

Music



El Mató a un Policía Motorizado.

Apocalypse pop

Rosie Hilder catches up with El Mató a un Policía Motorizado's lead singer, Santiago Motorizado.

The five guys from the Argentinian city La Plata that make up El Mató a un Policía Motorizado (He killed a traffic policeman) are notoriously hard to define. They claim to have invented their own genres (spatial punk, gang-style indie rock, country kraut and apocalyptic pop) and to have taken their name from a rip-off RoboCop film. The band members have equally bizarre nicknames: Niño Elefante (Elephant Boy), Doctora Muerte (Doctor Death), Pantro Puto (Queer Panthro), Chatrán Chatrán (a reference to a Japanese film about cats) and Santiago Motorizado. The group formed in 2003, and were popular in Argentina for nearly a decade before their acclaimed album *La Dinastía Scorpio* propelled them onto the international scene in November 2012. They have since toured Europe, the US and South America, and recently wowed crowds at Lollapalooza in Argentina. Rosie Hilder meets El Mató's lead singer, Santiago Motorizado.

Last year you performed across the world. Which did you enjoy the most and are there differences between your Latin American and European or US fans?

I think that in Latin America the audience is more enthusiastic somehow. In Argentina we've really broken the parameters in terms of celebrating and enjoying music...I'm sure there must be pogo everywhere, but in Argentina I feel like a mix of different things have come together and it's particularly good. In Mexico the crowds are very enthusiastic too and always ready to party. In Spain, there's a lot of alternative culture and has been for a long time. There are lots of festivals and specialised press and perhaps the public is more critical...Here in Latin America, the culture is really friendly and intimate. The nights we played in Peru were really intense, and we didn't expect that, we had a great time. Really, we had a great time everywhere.

How would you describe your sound? Do you think it's a typically Argentinian one?

The plan was to make music that we liked, drawing on influences from the past and trying to mix those with our reality. We felt there wasn't any music that represented us and so the idea was to make something ourselves. We like all types of music, but we

try to explore its alternative side; those sounds that you don't usually hear on the radio, that's what we've always been passionate about.

Who are your biggest influences? We've got all sorts of influences that come from music, cinema, literature and art in general. We were always big fans of The Velvet Underground, Sonic Youth, Pixies, The Ramones, in addition to action films and pop art. We like mixing sophisticated things with crude shapes and images and creating a distorted, harmonious sound.

Your home city, La Plata, is the capital of Buenos Aires province and is famous for its universities and unique city planning. What was life like growing up there? How has this influenced your music? La Plata is a quiet city, a big town really. There are lots of young people around and that's always good being surrounded by young energy. We're happy slow-paced La Plata is where we were brought

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up, and where we started the band. You're always influenced by your surroundings, I can't say to what level stylistically, but yes, when it comes to starting an artistic project, ours seems to encompass everything that is removed from a big city, but yet is not so far away from it.

I've heard your name is a quote from the 1989 film *R.O.T.O.R.*, which has been described as a low-budget version of *The Terminator* and is often cited as one of the worst films ever made. What made you choose that particular quote?

When we named the band, we didn't know which film it was, we weren't paying attention. It was at a party, the TV was on and we were looking for something that would be a bit different from the classic band names you hear.

Can you tell me about the labels Laptra and Limbo Starr that you work with?

We met the guys from Limbo Starr in Madrid and fell in love instantly. They showed us their editions and we really liked their independent spirit, similar to our label Laptra in Argentina. Working with independent labels is wonderful, it's like being in a family and having freedom, and it's great to share this with people whose love for music is greater than a blind ambition for money.

This year marks a decade since your first album. What's been the highlight of those ten years and how have you changed in that time?

I'm sure we've changed a lot over these ten years, I wouldn't know how to describe it but I think we're better, I hope we are. We're better people, a little wiser, a few centimetres taller. The band grew and other friends of ours also joined, they help us with social networks, organising gigs, with the videos, with everything. We're grateful, because the last ten years have been good, and we hope that continues for a long time. One day this will be over and it'll be a sad day, but the important thing is not to be resentful when you stop doing what you love.

What's next for El Mató? We want to keep recording our ideas, keep playing, travelling the world and editing CDs. We have a new tour round Europe, we're going to return to Brazil, Uruguay, Peru and Mexico and we're going to keep touring in Argentina.

For the latest on El Mató's music and touring, check out their website www.elmato.com.ar.