

www.crookedfiddleband.com



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"The Crooked Fiddle Band are completely surprising. The music is original and quixotic, and yet has the strength of some deep and strong roots. I can't say I've ever heard anything else like it!"

Brian Eno

Having built a remarkable word of mouth reputation as one of Australia's most intense live music experiences, 'chainsaw folk' vigilantes The Crooked Fiddle Band are set to bring their unique, incendiary sound to Europe for the first time this summer to promote their debut stunning new album *Overgrown Tales*.

Driven by the beautiful and furious fiddling of Jess Randall, and underpinned by a rhythm section featuring Gordon Wallace (bouzouki, guitar, banjo, mandolin), Mark Stevens (double bass, Appalachian dulcimer, charango) and Joe Gould (drum kit, hand percussion, garbage bin, vocals) the Crooked Fiddle Band sound blasts, rocks and grooves to the point of dementia, compelling listeners into a joyous frenzy.

Fresh from recording their debut long player in Chicago with legendary engineer **Steve Albini (Nirvana, The Pixies, Joanna Newsom, Gogol Bordello, PJ Harvey)**, the band are now ready to hit the road across Europe and *Overgrown Tales* truly captures their no-holds-barred live sound.

Combining stunning musicianship with a rhythm and energy aimed straight at romantic hearts and dancing feet, the Crooked Fiddle Band intertwine folk traditions with modern evolutions and have impressed all who have encountered them such as Damien Dempsey who they have supported and Brian Eno, who invited the band to participate in his *Luminous Festival* at the Sydney Opera House.

"For us, there is a direct link between folk traditions and blast beats: it is the unstoppable energy, that intensity that hits you in the chest and forces you to move," says The Crooked Fiddle Band's Gordon Wallace. *"Chainsaw folk" is our attempt to craft a new beast from these influences – coherent but mutated and we can't wait to hit Europe hard this summer."*

Overgrown Tales roams across a wide range of styles and influences yet maintains an intense, vivid energy and Joe Gould from the band describes the new album as “*Like finding a folk tale deep in the forest, rooted in tradition but with the newest of shoots and a few thorns.*”

Album opener *Countess Bathory's Finishing School for Girls* is a song inspired by the real life story of a bloodthirsty Hungarian noblewoman whose finishing school tended to finish people in entirely the wrong way and if there were a party to celebrate her demise, it may well have sounded like this: a raw, acoustic, ecstatic celebration of whirling fiddles and pounding rhythms.

Track two *The Ruination of Junkyard Joe* meanwhile charts the rack and ruin of hobo Junkyard Joe as he discovers the trickery of a beautiful woman - and the ensuing farcical chase that follows. Partly inspired by an encounter with such a hobo character who offered to bite off drummer Joe's ear whilst on tour and partly an alternate take on the misadventure of Brer Rabbit that lands him in the briarpatch (himself an incarnation of Anansi, a Ghanaian trickster spider character of folklore).

Next up *Clockwork Bride* sees the band strip back the groove with the soundtrack to a mad scientist winding up his creation and setting her loose - as the riffs whirl around, it's obvious that maybe the bride has a few cogs in the wrong place. The inclusion of a mutate-ilated traditional Romanian melody "Joc Tiganesc de Doi" adds an unsteady step and manic determination to the awakened bride's designs.

Clockwork Bride is then followed up by *All these Pitchforks Make Me Nervous*, a song the band describe as “What happens when the hillbillies of the world turn the tables and start abducting extraterrestrials!” Combining footstompin' fiddling and otherworldly rhythms, with echoes of sci-fi soundtracks and some barnyard sounds, it's a gathering of farming implements enough to make any alien nervous.

Then comes *The Mountain Hag's Advice* with a violin riff bristling with dark energy that reflects despair and frustration - a mountain quest and a haunting vocal melody offering only empty, wordless miswisdom that was partly inspired by grey, rainy ramblings in a mountain range in Ireland.

Beneath Ash and Ocean then immerses the listener in a rich violin harmony with added string players, which tells a tale of stillness, ancient sadness and something long lost under the waves.

Penultimate track *Over Hill and Under Hill* then takes up the heroic tale of a journey to both light and dark places with joy and danger in equal measure. Jess introduces the little known Swedish instrument, the nyckelharpa, to help create a rustic folk epic that rises to blasting urgency and a full band rhythmic peak. The title was taken from the 4th chapter of J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Hobbit" having previously been conceived by the working title "The Hobbit's Breakfast".

Then finally bringing the curtain down on a truly remarkable listen is *What the Thunder Said* which begins with first delicate drops and gentle showers of a string band (mandolin, bouzouki, charango and guitar) before steadily growing into a maelstrom of hail and lightning, which eventually passes, revealing calm destruction and a time for renewal. The outro includes the sound of the band's drummer, Joe, shovelling snow from Chicago's worst blizzard in 15 years out of the alleyway behind Steve Albini's Electrical Audio studio and is a fitting climax to the album. The track is named after the fifth, and final, section of T.S. Elliot's dark, apocalyptic poem 'The Wasteland'.

Daring, heartfelt and sounding as fresh as a spring morning after a thunder storm, The Crooked Fiddle Band look set to bring a whole new audience to the music they love while simultaneously inspiring jubilation amongst folk devotees and *Overgrown Tales* will take root and spout in the minds of listeners wherever it is heard.

Overgrown Tales can be listened to on the band's website www.crookedfiddleband.com/music and is available on iTunes, emusic, bandcamp and CD Baby.

What people are saying about The Crooked Fiddle Band:

"This band really is a national treasure and testament to the infinite talent that keeps manifesting in our backyard... this group has reinvented folk music as it is known"

Vanessa Lahey, Australian Stage

"Crooked Fiddle Band continue their musical manifesto, rallying around the incendiary fiddle of Jess Randall to make music that will make punks tango, grandmas mosh and metal heads hoe-down."

Lucky Oceans, ABC Radio

"So this is what Sepultura sound like in a parallel universe where they're a travelling gypsy band. It's the soundtrack to a hyperactive version of 'O Brother, Where Art Thou?' Awesome!"

Dom Alessio, Triple J Radio

European Tour Dates:

18/06/2011 Ulmer Zelt Festival, Ulm, Germany
25/06/2011 Arteganza Festival, Amersfoort, Netherlands
01/07/2011 TFF Rudolstadt, Rudolstadt, Germany
02/07/2011 TFF Rudolstadt, Rudolstadt, Germany
03/07/2011 TFF Rudolstadt, Rudolstadt, Germany
06/07/2011 The Clipper, Camborne, Cambridgeshire, UK
07/07/2011 Jacob's Ladder, Falmouth, Cornwall, UK
08/07/2011 Wattsfest, Devon, UK
09/07/2011 The Bike Shed, Exeter, UK
10/07/2011 Chichester Festival, West Sussex, UK
11/07/2011 Lichfield Festival, Staffordshire, UK
12/07/2011 Lichfield Festival, Staffordshire, UK
13/07/2011 Hare and Hounds, King's Heath, Birmingham UK
14/07/2011 The Fleece, Bristol, UK
15/07/2011 The Garage, Kentish Town, London, UK

For more information

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Also watch The Crooked Fiddle Band here:

The Rom Rebellion: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ex-D9_TmRVg

The Milkman: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dq_4LYohOf0

Bohemian Masquerade Ball: <http://www.vimeo.com/15417327>