

Deconstruction For The Modern Idiot

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Miles Hunt talks us through the new Wonder Stuff LP, track by track.

Change Every Light Blub

Massive rant preceded opener

"I thought it was too optimistic because it had that Jamiroquai "Emergency On Planet Earth" thing running through it, which I don't subscribe too. I don't think for a minute that recycling will make a bit of difference to the world's inevitable decline. I refuse to be manipulated into thinking I'm doing some good, when there's too much big stuff going on with the rape of the planet. And this was really bugging me. I thought, this needs a juxtaposition, the way the Ice Cube album sets up, and Ice T -- which are the only albums I've got any pleasure out of in the past two years. So I invented this character who was the worst side of me. The side of me that would like to be anarchic, that would like to take heavy drugs but is terrified of hurting myself. So that's the ranting at the start. We got a voice box and stuck the microphone by my neck and I was stomping round the studio gesticulating and shouting. I had these boards round the room, all possible album titles- 'Pick Your Victims', 'Detonate Your Hate Bombs' - shouting them off. We only had to go back and get the 'Hallelujah' in time"

I Wish Them All Dead

Anti child abuse tirade

"On the Banshees tour in America I saw a Roger Cook-type programme about the Man Boy Love Association, which showed these guys of about 25 years being secretly filmed in a library, swapping all this paedophile material. That was one of the classic times when I was in a hotel room shouting at the telly. And 'I Wish Them All Dead'- it's a terrible thing to admit to but it's something I say quite a lot when I'm driving: 'I wish you dead c***'. And I'm always being told off for it, so I've started saying 'I wish you the worst of luck sir', but that's not a very good song title... 'I Wish Them All Dead' was going to start off with the MBLA, then go down a list of people I wish dead. Then I thought, No, cos each area I've got to justify, because I'm not a 20-year old making hateful little pop tunes anymore. I'm 27 and don't want to be a brat who just stamps around moaning 'I'm pissed off'. So we stuck to the MBLA because I DO wish them all dead. The ending is the old Randall & Hopkirk tune, which we've never gone back and checked, but it's another good pun. Randall & Hopkirk (deceased)...dead. Hmm, funny. One reason I was drawn to Vic Reeves the first time I saw him onstage was because he had the white suit and black hair like Marty Hopkirk."

Cabin Fever

Shameless party stomper

"Musically it was 'Size Of A Cow' Part 2, but we agonised over it and twisted it. I wrote the lyrics in a plane after a three week promotional tour in America, which had driven me nuts. I'd started to feel really claustrophobic in a place as big as America. Because I hated being the centre of attention, some days would be OK then I'd spend the next one playing the petulant rock star, keeping his sunglasses on all the time.

Hot Love Now

Good-time production number

"The first time we've ever used brass, but otherwise it's us doing what we do. It reminds me of a happy 'Circle Square'. It was sparked off by a comment from Alan Lake, who was married to Diana Dors, which a journalist reported after he'd committed suicide: 'Living without Diana was like trying to explain to a blind man what a rose looked like.' And I thought, there was a man in love".

Full of Life (Happy Now)

Self-questioning toe-tapper

"I had this one picture in my mind - the scene from 'Barfly' where Mickey Rourke keeps going out with Frank the barman and getting this shit beaten out of him - and he knows he's going to lose, but it was that self-destructive thing. Are you happy now? I suppose you're really pleased with yourself? I wanted to write something quite violent, but hopeless and just... dumb. So I'm two lines from finishing the song and Mary Anne's dad killed himself. We had to go up North for a week and there was the funeral, and when I got back I had to finish the vocals on this. And the

words seemed to relate so much to Mary Anne's dad that I felt terrible. I wanted to screw the thing up. But we finished it in the end. It'll always remind me of that time around his death though...and now Bob as well.

Storm Drain

Sprawling age-coming killer

"One time in 1989, me included, a lot of the crew, were just smoking so much dope it was pathetic. And at the beginning of 1990 it was like, "That's it - me and dope are finished". 'Storm Drain' is about that - not the virtues of giving up but going "That's better". It's nice walking around and feeling like you haven't got a condom stretched over your head."

On The Ropes

Familiar first single safety net

"It started life as a club song. Then one day Paul was playing the bassline and I started playing 'Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting' over the top. Lyrically I like it. The song's a scrap. And it's the same scrap I was having with 'Disco King', 'Radio Ass Kiss', and 'Astley In The Noose' except I managed to keep music out of it this time. It's about the relationship between the things you WANT to do that make you happy, and the things you HAVE to do to allow you to do what you want to do".

Your Big Assed Mother

Ambitious widescreen drama

"It's a conversation between an unwanted child and its father. The image I had was of two people being thrown together because they were going to be parents. Some years later the father's drunk and he's going through the 'What If This Hadn't Happened' line of thought, ruining the day."

Swell

Beautiful double-bluff blues

"It's sarcasm. Where it says 'You've never had it so good', it's actually saying 'Everything's Fucked'. Mind you I wrote it on Bondai Beach, whiskied out my head, so I probably WAS thinking I've never had it so good. But you get back to rainy London and everything becomes arse about face."

A Great Drinker

Epic, mannered alc-a-thon

"It struck me when I was strapping myself in the office with two bottles of wine: why don't you write about this? And I remembered during the summer, when I used to sit on the balcony, looking out at all the shit in Camden, drinking, and it was just a really nice feeling. It's not a crutch, but it's a nice place i visit. It's Bukowski, not the Macc Lads."

Hush

Upbeat yet plaintive born-45

"It's about my 25th birthday. Not because I was drunk but it was at the end of this three week press trip and Steve, our American manager, took us to see Guns N' Roses which I thought was going to be a top laugh. But I got really drunk, sat in my seat in an audience of what, 14,000 people and Guns N' Roses were just horrible. I just found myself looking at the audience and thinking: I've just spent three weeks prostituting the band in an attempt to sell ourselves to an American audience. And here's a gig so vile... I started to spit on people. In the end Steve and Mary Anne dragged me off and I sat in a corner sobbing, because I thought the whole trip had been pointless. It didn't occur to me, through the booze, that Guns N' Roses fans weren't the audience we'd attract anyway."

Sing The Absurd

Decorative strumalong

"Still my favorite. It's a continuation of 'Big Assed Mother'. I think it's one of the best songs we've ever written, if not THE best. It's quite accomplished, but it felt so easy doing it. There's a bit of vocal on it which is out of tune, which still plagues me to this day, but I was over the moon when we finished it."