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Making Ground & Standing Fast by morgaga

You will most probably remember their whimsical ditty about ‘... car crashes, tv shows, a drunkard on the side of the road, people running.’ Now who can make that sort of lyrics and get away with a top hit in Singapore? The answer - the new-on-the-scene but old-at-the-trade pop duo Standfast.

The partnership known as Standfast consists of namely the lovely lead singer Suzanne Mosson and the charming instrumentalist Patrick Tucker. This dynamic couple even made it to our shores to perform ‘live’ at the Hard Rock Café to a small intimate crowd of fans not so long ago. I was able to get a short chat with them before their little performance and garnered some very sincere and interesting tidbits.

Before you start wondering about the name of their group, Standfast was actually derived from Patrick’s family name. According to Patrick, Standfast also means quite literally “standing up for yourself.” Suzanne also believes that Standfast is, “something consistent ... we don’t let people push us around, we know what we want - we *stand fast*.” Patrick then cheerfully quips, “In a positive way!”

As straightforward as that sounds, that’s how the group presents itself – with a no-nonsense and fulminating love for their music peppered with positive messages.

It might have been possibly quite apt that one of the names they wanted to choose for their debut album was ‘Coincidences’. Both Suzanne and Patrick have a Swedish mother and an English father, which has lent a unique influence to their music. Both spent their first years in England and ended up later in a quaint town by the name of Karlstad when their parents decided to move to Sweden. Both of them got involved with music at an early age like any aspiring musician and both of them moved to Stockholm in 1997 to get closer to the industry. It was only a matter of time before fate brought their parallel paths to a point and presented us with Standfast.

Their current self-titled debut album features 11 odes to their inspired lives and they have some very interesting lyrics to show for it. The runaway hit of many is also Patrick’s current personal favourite and ‘Carcresses’ starts off the album with a rather idyllic pace and conjures an image of Suzanne singing in a car, driving by and watching the scenes being mentioned in the song. Cryptic lyrics like ‘... creditcards, simplicity stress, go live your life on the internet...’ makes you wonder about what the group is trying to say but that is exactly what they are trying to achieve. Suzanne quotes, “When we write the lyrics, it always comes from our lives and our experiences and we like to write lyrics where you don’t explain everything. We like to leave it a bit open to

people to have their own interpretation.” So the group would actually like you to have a go at their meaning of life. Kinda like poetry. And that is maybe where the charm lies for the duo. Another experimental track is ‘Braincheck’ and although the music is a little offbeat with slightly zither-ish twangs and a digitized villain laughing in the background, the lyrics coax us to remove our strong shell and letting our inner vulnerabilities show.

There are other tracks which lend their radio-friendly way to our ears and ‘Morningcharm’, ‘No Longer’ (the original track which got them noticed by the people at EMI) and ‘Shine On’ are Standfast’s testaments that pop still rocks. Though upon first listening, these tunes are quite run-of-the-mill, you soon notice their different treatment and messages. ‘Morningcharm’ is chirpy yet lazy and reminds us of the simple pleasure of each other’s company. ‘No Longer’ starts off a bit more raw and the instrumentals in the background seem quite dated but that was an effect put to good use when the modern electronic beats and groove start making their way into the song mid-way. The lyrics are reminiscent and self-reproachful but brings a message of hope to all those wanting a second chance. ‘Shine On’ is the perfect track to play during stormy days and you’re cruising along in your car. The notes in the background tumble their way through the songs, raining their way into a determinedly cheerful track. It’s a personal favourite of mine that always bring a smile to my day.

The one outstanding track that is a little off-kilter is the last one. ‘Lullaby for Lucas’ is a slow (you guessed it) lullaby entry and does not try to be anything other than a tune to put a child to sleep. When asked about this rather bizarre addition to their album, Suzanne clarified matters. “Lucas is my godson. He’s four years old and he’s one of my best friend’s son.” Explaining further, she added, “We wanted to give him something special. We wrote a lullaby that he can have forever and he can pass it on to his kids.” Patrick even added that they had the score sheet and lyrics all framed up for the lucky little tyke.

So there you have it, Sweden/England’s latest offering giving us their debut effort full of hopes and dreams and that is essentially what Standfast wants to be associated with. In fact when asked to leave a message for our loyal readers, they unanimously chirp, “Live your dreams!” Seeing the gorgeous Suzanne with the sweetest voice nodding in unison with the talented, golden-tressed lanky Patrick, you can’t help but agree with this amiable duo that this kind of attitude (coupled with their musical talents) will bring them far.

Tech Facts:

1. Suzanne doesn’t think she is a gadget freak but she definitely thinks she can become one.
2. During the wintery months, Patrick’s mobile can actually dial up to his car and start up a heater in the vehicle!
3. Like true music lovers, the duo usually visit websites selling tickets to the coolest acts performing in their country. Other than that they usually get online to check their emails and stay in touch with their close friends and family.

4. They believe that Napster is a good thing to bring music into everyone's lives but they believe also in buying for the music that you want to keep. Nothing compares to the original.