

Flamingoes - Biography

Flamingoes were formed in London in spring '93 by twin brothers James and Jude Cook. Originally from Hitchin, Hertfordshire, the brothers had already spent several years honing their song-writing and studio skills before recruiting drummer Kevin Mathews from an ad in Melody Maker. The band was named after a line from Roxy Music's 'Sunset', "Horizon's appointment you'll keep/ for sunswept flamingoes must sleep". It was decided to use the English plural 'oes' rather than the more familiar American 'os'. Also, there would be no definite article. Flamingoes, like Sparks, Buzzcocks or Pixies.

Deborah Edgley, former head of press at 4AD, attended the band's first gig at the Charlie Chaplin pub in South London and offered to manage them. Soon after, the band won Gary Crowley's Demo Clash on BBC GLR Radio. The late publicist Philip Hall saw the band and got involved, creating interest in the group at a very early stage.

The legendary New Art Riot gig at the 100 Club in December '93 ensured media interest. In February '94 the first single, 'The Chosen Few', produced by Pat Collier, was released on the indie La La Land.

Extensive touring throughout '94 saw the band build a considerable following on the UK live circuit. The trio were picked up by A&R man Daniel Pope for Pandemonium, an indie offshoot of dance label Kickin' records. A second single, 'Teenage Emergency' was released in June followed by 'Disappointed' in October, after which the band went into the studio with co-producer Dick Meaney (Jesus and Mary Chain). The result was debut album 'Plastic Jewels', released worldwide in February '95 (US: Big Pop, Australia: Mushroom/Festival; Japan: Tokuma; Europe: Pandemonium). It received widespread critical acclaim.

The release of 'Scenester' as a single in the same month was followed by two European tours – the first took in France, Belgium and Germany; the second a headline tour of Scandinavia, culminating in celebratory gigs in Gothenburg and Stockholm.

Around this time Flamingoes signed a publishing deal with Bug Music, home to Johnny Cash amongst others. Later in 1995, the band and producer Charlie Francis (REM, High Llamas) recorded the song 'Water on the Brain' for the Hollies tribute album 'Sing Hollies in Reverse', and continued to tour Britain with second guitarist Adrian Stevenson. In December '95, the brothers parted company with drummer Kevin Matthews; his replacement, Steve Necchi, is now a permanent member of the group.

In the following years, the brothers continued to write and record music. In 2007 they signed a deal with Cadiz Music and played their first live shows for over ten years. The new album 'Street Noise Invades the House' is produced by the twins and engineered by Tom Aitkenhead (Ben & Jason, Bloc Party, Babyshambles). With James as the main singer/writer for this record, the mature style hinted at earlier in their career has come to full fruition.