

DARKUS

2020 Showcase Series



SHAI BRIDES

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Editors Message

Here at Darkus we are always on the look out for fresh and exciting music not just from within our own region, but in other parts of the UK as well. When I first realised my love of music it was when I was during my student days while studying in the West Midlands – a place I have not been to for quite some time. It came as a welcome treat therefore when this summer the team at SUCKER introduced me to Birmingham based band, Shai Brides. With

Covid-19 having slowed things down for a lot of people, members Thom, Meg, Sam, Jez and Cam instead used it as a opportunity really push themselves as songwriters which resulted in their latest single Honeydew that was released on 31st July 2020.

Although the band may have only recently come on our radar, the spirit of the showcase series is about highlighting the exciting journeys musicians take, so dedicate this edition to Shai Brides is an absolute honour.



Thushara X x X

Editor in Chief: Thushara S. Chandrasiri

Thank You To Shai Brides

SUCKER

Shai Brides Are: Thom Dent, Meghan Avery, Sam Cheeseright, Jeremy Caglayan & Cameron Williams

SUCKER

IN CONVERSATION WITH SHAI BRIDES

There comes a point in any band's journey, where they take a take a decide to mix things up and try to get a little bit more experimental with the type of vibe they are usually associated me. For Birmingham based quintet Shai Brides this has been something which is evident when you listen to their latest track Honeydew.

While it can be quite a scary thing to do for most people, members Thom, Meg, Sam, Jez and Cam took it in their stride, and used it as an opportunity to show music fans how versatile they are when it comes to making new material.

With there already being quite a lot of excitement about this potential new direction for the band, we caught up with the five friends to find out more.

Article By Thushara

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Answers By Thom, Meg, Sam, Jez and Cam

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"We've built our sound up like a video game, with everything we release being put out as a 'level up' from the last song. The way music looks is just as important as the way it sounds - the entire experience has to be as artistically satisfying as possible."

Thom, Meg, Sam, Jez and Cam - what a pleasure it is to welcome you to Darkus! Tell us a little bit about some of the things that have been keeping you smiling and sane during the past few months?

Hello! We're happy to be here. The last few months have been pretty mental to be honest, it's given us all the time in the world to plan our next few projects and where we're looking to get to next as a band, but has also not given us any opportunity to actually put those plans into action in the flesh. It's a double-edged sword. The excitement of planning everything has definitely kept us going, as well as making loads of art and stuff for the next couple of tunes we have coming out. We also all met up again, for the first time in like five months, last weekend, so we're all on a bit of a creative high right now off the back of being able to hang out again.

Your latest track, Honeydew, is going to bless the ears of music fans on 31st July - as that date gets closer by the second has it been a season of sleepless nights or a 24/7 hell yeah party vibe?

We're actually relatively organised with this song to be fair - COVID gave us loads of time off to create and plan all the promo and artwork, whereas for our first two singles there were a lot of rushed midnight sessions on Photoshop. It feels a lot more chilled, which gives us a chance to enjoy the ride a bit more. We're really proud of everything we've created for this release.

Now some of our readers, myself included, will be new to the world of Shai Brides, so what are two or three facts that form part of the glue that make your band have that extra touch of sparkle?

Shai Brides are all about making pop music that might survive the apocalypse. It's as much a visual project as it is a musical one; we take inspiration from everywhere and from a lot of visual media as well as musical artists. We've built our sound up like a video game, with everything we release being put out as a 'level up' from the last song. The way music looks is just as important as the way it sounds - the entire experience has to be as artistically satisfying as possible.

While the situation regarding live music may be a little up in the air at the moment, would you agree that the release of the new track is still a good way for people to do some bopping and dancing regardless of whether they're in the same room as you or in the comfort of their own homes?

Definitely yeah - we always knew we wanted to put something out around this time, regardless of how the year turned out, and 'Honeydew' is the perfect song for that. It's a summery love song with a lot of sadness in it, which works pretty well in the context of a summer where a lot of people are already feeling a bit melancholy.

There has been quite a lot said about the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown for bands at the local level. What has been your experience and has it been one where you have had to adapt and take new approaches to the way you connect with your fans?

We're pretty fortunate to be in the position where we aren't yet relying on our music for our livelihoods - there are a ton of artists out there who've lost practically all their income because of the lack of a live industry and the ridiculously low money you earn from streaming. We've done a couple of live shows on our Facebook and Instagram which have been fun, but the main thing has been trying to collaborate with other artists and to use our public platform to connect more with people on things other than music.

The support system between musicians on social media has been so great the last few months - there are loads of other artists who we barely knew before lockdown that are now some of our closest friends, just through connecting with and supporting each other's work.

Thinking about your bond as a band, how do you think you bring out and enhance each other's strengths?

Spending as much time together as bands tend to do, you're always going to get to know each other incredibly well. We've all got our own quirks and strengths, and having a strong collective mindset and dedication to our art helps us all to bring what we have to the table and combine, Power Rangers-style, into that huge Shai Brides megazord that fights all the bad guys

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Originally you were known for your synth-punk roots, so how did you find that transition into the new territory of synth-pop?

We wouldn't say synth-pop is necessarily a new territory for us really - it's always been in our sound, just hidden beneath a few more layers of angst. We take on so much influence from so many places that there are always new shades of our sound coming through in each song we write. With the internet, and streaming in particular, everybody has so much more access to so much more music nowadays, which means as an artist you can be a lot more genreless. There's no loyalty to any one genre or territory - the loyalty is to whatever your vision is, creating whatever you want to create.

You have already gained a lot of praise and support from the likes of BBC 6Music and also BBC Introducing West Midlands. For a band such as Shai Brides how special is it to have platforms like that actively celebrating your music?

It's honestly so cool. The initial reaction we had from Alex Noble, who runs Introducing WM, was so great. It was the first time someone outside of the five of us had been as excited about our music as we were, and to have it be someone from BBC Introducing is still insane. We're always chasing that enthusiasm from anyone who listens to our music, regardless of who they are. The main aim is to excite people.

To be compared to the likes of White Lies and Friendly Fires, plus also sharing the stage with the cool cats in Larkins and Valeras, I am guessing there have been more than a few 'mind blown' moments?

Absolutely. Being able to play with artists like Larkins and Valeras, who have such a buzz around them nationally, is really inspiring. We still learn a lot every time we play a show about where we can go next and what we can do to get there.

The possibilities opening up at the moment are so sick as well - we can't say anything yet but there are some pretty insane shows being discussed at the moment, properly exciting stuff for the future.

With the release of Honeydew and reflecting on all we have discussed, what makes you excited as you prepare yourself for the next steps in the evolution of Shai Brides?

The opportunities that are presenting themselves at the moment are the main thing. We've recently picked up management, which has kind of opened our eyes to the possibilities of where Shai Brides can go next.

Our main focus is on honing our sound, on writing more music, writing better music, and figuring out how to share that in the coolest way possible. It feels like we're just getting started.



'Honeydew' Released 31st July 2020

On 31st July, Birmingham based band Shai Brides released their latest track Honeydew, and oh my days what a amazing piece of music it is.

The moment I pressed that play button I was totally loving the vibe as it was one of those tracks which really connects with you from the word go, whilst keeping you hooked with the very inviting melodies. If Honeydew was a cocktail I would be ordering it the whole batch plus more!

So what is it about this track that has got me all excited I hear you cry? Well for a start if you compare it to the bands previous material it sees them do something which only a select number of bands manage to do where they take their 'stereotypical' sound, mix it up, and take themselves out of their comfort zone only to create something different where the instant reaction that comes onto the lips on the listener is "ooooo now then I like the sound of this".

Given that Shai Brides have originally be regarded as a synth-punk band, and then keep fans on their toes with the synth pop power track goodness that is Honeydew demonstrates they are not afraid to be bold and try something a little different but still with their special charm and drive and hunger for music right at the heart.

If you dig a little deeper with the lyrics too and your ears pop up to the words, "I've got low self-esteem, You've got honeydew, You can't do it for me, I can't do it for you' for example its brilliant to see how the band are able to create depth and honesty within the power of music whilst maintaining that resonance and strength with the listener. It gives you goose bumps but the type which fills you with adrenaline and excitement the more you connect.

There is such a rich variety of emerging talent across the UK, and if your wondering who to keep an eye out for then Shai Brides are certainly on that list. So what are you waiting for - Honeydew is calling your name!

Article By Thushara



SHAI BRIDES

Honeydew

And I'm happiest when I'm here
But I can't be here any more
Is it cool to leave my t-shirt on the floor?
You were the light at the end of a tunnel
But now I'm outside
I don't know where I am
There's nowhere left to hide
Am I too self obsessed to give myself away?
We could face the facts
Or spend another morning underneath the duvet

So now I need a minute just to calm myself down
I've rehearsed it all and I'm coming round now
Another one to cross off on the wall
Sweepstake winners at birth
Give me a chance to make it work
No please, you go first

There are so many things that I need to do
But I'd do nothing if I could do it with you
I've got low self-esteem
You've got honeydew
You can't do it for me
I can't do it for you

So now I need a minute just to calm myself down
I've rehearsed it all and I'm coming round now
Another one to cross off on the wall
Sweepstake winners at birth
Give me a chance to make it worse
No please, you go first

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