

MTV News - 12/01/2006

Initially, Stadium Arcadium, the Red Hot Chili Peppers' forthcoming ninth studio album, was going to be released in three separate parts. Frontman Anthony Kiedis was keen on the idea — and championed it — until he realized the third installment of the trilogy wouldn't surface for almost two years.

"That notion, I couldn't handle," he said. "In a year and a half, I know we'll be writing new music and then it will be time for that. In the end, [these songs] seemed like a body of music that needed to be heard as one body."

So Kiedis and the Chilis suffered through the "heart-wrenching" process of cutting down the 38 tracks they'd recorded with longtime friend and producer Rick Rubin to the 25 featured on the Stadium Arcadium double LP. "Slow Cheetah," "Storm in a Tea Cup," "Hard to Concentrate," "C'mon Girl," "Ready Made" and "Desecration Smile" are just a handful of the tracks that survived the process and will make the record's track list.

"I think we always [approach the songwriting process] with this mindset that this time, we're going to write the perfect 11 songs and just put out 11 songs like they used to do in the days of Buddy Holly and the Beatles," Kiedis said. "Those early records were so short and sweet, and had this kind of lasting profound impact on the world because they're very memorable and digestible and, I don't know, maybe it just takes less energy or effort to connect with smaller collections. But as has been the case with every single time we've tried to do that, we end up with 30 some-odd songs. The difference this time was we ended up liking all of those songs and finishing all of those songs and it actually became a very difficult process to even just whittle it down to 25. I think it's sort of the best thing that we've ever done, and I just want to get it out there on the airwaves and in the earholes of the world."

Stadium Arcadium's first single will be "Danni California." Kiedis said the band plans to shoot a video for the track soon with Tony Kaye, who directed "American History X." The performance-based clip will boast an underlying story about a character that's appeared on the band's previous two discs.

"The spirit of Danni was evoked in the song 'Californication,' and it talks about a pregnant teenager. And then she sort of comes to fruition in a song called 'By the Way,' where she is actually mentioned by name," he said. "This song's the final chapter of Danni." Kiedis wouldn't elaborate further on the video's treatment, but did say Danni's "an amalgamation of lots of things and people — she's not really based on one person but a collective of probably every girl I've ever met."

As for Stadium Arcadium's sound, Kiedis said the writing process was aided this time around by the fact that "everybody was in good moods. There was very little tension, very little anxiety, very little weirdness going on and every day we showed up to this funky room in the Valley where we write music, and everyone felt more comfortable than ever bringing in their ideas."

Every idea was used to create those 38 tracks. "There is a weird thread that connects back to our first three records," Kiedis added. "There's this weird kind of sublime, subliminal undercurrent that is suggestive, in a spirited way, of our earliest records. There's some retardedly painful funk on this record. There are a few songs that are just straight-up dirty funk, and beyond that, there's this ongoing progression of everything else that has been slowly happening between Californication and By the Way, with harmonies and textures. [Guitarist] John [Frusciante] has really fallen in love with the art of treating sounds. [The album's] layered, but not in a heavy-handed way. John's work is definitely of the masterpiece quality, as a guitar player and sound treatment-ist. He has certainly gone to some weird über-level of hearing some Beethoven-sized symphony sh-- in his head. He really shines on this record."

The 13 tracks that didn't make it onto the final product might wind up surfacing commercially, after all, because "I'd be crushed if they didn't get heard," Kiedis said. But it won't be cheap for the truest of the band's fans to get them all. The singer said the idea is to release different versions of the album through different retail outlets, each with a unique bonus track. So fans who download Stadium Arcadium using iTunes would get one bonus track — say "Especially in Michigan" — while those who picked up their copy at Target would get a different bonus song — like "Mercy, Mercy."

"We're going to try and do that with the independent record stores across America, and for all the monster chains," he explained. "We'll service everybody with a different bonus track, because we have them."

Stadium Arcadium is due May 9, according to the band's management.

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