



PoetryKernow

Hedluv & Passman are the 'Casio Rap' duo from Redruth. Our Poetry Editor Mac Dunlop caught up with them at The Tap Rooms in Falmouth to talk about lyrics and songwriting...

First of all, is 'Rap' poetry?

H A song isn't a song until it's got words on it really, to make it accessible it needs lyrics. We've been struggling with lyrics - you know, images and metaphors - since we were teenagers. We tried to write like Nirvana, Pearl Jam, but it didn't really work for us. We're into keeping it real and working with that. Poetry is Rap and Rap is poetry.

P I appreciate the craft. I enjoy rap more than I enjoy poetry, so there must be some difference. I think a lot of Rap is in the performance, and that's something lacking from poetry when you read it in a book.

H Rap doesn't have to rhyme, you can have repetition, alliteration - mostly it's about the flow, it has to flow, the flow in poetry is often different.

P In Rap, form is as important as what you say.

H When I first started listening to Hip Hop I didn't know what anyone was talking about and it didn't matter to me what anyone was saying. I just enjoyed the voices, the flows and the music, I didn't have to know anything about it.

Can you separate lyrics from music, which end do you start from?

H Start with the music, see if it brings up any ideas, themes, then go from there, usually rhymes leads the lyrics forward. Sometimes it's like the lyrics were there all along, it's just getting them out. Words just need to follow that thread, that rhyme, that flow, you kind of uncovered something, and wonder - was it there all along?

Your work has a lot of humour in it, is that an intentional thing?

H We don't want to be 'comedy music' or a parody or something like that, but in using lyrics that are real to us, we are quite funny on occasions. That's just honest, it's just what happens, it's just how we are.

Are the songs you write inspired by being in Cornwall?

H If we can put a bit of Cornwall in there, then people - wherever they're from - can listen - a lot of people don't even know where Cornwall is, do they?

P It's the pointy bit!

H It's the easiest bit to remember!

H If we can give people a little, if they can put on a song, listen to it and feel a little of what it's like here, it's something no one else can offer.

P The majority of Rap is urban, gritty...

H In a city, what we are doing would be 'Grime' or 'Hip Hop' at a sort of medium level. My first rap, was about being quite comfortable - I lived with my parents, I didn't have to pay rent, it was being honest, and telling that story. That was called the 'Penguin Rhyming Dictionary'. I have one now, but I don't use it a lot - too many botanical references, although I suppose I could become the 'gardening rapper' - but that's not me...

Does looking for inspiration in the form and structure of the music mean the lyrics must have a certain rhythm, a certain syncopation?

H If you're writing rhymes to one song and try to put them over a different one it doesn't fit. It's getting a marriage between the rhythms and the subject matter that fits with the melody.

Are you influenced by your audience?

P What we are doing is 'Pop', basically, so there's a certain need to be accessible. At the same time what we do is very particular to ourselves, we don't feel like we're making allowances to the audience. We're not really sure what exactly it is that they latch onto, so it's hard to sustain that when you're not sure what it is! But it's different for everyone, talking about poetry again, we don't use a huge amount of symbolism or metaphor. It's always apparent what we're talking about. A lot of people feel they have something of importance to convey to an audience.

H We're not influenced by them, but we don't want to lose them!

What's the balance for you between the influences from the international scene, and growing up in Redruth - does the landscape inspire you?

P We've lived there all of our lives, that's quite a deep cultural root, its hard to ignore what's going on.

H Yeah its spectacular. We can see Carn Brea nearly all the time, 'look up not down' they say, and when you stick that in a song you've got a little truth there.

Lastly I want to ask about the 'Christmas Song', because that's a big hit isn't it?

P I guess it's timeless in a sense.

H It's a proper Xmas classic, we needed a chorus that was a little bit...

P ...Bad...

H Yeah, with a kind of a ...

P ...Half assed quality to it...

H We didn't even open any presents!

P I don't really get presents - what did you get, cash or something?

In the video, your presents turn out to be your instruments.

P Yeah, I guess that kind of ties it all together...

Catch Hedluv and Passman live on the first friday of every month at the Zero Lounge in Penzance, or on the second friday of every month at Falmouth's new live music venue, 5° Below.

Hedluv and Passman are currently working on their new album, 'Dreckly'. To find out more, and to see their Christmas video, go online to: www.hedluv.co.uk

Poetry Kernow welcomes your poetry for consideration, please e mail us at: poetry@cornishworldmagazine.co.uk
or post your items with an S.A.E. to : Poetry Editor, Cornish World, Jennings House, Jennings Street, Penzance, Kernow, TR182U, Please do not submit originals as we cannot guarantee a return.

Our poetry editor Mac Dunlop's Unspoken Words radio show is broadcast every Wednesday at 5pm on The Source Fm 96.1 FM, and on internet radio at www.thesourcefm.co.uk/listen

To find out more, visit: www.thepoetrypoint.wordpress.com



The Shortest Day

today
at first light
I had birthday gifts
of earrings
black
as storm cloud
passing the bedroom window
purple as moorland
when the sun
slips through the camelia -
and earrings
the colour of honey
falling from a spoon
with a silver celtic
cross twisting
to my ears

today at second light
I walk across
a squalling wind
into a greyhoused sunday village -
the thick paper
flicks open and shut
in the cold square -
the christmans tree
tosses and sways
lights riding the waves
like surf

third light
at noon
rain skitters
windscreens -
I swim alone
in a golf club pool
with a stained glass sea
and panels the colour
of my first light birthday earrings

in the half afternoon
twilight tweaks
the cliff church tower
as we christingle
with carols
candles carried in
red ribboned clementines -
the Earth
the Light
the Blood

the wind skips into last light
pirouetting in narrow sea streets
where tall tales are told -
and the dark world swings
through the solstice
like magic

tomorrow
I will wear
my birthday earrings
in the one given minute
of extra light

by PennyAnne Windsor