

At our usual cozy interview spot, we spoke with new Projekt band Love Spirals Downwards' only two members, Ryan and Suzanne. It was the first interview ever from a band which has played just one live show. Uncertain as to their place in the scene but with a sound that leads the way, Love Spirals Downwards is a band to watch. Interview by Ariel and Aillinn.

# Love Spirals Downwards

Ryan: Is the whole interview like question and answer, or is it going to be more of an article?

AM: No, question and answer.... Having heard only the two songs, "Mediterranea" and "Forgo" on [Projekt compilation] *From Across This Gray Land No.3*, what can we expect from your album, which is due out in November?

Ryan: We're mixing it right now. We just mixed the first three of the eleven or twelve songs. It will have a different feel than "Mediterranea" and "Forego." It's more—what do you think?—trancy, Eastern.

Suzanne: We were a little reluctant to put those two songs on, when he [Projekt's Sam Rosenthal] chose those two. Those are two out of the three first songs that we ever sent him. They're a little old. They're about a year old. I guess the sound's a little bit different [on the album]. It is a little more trancy, more Indian or Middle Eastern sounding.

Ryan: More airy and spirally and trancy. The two *GrayLand 3* songs are more our old gothic sound.

Suzanne: That's why we're thinking people are going to be a little surprised when they hear the whole album. It's a little more tribal, as tribal as you can get with a drum machine.

AM: Give us a history, as much as there is, of the band.

Ryan: We have no history.

AM: How did you meet? How did you get on Projekt?

Ryan: Let's see. I've been making music for a long time, and we somehow got you [Suzanne] singing on my music.

Suzanne: He had a couple other singers before, like he was trying my sister out [laughter]. Sibling rivalry. It's funny because I was in London at the time going to school, and he was sending me tapes with my sister on it, and I thought, "I can sing that. In fact, I can

sing that better." Then I kind of came back, and we started doing it.

Ryan: What got us motivated to make a demo tape to send out to Projekt and others? How did we get from messing around to being serious?

Suzanne: We sent out that demo tape...

Ryan: We sent three songs: "Forgo," "Mediterranea" and another song called "Dead Language" that will be on the album.

Suzanne: We sent it to two big labels and to Projekt. We figured it was fate because one of our friends who goes to the Art Center in Pasadena knew this girl, and she's the girlfriend of Sam from Projekt. So we sent those three songs in. We were completely surprised [at Projekt's acceptance]. We didn't talk about, you know, making money, getting famous—I mean we're not being famous or getting money. We were just kind of having fun. He was



making music for so long before that, and I was just used to him just making music and not sending it anywhere.

AM: And you had known each other for a while?

Ryan: Yeah.

AM: Do you guys play live shows?

Suzanne: We played one.

R&S: Oh, God...

Suzanne: It was a little place.... What city were we in?

Ryan: Somewhere out in this direction.

Suzanne: We had a friend who was playing, and he goes, "Hey, why don't you guys play a couple things for us and open up for us." We never had a sound check, and I couldn't hear myself at all.

Ryan: Do you know Moonwash Symphony? I'm friends with them, and a year or two ago I used to do strange opening act things for them. One time me and my friend did a weird electronic sustained reverb jam. After that, Suzanne and I did a few of the songs we were working on, and that was the only time we played live. We had a backing tape, and we played on top of that. If we ever play live again we're not going to use a backing tape. It's too

much of a problem. It'll be more acoustic-type sets. Suzanne: It would be hard because the sound is kind of hard to do live.

Ryan: Yeah, with two people, and I don't want to put a band together.

Suzanne: I don't think it would do it justice.

Ryan: We would have to do an acoustic set. We don't have any plans to play anywhere for a while unless something interesting comes up.

AM: Who, ideally, do you think your fans are?

Ryan: We don't have any fans.

*The Altered Mind #12 • 7*

(Photos by Tom Pathe)

Reprinted from *The Altered Mind #12*, September 1992

**AM: Who would they be?**

Ryan: If we were to get fans.... Right now it's just people we know that know us close enough that we show them our music. People we don't know, is that what you're talking about? People who would buy it on Projekt?

Suzanne: Maybe people who are unsatisfied with current trends in commercial music, and, like, the recent 4AD sound is kind of disappointing, so people have to go underground.

Ryan: I'd like everyone to like it.

Suzanne: We like more 60's stuff, and like Popol Vuh.

Ryan: I'm not that familiar with who buys from Projekt. From what I gather it seems to have a real gothic appeal. But hearing *GrayLand 2*, the sound is really diverse. Not everyone is really gothic like Lycia. We're more on the O Yuki Conjugate-Popol Vuh side of Projekt than on the Lycia side. I don't know who our fans are going to be. I hope it'll be all kinds of people: gothic people, hippie-deadheads, anyone who likes to expand their consciousness through music. Not through drugs; through music.

**AM: The LSD in your name has nothing to do with the drug?**

Suzanne: No. Originally, it was Love Spirals Upwards, and we just kind of thought...

Ryan: "Downwards" had a nicer ring to it.

**AM: Sounds more Projekty, for some reason.**

Ryan: It did give it a more gothic twist.

Suzanne: We did think of [the initials], and LSU was like Louisiana State University or something.

Ryan: LSD is cooler than LSU.

**AM: Are your influences more in classical or traditional music or in rock?**

Ryan: Definitely not classical for me... Western classical I would say a definite no. Indian classical, yes.

Suzanne: We go to see the Indian concerts at Occidental College.

Ryan: We always try to look for really percussive bands, for lack of a better term, or ones that have really strange-sounding stringed instruments or ones that have nice vocals for [Suzanne] to listen to.

**AM: As a new band, what do you expect from your career?**

Ryan: I'd like to do a second album, definitely. I wouldn't want this to be our first and last. I personally would like to see our band grow, as far as

reaching a lot of people. I'm not talking billions of people or like you can go to Music Plus and buy it.

Suzanne: I try not to think about that because so many people have all these ideas in their minds before they even make the music. It's like, "We're the Rosemarys." And I go, "Who's in your band?" "Oh, we don't have a band yet, but we're the Rosemarys."



Ryan: Yeah, "We're gonna practice here, do this kind of music, record in this studio, appeal to this kind of age, category, class," you know. We're really free and experimental with our music, and I think we're probably free and experimental as far as our career's going.

**AM: Who writes the songs? Is it collaborative?**

Ryan: I'll do just about all the music. I do the music first, usually.

Suzanne: He'll usually do the whole music and play it for me, and I'll come up with ideas, just notes and things, either on my own or with him.

Ryan: Then we craft the vocals in with the music.

Suzanne: Then we record it, and we

barely ever play it more than what's done in the studio. Sometimes he can't even remember what he played because he did it in the studio, and that's it.

Ryan: We're recording artists as opposed to performance artists.

**AM: Does either of you have formal musical training?**

Suzanne: I had one year of vocal training, but I never practice. I've been

singing since I was little, though.

When I was five years old, I thought I was Annie.

Ryan: About ten years ago I had guitar lessons for about three or four years, but everything I do now I learned on my own.

Suzanne: He has the eight-track, so he's been fooling around on that for a long time.

Ryan: I'm more of a recording engineer than a guitar whiz.

Suzanne: Yeah, we manipulate the equipment, and then we don't do it unless we're in the studio. Sometimes we'll hum the song or something, but it's really in that room that we do most of the stuff.

It's really unbandlike.

Ryan: Some friends don't know we're in a band. They don't perceive us as bandmembers.

Suzanne: We don't walk around with guitars.

Ryan: A lot of our friends didn't take it seriously that she was on a label. They were like, "Suzanne, on a label, yeah right. You're not in a band." We're really unbandlike.

"Mediterranea" and "Forgo" are currently available on *From Across This Gray Land No.3*. For information on this and Love Spirals Downwards' upcoming cd/cassette release, write to Projekt at PO Box 1591, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1591.