

With these workshops in Australia, is this the first time you've offered these?

Yeah, this is the first time.

Judging from the responses of the people who attended, it was greatly appreciated.

It's really good, I'm really pleased with it. It gives me something to work on.

Even if they weren't a percussionist, they were still able to take something away from these workshops?

Yeah, that's what we gear the workshops towards, for everybody, all musicians to hear how to break the music down, rebuild it and try different ideas. And also, to do a bit more research into their own areas of specialization. Drummers research a bit more rhythms from different parts of the globe. It's all music man, a universal language.

I could definitely take something away as a sax player.

Yes, good. That's excellent.

That loose jam.

That's how it's supposed to be.

The music is making me sit there and think, what are the licks that I could put over the top, playing along.

Yeah, brilliant.

It was really enjoyable. So where on from Australia?

We're off to Bangkok. We've got one gig in Bangkok and then where finished. We've been everywhere, man. Covered the whole of Europe, apart from America. We didn't do America this time around, the album, A Funk Odyssey was released on that fateful day, September 11th, so that put pain to that album in America.

So, is there anyone on tour that you would like to collaborate with, anybody caught your eye?

Not yet, so I'm hoping next time we come, there'll be that. Although, I met some people in Sydney, a guy who runs the club Hemisphere and an establishment, called Tank. Basically, the last time when we were here, I composed some music after spending a night in this club called Tank and really enjoyed myself and I composed this piece of music and I played it to him on Thursday and he really liked it, so he was very interested, in maybe, doing some recording collaboration.

So, what's planned for the future. Is Jamiroquai a full-time gig for you?

It has been a full-time gig. At the end of the year, Jay's going to take a really well deserved break, which will be good for us, we're also going to have a break. I'll be working on some of my own material, doing some more workshops in the UK, some work in Europe with some different artists, so I'm going to keep myself busy. Not as busy as I've been with Jamiroquai, but busy enough to keep the playing together. Associate with different artists and get some fresh ideas.

Is there any truth in the rumor that the band is splitting up? I've seen in the press, that the numbers are dwindling.

No, it's change, that's what it is. It's evolution. New musicians come, new people they're always hungry people out there who are ready to play and Jay, at the end of the day, is interested in playing. He loves playing live, he feeds off of a live

performance, he composes during a live performance, so he needs highly responsive musicians and that takes time. You know, as a saxophonist, that you've got to improvise on the spot, change things around, reinterpret things and react to the moment. That's what Jay likes, so he needs a change of musicians.

Everybody just wants to know how many cars the man has and who he's with now, whereas, we all just want to talk about the music.

It takes the next album into a new direction.

Yeah, exactly.

Musical evolution.

And unless people in the band are also growing and evolving in the same way, then you kind of filter off and you know, Toby is doing his own thing, Stuart is doing his own thing. That's how it works, man.

So, for the next album, in the break that Jay's taking in the next 12 months, you can't stop yourself, as a musician, from writing and having ideas. Would you consider [to the delight of fans starting earlier?]

Possibly, yeah, possibly. If he gets the inspiration, if he gets the ideas, I think he could do that, at least start writing and developing compositions earlier. So that is a strong possibility.

Like you said before and Derrick said earlier, the next album will take on that classic, organic sound. Does that mean that there will be a new format to the album? The lengths of tracks increase, 5 tracks instead of 10/12 that run 10 minutes each?

No, I think Jay will still go for the 10 -- 12 tracks. Like Derrick said, I think it will be less sequenced, less computers and more live, more of the band. Which is a good thing as that's what the band, that's what Jamiroquai did to burst on the scene, because it's live energy.

And that in turn will let the live performances, when you're touring, take on that different flavor?

Exactly.

Because you're working out those longer, more organic sounds in the studio. Then you take it on the road.

You stretch it.

You stretch it a lot more and also add to it, and take away from it.

That's exactly what we do.

Which is great for the band and great for the audience.

It has that element of surprise.

Yeah.

Oh my god, they've rearranged that. Like, main vein today, we played it slightly different. [Laughs]

So people, in that respect, could sit in on a couple of nights of the same tour and see something different, it has a little different mix to it.

Yeah, yeah.

After reading other media vehicles, like newspapers, radio, TV, etcetera, interviewers seem to only be interested in Jay's offstage interests.

Yeah.

You know, who's dating who, what's going on in the press.

I know, I know.

Very few just talk about the music, which is what everyone is essentially here to do. So being able to get past all that and dig beneath the surface, has been really good.

Yeah, good Joel. And it's great for us. Everybody just wants to know how many cars the man has and who he's with now, whereas, we all just want to talk about the music, let's talk about the music. How we can make it better, how we can make it simpler, how we can make it more powerful. That's what it is: a powerful, powerful vehicle.

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