any uptempo "rawk" songs in the vein of the singles from *Fly Me Courageous*. Geffen, deep in the throes of a "What Would Kim Gordon Do?" mania and desperately trying to be the hippest major label (a mass hallucination that led directly to the label's demise just four years later), released the album but pretended they didn't know anyone in the band.

### 1997

Bloodied but unbowed, the band returned to its independent roots with the self-titled *drivin n cryin*, the band's name now mysteriously missing its apostrophes. Recorded back home in Atlanta with former Clash manager Kosmo Vinyl, the record's success led to extensive touring with The Who.

### 2001

After a long break, Tim, Mac and Dave join Kevn in Hoboken, NJ for a recording session that will eventually be released on Kevn's *Broken Hearts and Auto Parts* solo CD. The sessions go so well that the band reconvenes in Atlanta in September to record demos for a new drivin' n' cryin' album. Plans for the album were abandoned after the September 11th attacks, but the reconstituted band slowly begins playing shows together.

### 2007

Several years overdue, Kevn has surgery to remove nodes from his vocal chords. The recovery is a surprisingly fast one and his voice sounds better than it has since the early days of the band. Serious discussions about a new album start at the end of the year.

### 2009

After making deals with local Atlanta label Vintage Earth Music and Nashville marketing and distribution company Thirty Tigers, Drivin' N' Cryin' records (*Whatever Happened to the) Great American Bubble Factory* at Sonica Studios in Atlanta, reuniting with *Whisper Tames the Lion* producer Anton Fier and ex-manager James Barber for the sessions.

### 2010

Drivin N Cryin performs more shows this year than they have in a decade. Fans and critics alike hail the band's renewed energy and creative output. Work begins on the definitive film documentary of DNC's 25 year career with Atlanta's Rock 100.5 The Regular Guys' Eric Von Haessler at the helm. Videos for 'Detroit City' and 'I See Georgia' generate new fans and remind old fans why DNC is a must-see-live sensation.

## 2011

The State of Georgia honors Drivin n Cryin on March 10 with Resolution 387, recognizing the band for it's charity, longevity, service, and cultural contribution. Sadler Vaden, voted Charleston, SC's Best Guitar Player 2011, replaces Mac Carter on lead guitar. With deep roots in soul, punk, rock and jazz idioms, Sadler's stunning guitar playing and vocal abilities breathe new life into Drivin N Cryin. Fans and critics alike attest to a renewed energy and direction for Drivin N Cryin's music and career. Plans are laid for a new record.... The road beckons once again...

## 2012

Drivin N Cryin signs a distribution deal with Redeye and begins the process of creating and recording material for 4 EPs to be released over a 12 month period. The band drops its long-time booking agent to sign on with the William Morris Endeavor, a global entity with deep resources and long arms. EP#1 '**Songs From The Laundromat**' is given a June 12 release date. Produced by Kevn Kinney, this 5 song collection was recorded in Atlanta, GA with 'Great American Bubble Factory' alumnus John Briglevich. EP#2 '**Songs About Cars, Space & The Ramones**' is tracked in Nashville with super-producer Paul Ebersold at the helm. Intending to record 5 songs in 2 days, the band actually lays down tracks for 11 songs in 2 days! 'SACS&theR' is given a September 18, 2012 release date.

To be continued...