

MERIWETHER

Drew Reilley – vocals/guitar

Stefon Bergeron – guitars

Joshua Barbier – bass

Brett Schexnayder - drums

“I try to be as straightforward as I can,” explains Meriwether singer Drew Reilley in his laid-back Louisiana lilt. “I think honesty is one of the biggest keys: let’s get to the point and have people connect immediately.”

Admirable sentiments – and Reilley is certainly one of the more unguarded musicians you’ll meet – but almost selling Meriwether’s music short. Though instantly enticing, their sophomore album (and major label debut), *Sons Of Our Fathers*, is also a multi-dimensional opus embracing influences both classic and contemporary; the collective expression of four very young men with very deep roots (the band is named after Meriwether Lewis, leader of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, of whom Reilley’s a direct descendant – seriously).

“All four of us listen to totally different music,” say Reilley. “We’re big closet metal-heads ... but Queen is one of my favorite bands and I grew up listening to Motown. Our guitarist grew up with a dad who still tours all over the world playing jazz piano.”

Meriwether’s diverse tastes is evident on *Sons Of Our Fathers*, which was recorded in L.A. with Grammy-nominated producer Howard Benson (My Chemical Romance, Three Days Grace etc.) and mixed by the similarly lauded Chris Lord-Alge (Underoath, AFI etc.). Both in-the-moment and of-the-ages, the album oozes the angst, urgency and chiming guitars of Meriwether’s skinny-jeaned contemporaries, but is built on timeless songwriting qualities: robust riffs; love-at-first-listen melodies; propulsive grooves; and Reilley’s evocatively tremulous, versatile voice.

Lyricaly, Reilley sticks to his to-the-point M.O. – to a point. There’s the unpretentious storytelling of “Girl In Mexico” (“She learns about herself and comes back to make up with her father”); and the almost self-explanatory “I Sleep Alone” (“A typical ‘I miss you’ type of song”) and “Can’t Get Over You” ; but also make-you-think curveballs like “Aye Julian” (“It’s about a relationship gone bad ... and Julian would actually be the child that never was born because the relationship never progressed”).

Aside from instilling Meriwether’s members with a palpable Southern pride, their home base of Baton Rouge, LA – hardly a music biz hub – has, out of necessity and sheer desire, shaped their bond as a band since their forming in 2003.

“We had to go where the industry is – that’s expensive and time-consuming. We’ve basically toured for three and a half years and I think that’s made us a much stronger band,” says Reilley. “Nothing was given to us ... and I think that makes us a more genuine and honest group of people.”

Not that Meriwether – who’re already Warped Tour veterans and have opened for everyone from The Starting Line and Armor For Sleep to Puddle of Mudd - are sick of the road. Far from it. “We’re definitely a live band ... it’s the rawest form of a band: it’s just us with all our guards down and guns blaring. We love to play and I love to be on tour – it’s almost *sick* how much I like to be on the road.”

For all their musical prowess and off-stage antics (“we really don’t care – we just have a good time”), it’s the depth of Meriwether as *people* that sets them apart and hints at longevity. Look no further than the *Sons Of Our Fathers* title:

“This is who we are and this is where we come from,” Reilley concludes. “At the end of the day all we really are is the sons of our fathers. We’re representatives of who we are and where we’re from: from the people who raised us and the culture that we’re from.”

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