

# TORCHING TRAILS

Californian indie pop trio **FOSTER THE PEOPLE** has sprung far up the ladder since their debut studio album *Torches* last year, with lead single 'Pumped Up Kicks' blazing the path for misty dance floor magic. Julailah Wahid dives deeper into the band's friendship and hopes for 2012 with gifted bassist Cubbie Fink.

INTERVIEW COURTESY OF SONY MUSIC

PHOTOS BY JOSEPH LLANES, CHUGG ENTERTAINMENT & ALOYSIUS LIM



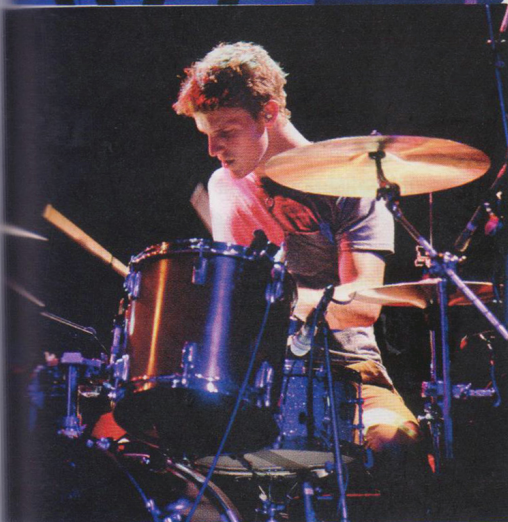
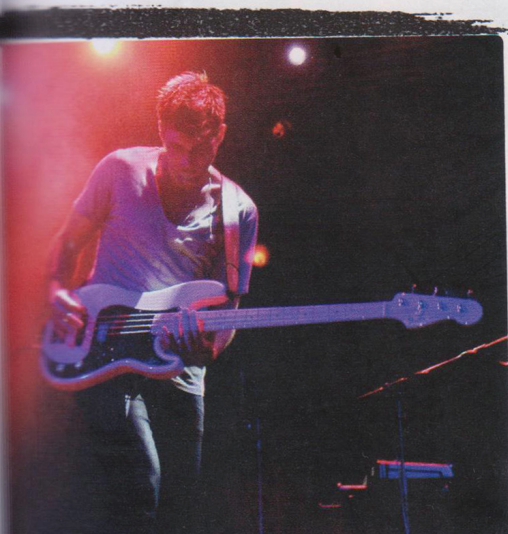
The band's breakout single, 'Pumped Up Kicks' first garnered attention when founding member Mark Foster, who wrote and recorded the track in five hours, posted it on his website as a free download. After which, *Nylon* magazine as well as popular TV collectives like *Gossip Girl*, *The Vampire Diaries* and *Entourage* adopted the catchy ditty, resulting in a chain of global followers. This sanguine bunch, comprising Mark Foster (lead vocals, keyboard), Cubbie Fink (bass, backing vocals) and Mark Pontius (drums, percussion), has experienced

immense success, even performing on *Saturday Night Live* in October last year and receiving Grammy nominations like Best Pop Duo/Group Performance for 'Pumped Up Kicks' alongside Best Alternative Music Album for *Torches*.

Held at Fort Canning Park, their sold-out show here saw an enthusiastic crowd of 3,500 partying and singing along to massive jams like 'Houdini', 'Call It What You Want' and 'I Would Do Anything For You'. Seeing how much the band has been

through this past year, we were pleased to be greeted with a very laidback and amiable lad in the form of Cubbie Fink pre-concert. Towering over us in a simple jeans and t-shirt combo, Cubbie seemed excited about being in Singapore, even showing relish for the local spicy fried rice dish he had earlier on. When asked if 2012 signified a sophomore album release for the band, the charming bassist appeared optimistic, stating that the band would have a lot more time to focus on a new album this year after completing tours by June.





**YOU GUYS HAVE ENJOYED A WHIRLWIND OF SUCCESS IN 2011. HOW HAVE YOU EVOLVED AS A BAND AS WELL AS INDIVIDUALLY?**

It's cool to see that after spending an entire year together, we're much closer now and better friends than in the beginning. We've really progressed a lot as a band. We got to see the world and experience so many different cultures. Anytime that you're able to get out from what you know as reality, really broadens your perspective on life.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR BAND'S STYLE, BOTH VISUALLY AND MUSIC WISE?**

Many people say that we've got a Californian sound. That definitely wasn't something we set out to create. But I think just living in California by the beach has sort of affected the art that we create. It's more of a subconscious thing.

**WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO WRITE AND PLAY MUSIC?**

Just living life – taking in the experiences and letting them affect you, seeing what comes out. Being creative is a really interesting process because it is letting something inside of you out so that creativity can manifest in many different ways. Being creative in music allows you to portray so much of who you are in just a sound or lyric. Relationships and cultural or life experiences are where we mainly draw our inspirations from.

**WHICH SONG ON *TORCHES* DO YOU FEEL MOST STRONGLY ABOUT?**

I really like 'I Would Do Anything For You'. It was actually one of the first songs I had heard by Mark (Foster). He was writing songs for a really long time and he had a few that were close to being finished when we met. That song just really stood out to me. The original version he showed me is much different from the current one in

*Torches*. We reworked it in the studio as a band, which was a really fun process.

**WHAT'S ONE THING YOU CAN TELL US ABOUT MARK FOSTER THAT NOBODY KNOWS?**

Mark is definitely nocturnal. He's absolutely at his best from the hours of 2am to 6am. That's when his brain is the most active. At wee hours in the morning, he'll be like, "Hey, let's go hang out!" and I'll be absolutely beat while he is all ready to go.

**HOW DIFFERENT ARE ASIAN FANS FROM ALL THE OTHERS?**

We've performed at Jakarta and then KL just last night. The support was through the roof. Fans were going absolutely nuts. It was a pretty wild experience being on the other side of the world and having fans sing along to your music. The one big difference I must point out between Asian fans as opposed to the ones back home is that they sing really well! They're all singing on-key and aloud, it's pretty awesome.

**HOW DO YOU GUYS USUALLY GET ALL PUMPED UP FOR A PERFORMANCE?**

We've had Youtube parties plenty of times before a show. We just go through and watch a bunch of random, funny Youtube videos. It's not necessarily a routine but it has happened a lot.

**WE FORESEE THE BAND GOING REALLY FAR THIS YEAR. WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR 2012?**

I didn't make any resolutions for 2012 but I do have an idea of what I want. Last year, it was really difficult to get exercise and be healthy while on the road. So I'm trying to go out of my way this year to eat better and exercise as much as I can. For the band, our biggest goal is to continue making music. Our second album is definitely a goal we're working towards.