

## Interview: Funeral For A Friend

[Francesca Donovan](#) finds out what's next for post-hardcore Welshmen Funeral For A Friend

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Now is seemingly the musical era of the Dubstep's heavy bass, the kick drum of House music and the synthetic sound these genres embrace and embody. This style of music is becoming ever increasingly predominant in today's pop-culture, in conjunction with the UK Top 40's preoccupation with ready-made boy band clones; the marshmallows of the musical sweet shop. Ours is a musically artificial milieu and it is somewhat refreshing to be reacquainted with our old friends; the timeless combination of striking vocals thrown into a piping hot mix of guitar and drums – played on a real drum kit, I might add, not generated by a machine.

Who better to look to, then, for such a delectable musical stew than post-hardcore veterans Funeral For A Friend; known to their mums and adoring and loyal fan base as Kris (guitar) and Matt (lead vocals), the two remaining founding members of the band and Gavin (guitar), Rich (bass) and Pat (drums). Beginning their musical career, spanning over a decade, with the release of *Casually Dressed in Deep Conversation*, the Welsh quintet from Bridgend have been hailed, again and again, as one of the pivotal groups involved in the post-hardcore movement. Since then, the band has justly won a worldwide following, taking the previous and current members to America, Europe, Australasia and Asia, having played in Tokyo the weekend prior to this interview. Funeral For A Friend has been asked to support Rock legends such as Iron Maiden and play to thousands at world-renowned festivals. Not that the success of being a gold-selling UK band experiencing international accomplishment has instilled any sense of pretence to the group. Off-stage antics usually peak when "Matty pulls someone's trousers down", the band preferring to "keep it chill in the backstage area"; their own particular brand of audience-friendly hardcore punk staying contained to the stage itself.

Throughout the releases of their four following albums the band has evolved and explored divergent musical styles while still tirelessly remaining true to their punk roots, having been inspired by "Deftones, Pantera, Bad Religion, Slayer and Iron Maiden", not forgetting, of course, Michael Jackson. The deviations from Funeral For A Friend's famously aggressive first album have always reflected the zeitgeist of their loyal fans and perhaps, of the band's growth and maturity. However, when asked about the key to successfully changing a tried and tested signature style, Gav speaks on behalf of his bandmates when he

says that he doesn't "feel that as a band we've ever set out to try and write an album to a formula. We've always gone with our gut and done what feels right."

The arrival of relative newcomer Pat Lundy has been of considerable influence in once more revitalising Funeral For A Friend's sound, in time for the release of the upcoming album, Conduit, which is to be released on the 28th of this month. Matt and the other band members seem grateful for "another creative outlet" and the "infectious enthusiasm" that is so clearly alive in Pat. It is obvious that Pat has settled seamlessly into the band dynamics – a trait much desired in a rock drummer who, in essence, is the beating heart of any band. Matt goes on to say that Pat has "rekindled our love for what we do."

And that is the crux of the matter – Funeral For A Friend is a musical entity so successful largely because all five musicians love what they do. It is so often seen in this era of music that artists and bands enter and exit the limelight, as though walking through a full turn of revolving doors. Thus, it is a credit, but no great surprise that FFAF have been on the scene since 2001 and are still going strong. The boys have no plans to slow down after their next release: "For as long as we physically can, as long as people love what we do as a band, we're gonna love touring and playing for our fans. There's no two ways about that", as Gav resolutely put it. And when pressed for details of the band's future, Pat proceeded to enigmatically reply, "Watch this space."



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