

Mother Mother Nurture Their Output

Vancouver band have come a long way since *Touch Up* | by Kate Harper

Mothers are responsible for caring for their children and watching them grow throughout their lives. It would seem Mother Mother guitarist/singer Ryan Guldemond takes his band's name seriously, since he's adamant about constantly improving and nurturing their musical output.

The Vancouver quintet's sophomore album, *O My Heart*, is due out in September on Guldemond's mother's birthday. Guldemond says his band have changed and grown a great deal since they released their debut full-length, *Touch Up*, last year. They said goodbye to drummer Kenton Loewe and welcomed Ali Siadat to the fold. Then Mother Mother hunkered down in the studio with producer Howard Redekopp (The New Pornographers, Tegan And Sara) and recorded what Guldemond says is a much more focused album.

"It's vibrant. We try and be vibrant, I guess" —Ryan Guldemond

"[*Touch Up*] wasn't even really an album," Guldemond says. "It was a smattering of ideas that acquired personality over time. It didn't start and finish in a focused period of time. It was kind of added to and re-released and stuff like that. So this album was very focused in terms of what we wanted to achieve and get done within a certain amount of time and then regarded as finished."

Part of that sense of cohesiveness comes from big changes and growth. *Touch Up* was originally released as *Mother* in 2005 and was later re-released under a new name when Mother became Mother Mother. It was also recorded when Mother Mother were still a three-piece consisting of Guldemond, his singing sister Molly and her vocal counterpart, Debra-Jean Creelman.

Mother Mother didn't expand their ranks until 2006, when Page and Loewe joined the band. Guldemond says Page played on *Touch Up*, but he didn't truly join until after the disc was released.

"It's kind of a long, convoluted story of members joining and leaving and doing overdubs and stuff like that," Guldemond says.

While Ryan Guldemond, Creelman and Page all went to music school, *Touch Up* was their first foray into the studio as a band. Guldemond says the additional studio experience they acquired while recording their debut means *O My Heart* sounds quite different from *Touch Up*.

"I guess, more than anything, this new album, there's a real sense of a band personality imprinted on it, just because it was, you know, five people that made one album," he says. "You can definitely hear that continuity in sound and personality throughout the album. The first album was definitely a little less cohesive."

Despite the changes, Guldemond says there's a "core personality" to Mother Mother's songs. *Touch Up*'s songs are still quirky, witty, fun and jazz-influenced. But the ideas they broach are fleshed out in more detail on *O My Heart*, which calls to mind acts like The New Pornographers.

"I think that there's a certain colour in the music," Guldemond says. "It's vibrant. We try and be vibrant, I guess. It's kind of outspoken, a little bit, and that's fun. That's playful for us."

"There's also a desire to always want to change and grow and evolve and do better and different than what was done before. These two albums are just vastly different from one another, just in essence and tone and expression and lyrical content and configuration and instrumentation. I think the next record's going to be as vastly different. But there's a through line, since it's coming from the same people."

DOUBLE TEAM

Mother Mother aren't the only act who will make you see double with their band name. Many others have chosen to double the first word in their moniker. Here are some who've done it, made Microsoft Word hate them in the process, and caused people to wonder if their fans are stuttering:



Talk Talk

Man Man — Some of this Philadelphia band's members also double up their stage names. Their stacked frontman goes by the name of Honus Honus, while their drummer is appropriately known as Pow Pow.

Mr. Mister — This isn't an exact case of copy and paste, but in terms of phonetics, it doesn't matter.

This Los Angeles pop-rock band were popular throughout the '80s and hit #1 with "Broken Wings" and "Kyrie."

Talk Talk — This London, England synth-pop group had huge U.K. hits with "It's My Life" and "Life's What You Make It." Matt Good is also obsessed with them.

