

THE CORE COMPETENCIES OF NAPALMPOM SOUND RECORDING - GOALS

PROJECT GOALS

The primary goals of the recording of The Core Competencies Of Napalmpom are:

- 1 - To record a sophomore album that better sonically captures the growth of the band's songwriting, with a greater emphasis on vocal melodies, thoughtful lyrics, harmony vocals and drum sounds, since the release of their debut LP, while remaining true to the band's contagious and enthusiastic energy;
- 2 - To make an album that largely focuses on themes of:
 - a) the continued (and worrying) blurring of lines of bands and brands (musicians as marketers, networkers, entrepreneurs, etc., not musicians);
 - b) The subversion of 'rock & roll' tropes relating to tough guy/macho posturing;
- 3 - To present the album in a fun and professional package, through continued work with designer (tentatively The Little Friends Of Printmaking) that thoughtfully communicates the aforementioned themes;
- 4 - To grow the band's audience in Canada by capitalizing on the momentum gained by the release of both the debut album (released in October 2014) and the split released with Toronto's Public Animal;
- 5 - To contribute to the professionalism and continued success of Western Canadian independent rock music;
- 6 - To sell 500 physical LPs and warrant a 2nd pressing and 1,000 digital albums- the band's debut has sold 550 LP copies to date physically as well as hundreds of CDs and digital albums;
- 7 - To chart to the top 10 of the Earshot! National charts with continued play on CBC Radio 3/CBC Music/CBC R3-30.

These goals can be broken down further as:

Artistic Goals:

Napalmpom's debut album was framed as a love letter to the history of rock & roll, with every aspect of the release supporting that theme: from the songwriting very shamelessly paying homage to the classic rock the band members learned to play their instruments to to the album cover calling to mind the Schoolhouse Rock high school notebook doodle art of the era it came from.

The band is now attempting to stretch its musical and lyrical smarts a little more on the follow-up, while still engaging directly with the classic rock idiom. Simply, rather than pay strict tribute, the follow-up will be engaging with the conflicted feelings that accompany the reality of being in a contemporary rock band; a genre that is often disappoints artistically and ethically. Added to that will be an a thoughtful look at the ever-increasing importance of artists considering their personal brand. The goal of the album is to re-frame the contemporary rock & roll band not as a bunch of neanderthals or macho party animals, but as thoughtful musicians who think that just because you're fun doesn't mean you can't be serious.

Lyrical content will focus on the subversion of classic rock & roll themes. For example, "Watch It Burn" is an anti-macho anthem, and "Last Legs" and "Show Me What You Can Make" are songs that continue the "do it our way" approach trope, but relating to more contemporary sources of musical depression: getting denied by granting agencies and being told to make the band into a brand.

The goal will be to record these new songs with Lorrie Matheson at Arch Audio in such a way that calls to mind the big productions of Boston, AC/DC and Thin Lizzy, so that the juxtaposition of modern lyrics and big classic sounds is fully felt. A greater amount of time will be spent in the studio to ensure that,

compared to the debut album, the drums hit harder, the vocals cut through better and the classic production nods are fully realized. Double tracked guitars with some cleaner takes for emphasis will be prioritized as will guest vocalists to beef up the harmony recordings (confirmed artists include: Kenna Burima (The Pygmies, Woodpigeon), Chris Neville (No River, The Von Zippers), Lorrie Matheson (Fire Engine Red, Night Committee) and Caitlin Dacey (Public Animal, Bella Clava).

While the album is still some way's off, the band have begun envision an album cover that plays off of these themes of rock & roll maturity and bands as brands. Current brainstorm sessions are pointing towards an album cover that mocks why bands make music today. The idea is to mock the reality of the contemporary rock band as a money-maker or brand, with the cover imagery representing a Rube Goldberg machine where the end result is a self-pat on the back.

Previously, Geoff Hanson had directed the album art for the debut album which saw a Schoolhouse Rock-inspired doodle art album cover come with a package of 12 markers, encouraging the listener to colour their LP in. It was a huge success.

Sales and Charting Goals:

Since the release of the debut album, Napalmpom's audience has grown exponentially. It is expected that, starting with this momentum, the follow-up album will see increased sales and increased pick-up on commercial and campus radio.

For the follow-up, the band would like to contract xxxx and yyyy who had previously expressed interest in working on the band's releases. While the debut album achieved some fantastic airplay and sales (550 LP copies to date, CBC charting for 26 straight weeks, a #29 Earshot! debut, etc.), a move away from taking on the work of publicist and radio tracker themselves is expected to yield even greater results. Chief among them:

- a Top 10 Earshot! chart position;
- continued play on CBC Music/CBC Radio 3/CBC R3-30;
- pick-up by Western Canadian commercial radio (X92.9, Sonic, The Zone);
- 750 physical LPs sold, 1000 digital albums sold (iTunes, Bandcamp through CD Baby);

The bulk of sales are expected to come from off-stage sales at one of the band's numerous live performances (so far, Napalmpom has been averaging about 40 shows/year) with digital sales coming from increased radio awareness. That said, the album will, as the debut, be available through Teenage Rampage's distribution networks.

We will be sending out 198 promo copies of our album to community and campus radio via a list provided by Marlene D'Aoust of Free Expression and CJSW's quarterly mailout. With the help of xxxx, national publicity director of xxxx and yyyy, radio tracker at yyyy, we aim to convert those promo copies into a top 10 charting on Earshot!'s national campus and community radio charts. Xxxx has more than 96 #1 Earshot! albums to his name since 2008 and managed to help Forbidden Dimension, a Calgary band with whom we share a member, reach the top 10 *without* an exhaustive touring and marketing plan akin to ours.

With a single hitting as high as #3 on the CBC charts (and music staying in the charts for 26 weeks), we expect that with radio tracking support, our three singles will do similarly well. We expect that xxxx's follow-ups with campus and community radio will be fruitful. Having heard our album and seen our marketing plan, they are confident we will enter the Top 50 of the Mediabase Alternateive and Active Rock charts. This goal is easily tracked via the charts themselves.

We will also be targeting classic rock radio in key markets (Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver) to see if the album gains traction at any of the stations. We feel the album is well-suited for

contemporary CanCon play alongside the April Wine, Prism and Guess Who classics, but will see this as a secondary goal to campus/community radio and contemporary rock radio.

Community Goals:

The band also hope to contribute to the professionalism and continued success of Canadian independent rock music by sharing the details of all aspects of the album's release. We are hoping to publish (on our website, shared through social media) a sort of post-mortem on our record that details everything that went into it: from our recording process and budget to the grants we applied for to lists detailing in which markets, media and outlets the band received coverage. We will be commenting on the documents to indicate changes we would've made in hindsight in hopes that it betters not only our own subsequent releases, but those of label mates and peers. This falls in line with the overall album's artistic vision of band as brand/marketer as well.

Audience Development (rise in social media followers, larger venue offers, track audience interaction)

To date, the band has been consistently selling out 180-220 capacity rooms in and around Calgary when headlining and acting as direct support in Western Canada in 200-500 person rooms. Post album release, we are aiming to be able to fill a Calgary club in the 350-500 range and act as a headlining act in Western Canada in small clubs. With offers from xxxx to act as direct support on a cross-Canada tour, consistent offers from the Gateway, Pawn Shop, Republik (before its close), etc. we also aim to see support tour offers rise.

Following the album's release, thanks to our tour itinerary, showcase dates and marketing and publicity campaigns, we expect to see our social media followers rise (from 1,582 to 2,200+ on Facebook and from 1,069 to 2,000 on Twitter within 3 months of the album's release).

Lastly, we intend not just to grow our audience, but to develop a stronger relationship with it. All aspects of our album's release have this goal, of interaction and transparency, in mind. From the album cover's interactive element to various aspects of the marketing plan (see marketing plan for details on: providing insight on the album's creation, providing guitar tablature to the songs to offering merit badges to engage audience members at live shows for singing along, headbanging, air guitar-ing, and the album's post-mortem etc.).

This audience interaction will be harder to track, but the inventory counts of merit badges handed out and the social media interaction analytics should provide a nice overview of the project's success.

In sum, the goals of the sophomore album are to capitalize on the momentum generated by the debut album and take the band to the next level...a level that has reasonable expectations; a level that will go a long way to developing the band's careers.

Awards Goals

Napalmpom's debut LP was nominated for the WCMA for "Best Rock Recording" 2014 and submitted by a juror for consideration for the Polaris Music Prize longlist. It'd be swell if the band was nominated and long-listed for this record as well.