

GLENN RICHARDS

Why a solo album? A question nobody has asked me yet but one I'll answer with all due defensive posture. May as well ask "why an album at all?", an even better and more probing question, and even less likely to be asked than the original. Because it's not really a solo album, it's another album of songs written by me that happens to feature other players and a deliberately low rent approach to the making. It's "Glenn Richards" because I was too dumb to call Augie March that in the first place. I could be almost middle class by now had I done that.

I've talked to my brother Chris, Dan Luscombe and Mike Noga about doing something together for years and happily we've just done it. To make things easy I'll give a short bio of each member of the cast:

Chris Richards: Older brother of me by 11 months, was learning the second solo from Metallica's "Orion" out the back of our Kialla block while I was memorising an economical response to Les Murray's "Broad Bean Sermon" and trying to hold down my Weet Bix before my HSC. Knows my tastes better than I do and can imprint them with greater acuity than I can on a song. Loves four track recordings as do I, thinks everything should be recorded so, and that all film should be 8mm, as do I. Plays in Hobart band Dust and wrote and played the music for two The Beautiful Few records among other things. Has two kids, lives in Hobart and is always tired. An invaluable presence on the record.

Mike Noga: Another Hobart lad, I first saw Mike singing behind a kit and wearing a Carlton jumper at The Arthouse which should have been two reasons to hate him on the spot. But the Tasmanian in me identified with his disability and the mainlander in me just felt sorry for him. Has since gone on to make records as himself, a Gentleman of Fortune, and a globetrotting Drone who had a long breakfast with Crispin Glover. Not afraid of random fills, terrified of toms but will hit them if he has to, thinks time is a magazine, smokes two cigarettes at once, plays like a songwriter because he is one. Perfect drummer.

Ben Bourke: In one of the trades of the season, team Richards

managed to offload a substance (beer) abusing guitarist to team Ned Colette in return for a very slightly red headed bass player called Ben Bourke. While team Ned Colette foraged for scraps of gig in Europe, Ben laid down some of the tastiest lines we've heard for a while in the arctic space of a Fairfield warehouse. It was at a speakeasy in the same space a couple of months before that Ben and I held forth on the merits of Iron Maiden's Steve Harris. The offers went out the next day and my people got their man in what I think was a coup along the lines of a Judd to Carlton, but without the cardboard money chucked in. A rare talent who insisted we pause the recording to watch Gillard's speech. It seemed to me there was a faint cheezel glow in the room, emanating from the bass corner.

Dan Luscombe: Obviously one of the great talents of a generation, Dan is currently another Drone who has done time in countless outfits, chief among them The Blackeyed Susans and whatever 80 piece cacophony Spencer Jones had together early last decade. Ever in demand it's hard to even get a word in to Dan so it was with great relief that I paid off every other songwriter in Melbourne for the Winter to piss off and leave my boy alone. He knows what's good for him anyway. Our first acquaintance was Augie March's roughly 15th gig when we were first up supporting The Church at the Palace. The Susans were main support and after trembling through a forgotten half hour Dan, very politely, remarked to us "That was really...messy." Of course it was meant as a compliment and each time he repeated it during the recording I took it as such.

That should do. Maybe a quick picture of the process - we set up in a warehouse the size of a skating rink, rehearsed and recorded 19 songs over a month, although with the many technical hitches I can safely say we probably did 19 in 19. A fair achievement and not without cost to health and sanity. I'm in the middle of vocals now and it feels like there's an electric razor shaving the inside of my neck, and I can't remember ever swearing so much when I'm talking to myself on the street. It's rough and ready but not without ambition and some finesse. Like most of the Augie stuff it ain't hip, but I hope it's got some legs to out-stroll the sprinting ninnies on Cool Street.

Cheers, GAR 13th July 2010