

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:  
MUSIC - ART PRODUCTION  
SELF-CUT BANGS - WHIMS & WISHES (SOPHOMORE ALBUM)**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Self-Cut Bangs (members of Napalmpom, Reuben & The Dark, Night Committee, Dark Time, Hot Little Rocket) is planning to hire session musicians to add piano overdubs and harmony vocals to their largely self-recorded sophomore album, and have it produced, mixed and mastered by Lorrie Matheson to give it the sonic impact it deserves. The album continues their focus on writing short, catchy power pop songs, but expands the sonic palette considerably with reversed guitars, sonic freak-outs, musical left turns and a sequence that presents the 12 songs as more than a collection of pop songs, but as a meticulously arranged album that blends one song into the next seamlessly.

Self-Cut Bangs write songs that don't wear out their welcome; big hooks, guitars and hearts. Initially started as a means to kill time without killing their wallets when their bands couldn't otherwise rehearse in the very early days of 2020 quarantine, Cayley O'Neill Hanrahan (Dark Time) and Shawn Petsche (Napalmpom, The Adam Brown) spent a short Saturday afternoon writing a rock song that looked forward to time outside of their small Calgary apartment. As quarantine was extended, so too was the tradition of waking up Saturday morning and writing and recording a song before the sun went down, by themselves, for no one else but themselves. Before they knew it, they had an album's worth of material that they slowly admitted to themselves was something they were intensely proud and maybe even really good?

After releasing it in September of 2020, they realized others agreed and made plans to begin writing a follow-up. They have recruited a full band featuring Dillon Whitfield (Reuben & The Dark, Astral Swans), Joel Nye (Hot Little Rocket, Night Committee) and Nicola Cavanagh (Cardiograms, Girls Rock Camp Calgary) to take the songs on the road.

**ACCOLADES FOR SELF-CUT BANGS**

- Polaris Music Prize Long List 2020 - for consideration as one of the best Canadian albums released that year based on artistic merit
- Played extensively on The Strombo Show, The Key Of A, CBC's The Homestretch, X92.9, and US radio stations including CHRIP, WZBT, WKNC, KTRM, WLAS
- 5 weeks on National Earshot Charts Top 50
- 27 weeks on Earshot Campus & Community Radio charts (46 appearances across the country)
- Named Top Five Albums of 2020 by Mike Bell (The YYScene), Eric Volmers (The Calgary Herald)
- Debuted at #1 on Bandcamp's "Alberta New & Notable"

*"They've given us one of the year's best albums...I'm kind of shocked that this album was home-recorded, because it sounds so massive." Faster & Louder*

*"...a cotton candy swirl of three-minute sugar rushes." TheScene*

*"...the link between the pretty of Teenage Fanclub and the fuzz-laden grumble of a 100 Futureman Records / Big Stir acts. Power-pop at its dynamic best." Janglepophub*

*"It's a perfect mix of garage-rock abandon and hard-rock craft: think Alvvays or early New Pornographers guided by the inventive guitar riffing of Cheap Trick's Rick Nielsen." The Calgary Herald*

**OBJECTIVES**

Self-Cut Bangs quickly grew from a fun side project into a very real artistic and professional pursuit for Shawn Petsche and Cayley Hanrahan. The goal with this sophomore album, is to harness the momentum the band has gained through radio play and word of mouth, and make a real splash in the summer as a combination of live and recorded band just as live music begins to return to normal.

The two main songwriters for Self-Cut Bangs have challenged themselves for this follow-up artistically and technically. While the first album was the result of creating spontaneous music in a limited time frame,

the second album is the result of a far more considered approach. The 12 songs chosen for the album were picked from 270 musical ideas captured between 2020-2022 (while having very few distractions during the pandemic). These 12 songs represent not only a document of the last two years, but also a far wider sonic palette than the debut album's big, joyous burst of rock & pop energy. Through big The Who-esque rockers to angular Devo-tinged curiosities to futuristic sounding post-punk anthems, the band has crafted an album that is meant to be listened to in one continuous 35 minute sitting, with ends of songs transitioning into each other seamlessly. Its main vision is to be a single document that argues for the continued vibrancy of rock music through all of its various subgenres.

The music has been written and sequenced, with bed tracks ready to be recorded at home for most of the songs. However, as the project has been developing, it's become abundantly clear that it deserves more than we are able to capture at home as we did on the first album. As such, we are looking to fill the gaps we see on the album with session musicians hired to be recorded at Arch Audio, and for the tracks to be turned over to Lorrie Matheson (Rae Spoon, Art Bergmann, Samantha Savage Smith, Wares) a more professional production, mix and mastering job. One song from the album, "Ludo," was requested for an upcoming compilation, and Matheson helped to mix and master that song, which confirmed how much better the project would sound under his guidance.

## **PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

Background vocals and harmonies: Expanding upon the first album's 2-3 part vocal harmonies by Cayley Hanrahan, we plan to invite new band members Dillon Whitfield (Reuben & The Dark, Astral Swans) and Nicola Cavanagh (Night Committee, Cardiograms) to record additional harmonies. Through my previous experience with Lorrie Matheson, recording upwards of 9 part harmonies for the Napalmpom records, I am convinced that his ear for these will push the songs into huge sounding anthems.

On top of that, the band hopes to take advantage of the first time since their formation where group vocals can be recorded. A few choruses were written with sing-alongs in mind, so we look forward to inviting friends into the studio to fill these out.

Additional instrumentation: While a big part of Self-Cut Bangs has been a pride in doing everything ourselves (writing, recording, releasing, marketing the debut album), there is no getting around that this new album requires help to fulfill our creative vision for it. We are hoping to recruit a small number of studio musicians to write and record a few cacophonous piano lines, and a Black Sabbath inspired synth lick as part of the standout songs on the album, "Shivers," "Stargazer," and "Head Start."

Most importantly, however, is the plan to hand over stem tracks to Lorrie Matheson for him to use his studio equipment and years of experience to make the album really shine. I've had the pleasure of working with Matheson on both Napalmpom full-lengths, both of which were well-received (Polaris Music Prize consideration and Western Canadian Music Awards Nomination), largely thanks to the work he put into them. While we are proud of what we can make at home, we know that the album, as we envision it, will not exist without Matheson's contributions.

## **TIMELINE**

- February-March 2022 Finish writing the lyrics for the final 3 songs on the album "Circle Around The Free," "Never Say Never," and "Hard Carry" and record home bed tracks (already demo'd in full)
- March 2022 Photoshoot with Heather Saitz (Samantha Savage Smith, Matthew Cardinal, Vivek Shrya) to mimic photos from late 60s of Sonny & Cher
- Early April 2022 Present the album in rough form to Lorrie Matheson for notes on elements to re-record, re-arrange, or for elements to be added
- Late April 2022 Complete basic recording at home, record additional harmony vocals, gang vocals and piano and synth lines at Arch Audio with guest musicians
- May 2022 Complete final mix & master of the album, begin booking summer tour

- July 2022 Release first two singles digitally, “Shivers” and “Stargazer” along with music videos directed by Shawn Petsche and Cayley Hanrahan - service album to community and campus radio, and begin press cycle for album
- August 2022 Release third single digitally, “Circle Around The Free”
- Late August 2022 Release album digitally and physically (CD). The goal is to release the album on vinyl as well, though pressing plant turnarounds are very slow right now. There’s the chance to do a short run through Red Spade Records or our friends in BC who press records...but we understand that this is a potential hurdle to releasing it.
- August/September 2022 Western Canadian tour
- 2022-2023 Focus on showcasing festivals (BreakOut West, Pop Montreal, Rifflandia, etc.)

## **EXPECTED RESULTS & BENEFITS**

First and foremost, we feel the project, as described, sets us up to have a successful sophomore album. We’ve spent a year and a half writing the album, and are ready to move on from a home recording project to release a more confident, impactful album. While the first album’s success surprised us, we are confident we have written a better album, one that wouldn’t just benefit from, but needs the guiding hand of Lorrie Matheson as producer/mixer, and some additional musicians to make sections of the album truly shine.

We feel that, as the first album was released at a time when we couldn’t tour behind it, or properly introduce ourselves as a live entity, that this album could make a real splash in coinciding with our first tour dates outside of Alberta. We’ve generated interest and momentum, and have been receiving dozens of tentative show offers as restrictions ease. Over the years in our other bands, and in my professional life as festival manager for Sled Island, I have developed large networks across Canada for booking shows, and am confident we will be showcasing at numerous great stages in 2022 and beyond (please see artist resume for a list of previous show history).

On a community level, I’ve always prided myself in how I’ve used the popularity of my other projects (Napalmpom, The Adam Brown) to showcase other fantastic musical artists as openers or while on tour, artists who have gone on to become far more celebrated, like Wares, Basia Bulat and Pup (formerly Topanga). Our goal will continue to be to shine a light on the great musicians, venues, campus radio stations and publications that support Canadian music as best we can.

In more tangible terms, we expect to meet and surpass the results of the first album:

- Aim for Polaris Long List nomination as one of the best Canadian albums of the year based on artistic merit
- Hope to make National Earshot Charts Top 10, and surpass the 27 weeks on Campus & Community Radio from the first album’s run
- Receive extensive play on CBC, The Strombo Show, X92.9 and some bigger community stations in the US including WFMU and KEXP
- To work with Michael Grondin of Dirty Laundry (who had previously licensed Napalmpom’s songs to MTV and Shameless) to develop commercial opportunities for the songs from this album
- To have an actual physical album to sell at our shows
- To surpass sales of the first album digitally and physically, and collect greater royalties than the first album generated (\$12,000 to date)
- To showcase at Canadian festivals like Rifflandia, BreakOut West, Halifax Pop Explosion, POP Montreal, CMW, Uptown/Downtown, etc.
- To grow our social media presence through continuous touring, multiple music video releases, and the excitement that comes from returning to a functioning music industry