

Who are Free Party?

The Leeds music scene appears to be filled with bands trying to do the same thing. Loud, shouty spoken word, post-punk melodies and a lot of them trying to be the next Yard Act or Squid. That is according to the alt-rock band, Free Party, who are breaking out of the current Yorkshire mould to bring more of an eclectic sounding performance to the gig goers of Leeds.

With the members all meeting by chance either at college or concerts, the five-piece formed their current lineup in early 2022. Setting out at first to be a post-punk band, Free Party made a collective decision to try and do something that would help to set them apart from the oversaturation of the spoken word genre in the current Leeds music scene. In a discussion about the band's new choice of genre, they said; 'Everyone's doing the kind of post-punk talking singing and we're just a bit sick of that now. Brad's voice suits that sort of singing style, [it's] not really made for shouting'.

Alt-rock is their genre of choice as they continue to experiment and claim to have a Cure-like feel to their new sound. With influences spanning the blues, the New York rock scene, Geese and Deftones, you can hear the range of inspiration come together in their soon-to-be-released single Ghosts. Debut single, Before, kicked the boys off to a strong start as their ideas for something different began to grow. Moving into their latest release, Joe's Song, the diverse choice of guitars used shows how they take inspiration from their idols and elevate it into something that sounds true to Free Party. A wall of sound surrounds the vocal melody during the chorus but gives it the time to shine in each verse. Hearing for the first time makes the listener experience teenage nostalgia, a time when 'we knew nothing'.

At a DIY art show organised by the band, Free Party played to a packed out room. With half smiles and grumpy-looking faces on a brightly lit stage, the sound and ambience of their first song, Silver Screen, felt like Jesus and the Mary Chain if they were fronted by Thom Yorke. Notably, the drummer entered the stage wearing just a denim jacket, tie and jeans. Certainly a bold move. The outfit soon lost the brightly decorated jacket and swapped in a pair of cool sunglasses, making him look more mysterious as he passionately bashed the cymbals at the back of the stage.

Each Free Party song builds off of a single riff created by lead guitarist, Joe, whose biggest musical influences include Sonic Youth and King Krole. The instrumental is constructed first and then sent to vocalist, Brad, who writes what he feels to the music and fits his melodies into the mix. Drummer, Henry, takes his much inspiration from infamous Buzzcocks member Danny Farrant, who not only inspired him to pick up the instrument but also taught him how to play. 'Matthew Tong is a big influence as well. His fast drum fills and how quick everything is just amazing'.

Post-punk-inspired instrumental with melodic vocals leads many to make the comparison to shoegaze. Slowdive sprung to mind during their live set as three guitarists brought an

unexpected layer we never knew we needed. 'I think Interpol are one of the most underrated bands of all time' the bassist remarked while discussing the band's influences.

A free party is defined as an illegally organised rave according to the Urban Dictionary. So why choose the name Free Party? 'Me and Brad used to go to free parties when we were younger. I think we were 16 or 17. In the rural areas of Sheffield, there's loads of free parties and raves in the middle of the woods. We said at the time that a free party would fit as a band name' and when the opportunity presented itself, named their band after their teenage adventures.