

MY WORLD

With Paul Casey

Paul Casey has carved out a musical career that has seen him tour and record with Chris Rea and become a much loved and talented local guitar player.

In 2010 Casey joined Chris Rea's band on an extensive European tour and was also be the support for the dates. The relationship between legendary guitarist Chris Rea and Casey was formed some years ago after Rea heard Paul's demo tape which led to many collaborations between the two.

Casey displays an exceptional command of slide guitar and a unique flair for penning striking tunes. He has been compared to artists from David Gray to Ry Cooder. In truth, however, Paul Casey is an individual who makes up his own rules and carves his own niche when song-writing and recording while continuing to create a unique and distinctive sound.

Three of Casey's songs were featured on the hit American Television series Wildfire on the ABC Family Network. Further placements were subsequently secured on MTV's The Real World; Brooklyn and the award-winning independent movie I'm Through With White Girls. All this is against the backdrop of US radio play in the past from Rodney Bingenheimer on KROQ-FM and a number of impressive US live shows - in particular at the Living Room in New York and Starr Hill Music Hall in Charlottesville, Virginia - which have resulted in a devoted and dedicated US following.

The young songwriter has a string of critically acclaimed albums under his belt - along the way receiving a 9/10 rating in Ireland's Hot Press magazine, in review by Jackie Hayden (the man who signed U2 to their first ever record deal).

Recently Casey spent a year working as engineer on Chris Rea's upcoming release, Santo Spirito Blues, which was released in June.

Casey's track 'Big World', in his own words his best to date, has received rave reviews and massive radio airplay.

What was the spark that led you into guitar playing?

Listening to my father's collection. He was into all the big guitarists like Clapton, Knopfler, and JJ Cale. I really loved the sound of slide guitar and Ry Cooder's soundtrack stuff really got me interested.

What was the first song you listened that inspired you?

I don't know what the first song was, but certain songs always remind me on certain things and times. The Horslips album "The Tain" was a big influence. I remember listening to Dearg Doom repeatedly and being blown away with the whole arrangement.

When did you get your first guitar and what was the first song you learnt to play?

I think I was about eleven years old. I went to lessons with a fantastic guitar teacher from Derry called Dessie Gallagher. All I wanted to play then was Dire Straits "Sultans of Swing".

What was the first song that you wrote and what are your memories of writing it?

First song I wrote was rubbish! I let my mum hear it, and I knew by the look on her face that it was bad, although she would never say it. She thinks I'm alright now though!

How do you approach the songwriting process?

I keep it very simple. I try to only write about what I know or have experienced. Plus I only know a handful of chords!!

Which recording that you have made so far are you most proud of and why?

The latest recording I've just finished of a song called "Big World" is definitely the best recording/production I've done so far. I'm very happy with it. It's picking up a great bit of interest with TV/Film people in America which is great!

What was the best gig you can remember playing?

They always say "you're only as good as you're last gig". One of the last gigs I played recently in a little bookshop in Botanic in Belfast was fantastic. The bookshop is called "No Alibis", it sold out, although you can only fit 50 people into it, and the atmosphere was brilliant. Can't wait to play it again in the New Year. Glasgowsbury this summer was pretty special for me too.

What guitars do you currently own and which do you love best?

My Lowden F10 is the only guitar I can't do without! Everywhere I go and play people always asked what it is. It's one of those rare guitars that just does what you want it to do.

Who are your biggest inspirations?

Over the last 10 years or so I really got into film soundtracks/scores. John Barry is God to me. I probably listen to him 99% of the time!

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

Haven't a clue! Being a musician/singer/songwriter is a funny old job. You never know where or when you're next gig/paychq is! But I still love it.

Paul's desert island discs

John Barry - the Beyondness Of Things

Hans Zimmer - Inception

Shawn Colvin - A Whole New You

The Blue Nile - Peace At Last

Dave Matthews Band - Crash

