



Photography Tinko

Who let the dogs out

Bamby of Bamby & the Dogs runs wild with Skin

Skin: So what's with the dog fixation?

Bamby: To be honest that's a good question... a friend in high school used to say that I look like Bamby. The other members are all guys, guys are often compared to dogs, so Bamby and the Dogs seemed a good name. Sounding like an innocent cartoon but not so innocent in fact!!! And then we liked the idea of the dogs and started to use it a lot.

Skin: What was in your record collection growing up? Was there a performance/record/show that made you say "Yep, that's what I want to do...?"

Bamby: When I was a kid I remember being pretty impressed by Blondie, and Madonna in her early videos. When I was a teenager, I used to be a fan of Nirvana, Smashing Pumpkins, and Depeche Mode mainly ... and then it was Shirley Manson on The Queer and Courtney Love's energy. They inspired me as performers and I wanted to do that, too. However, I wasn't a singer yet and did not think I could be. But I used to play the piano and secretly loved composing and singing. I knew I wanted to be in music. But I really decided to jump into the profession when I took singing classes in New York City ...and that was much later on.

Skin: Did the band always want to make this kind of music? Did you meet because of your mutual love of certain bands – like Nirvana, AC/DC, Blondie, Sonic Youth – or were you friends that just wanted to form a band and settled on the raucous style later?

Bamby: I met Philippe (guitar) and we started to compose songs together. He is a big fan of hard rock and I am a fan of new wave and grunge/alternative rock. So we knew we wanted to do rock, with lots of energy...but we did not know how it would sound at the beginning. It just took the shape it had to take over time, especially after we completed the formation with the bassist, Adrien, and the drummer, Frank C, as it is today.

Skin: You lived in New York for a time, and there is a certain CBGB vibe there. Is that an influence you brought to the band?

Bamby: I loved CBGB and was so sad that it was forced to close its doors last year. It was such a music monument in NYC, which has probably inspired me in my music. I still get to spend a lot of time there and it's the city I feel the most comfortable in. It's decadent, energetic, young and inspiring. It's not CBGB but NYC in general that inspires me in a certain way. But maybe also my Lebanese origins and the suffering from not knowing where I belong - like many Lebanese who lived in many places. Blondie and Shirley Manson are my favourites female vocalists. They have technique, power and charisma in their voice.

Skin: Any groupies yet? Any wierd presents from fans?

Bamby: Some fans, yes. But nothing too crazy. We aren't so well known yet because we are still an indie band. But we hope to get further!

Skin: Beirut is tossing up a lot of interesting underground/alternative bands. Are you in touch with any of them? Do you plan to come and play in the Middle East any time?

Bamby: I have performed a couple of times as a guest with 'New Government' but never with my band in Beirut. We need a tour manager to pay for that! We all live in Paris and would love to perform in the Middle East.

Skin: What's the best thing about being a rock'n'roll singer? What's the best thing about being a Lebanese, female rock'n'roll singer?

Bamby: The best thing about being a rock singer is being able to scream out all I have in my guts and having people get excited by our music. About being a Lebanese female rock singer? Well, I don't know many, so maybe it's cool to be kinda unique in that way!

Catch them if you can... www.myspace.com/bambyandthedogs