



**THE WHISTLES & THE BELLS,
ALT-ROCK MONIKER OF ACCLAIMED SONGWRITER AND
MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST BRYAN SIMPSON,
RETURNS WITH SOPHOMORE LP *MODERN PLAGUES***

OUT TODAY VIA NEW WEST RECORDS

EAST COAST TOUR STARTS IN NASHVILLE THIS SUNDAY, APRIL 30

“The Whistles and the Bells’ 2nd album is a winner...The elimination of genre limitations allows [Simpson] to explore every color of the musical rainbow, with exhilarating results.”

[ASSOCIATED PRESS](#)

“...the 11-track set feels like the product of a more sanguine, Fun-loving Father John Misty.”

[ALLMUSIC](#)

“[Simpson’s] original off-the-wall undertakings are reminiscent of the whimsical and whip-smart work by David Byrne, Jim James and the Decemberists’ Colin Meloy...The lyrics will make you think until your head explodes.” **[HUFFINGTON POST](#)**

The Whistles & the Bells, alt-rock moniker of acclaimed singer, songwriter, producer, and multi-instrumentalist Bryan Simpson, returns today with his sophomore album *Modern Plagues* via New West Records. The record is available now digitally, on CD and LP [HERE](#). Already gaining considerable critical praise, **Associated Press** calls *Modern Plagues* a “winner” in a must-read comprehensive review that states, “This is the sound of freedom...Simpson’s enormous toolbox includes tuba and harp, big drums and a flute solo, hip-hop, klezmer, topical lyrics and wordless ‘la-la-la’s.’ An EDM groove propels ‘Zombie Heartz,’ while a fat bass steers ‘Year of the Freak Out’ toward classic R&B. A synthesizer echoes Simpson’s vocal on ‘Good Drugs,’ and ‘Small Time Criminals’ connects the French Quarter with Appalachia. These aren’t just random whistles and bells. Hooks abound, tying the cornucopia of noise together, and Simpson’s social commentary provides further glue.” **AllMusic** adds, “That Simpson can keep so many disparate balls in the air (chamber pop, Americana, progressive folk, electro-soul, etc.) is impressive enough, but that he can make so much of that chaos compelling is the real trick.” AllMusic also premiered a full stream of the album last week; and **The Huffington Post** previously revealed the “inventive” music video for album track “Good Drugs” praising, “[Simpson’s] original off-the-wall undertakings are reminiscent of the whimsical and whip-smart work by David Byrne, Jim James and the Decemberists’ Colin Meloy.” View/share the Neighborhoods Apart-produced video [HERE](#).

Collaborations on *Modern Plagues* include co-writes with The Raconteurs' Brendan Benson that resulted in such out-of-the-box tunes as album standout "Zombie Hertz." Nashville indie blog [East of 8th](#) premiered the "bold and buzzy" track earlier this week commenting, "[Simpson] is never one to shy away from difficult subjects in his music as he makes searing observations on the status quo," continuing, "It has been said that the first step in solving a problem is admitting there is one in need of solving; brutally honest but never preachy, Simpson uses his signature whip-smart lyrical style to startle us, because once we are aware, we can get to work."

Another Benson co-write, the music video for lead single "Harry Potter" premiered at **American Songwriter** with the initial announcement of the new album. Of the song, they state, "A retro pop tune with strong '80s influences, the video for this track feels like something you would see a teenage Molly Ringwald starring in. Sung from the perspective of a teenage girl, 'Harry Potter' highlights what many young adults long for but unfortunately cannot find as they grow older: childhood innocence and simplicity." View/share the Joshua Shoemaker-produced video [HERE](#).

Co-produced by Simpson and engineer Eddie Spear (Judah & the Lion, Lake Street Dive, Rival Sons), *Modern Plagues*' 11 expansive tracks find Simpson delivering eye-opening lyrical insights and audacious verbal imagery, while displaying a freewheeling sonic sensibility that draws inspiration from a bottomless well of genres and textures. The album follows The Whistles & the Bells' 2014 self-titled debut, which gained an impressive amount of acclaim as an indie release and led to a larger re-release and record deal with New West Records. Prior to launching The Whistles & the Bells, Simpson had already won substantial success as a bluegrass mandolinist, serving a seven-year, three-album stint with the acclaimed progressive-bluegrass quartet Cadillac Sky. The band's broad-minded collaborations with both bluegrass legend Ricky Skaggs and the Black Keys' Dan Auerbach eventually led to an in-demand spot on Mumford and Sons' 2010 North American Tour. Meanwhile, Simpson also carved out a lucrative sideline as a mainstream country songwriter, composing hit tracks for icons such as Tim McGraw, Blake Shelton, and George Strait.

Modern Plagues Track Listing:

1. Harry Potter
2. Small Time Criminals
3. Playing God
4. Zombie Hertz
5. Highlight Reel
6. Spiral Staircase
7. Year of the Freak Out
8. Good Drugs
9. Head in the Sand
10. Supadope
11. 40 Years

The Whistles & the Bells On Tour:

April 30 – Nashville, TN @ 3rd & Lindsley (WRLT's Nashville Sunday Night)

May 2 – Cleveland, OH @ Beachland Tavern

May 3 – Pittsburgh, PA @ Club Cafe

May 4 – Buffalo, NY @ 189 Public House

May 5 – Rochester, NY @ Abilene

May 6 – Syracuse, NY @ Funk n' Waffles

May 7 – Asbury, NJ @ The Saint

May 9 – New York, NY @ Mercury Lounge

May 10 – Cambridge, MA @ Atwood's Tavern

May 11 – Philadelphia, PA @ World Cafe Upstairs

May 12 – Washington, DC @ Hill Country Live

www.TheWhistlesAndTheBells.com

www.NewWestRecords.com

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