

THE STEMS

A Brief History :

Formed in 1983 by Dom Mariani and Richard Lane who were serious students of cool underground 60's garage punk, R&B and pop music. As they evolved they also embraced an updated power pop sound. But foremost it was their ability to write great songs and electric live shows that made them stand out from the rest.

In Perth, as the main focal point of the original band scene, THE STEMS made venues such as The Wizbah, The Old Melbourne, and The Shenton Park their own in a town and at a time otherwise dominated by cover bands.

In mid '85 a 6 month sojourn to Sydney to meet up with their new label Citadel and promote their first single MAKE YOU MINE/ SHE'S A MONSTER was perfectly timed with the Sydney inner city scene rediscovering 60's music and fashion. The group met with an enthusiastic response which culminated in a full house at the legendary Trade Union Club for their final show. During this period they recorded the classic TEARS ME IN TWO single and the LOVE WILL GROW ep both produced by ROB YOUNGER of the legendary RADIO BIRDMAN.

THE STEMS completed several national tours and were perhaps one of the first bands to gain national success while remaining in Perth, and despite never having toured internationally they are held in high esteem in Europe and the US amongst fans of classic 60's and garage inspired rock 'n' roll.

THE STEMS released a total of 5 singles, 1 ep and 1 full length album, and set an impressive record with each release reaching No 1 on the Australian alternative charts. It was their debut album though, and their first for the White label AT FIRST SIGHT VIOLETS ARE BLUE released in 1987 that received national and international critical acclaim and would be one of the best selling Australian albums of that year despite the lack of commercial airplay in the corporate FM dominated 80's. The album continues to sell well to this day and was recently named in the top 100 Australian albums of all time by Rolling Stone magazine. Unfortunately their success was short lived when at the height of their powers and on the eve of a 6 week European tour they mysteriously disbanded later that same year.

THE STEMS epitomised 80's indie rock, giving it a wider currency. They are one of only a handful of Australian bands that cracked the mainstream charts with an indie approach in the late 80's and influencing a host of new aussie bands to follow with their brand of garage rock and roll.

Main singer songwriter Dom Mariani would eventually go on to achieve greater international recognition and become a lynchpin of the international power pop scene with his bands DM3 and the Someloves.

REBIRTH

Rising from the ashes of their 1980's breakup **The Stems** reformed in 1997 to perform a reunion show in their beloved hometown of Perth to an enthusiastic response. This event would see them return to the live scene in 2003. It is fair to say they were all surprised – even amazed - how popular they still were. They toured Australia, Europe and the USA including an incredible one off show at the invitation of Bruce Springsteen's guitarist (and Sopranos TV star) Little Steven, who lists himself as one of the **Stems** biggest fans, where they shared the stage with Iggy Pop, Bo Diddley,

Big Star, Nancy Sinatra..., and 60's underground bands The Chocolate Watchband, The Pretty Things, Creation and the Electric Prunes that were an influence on their sound in the early days.

Things seemed to gain momentum. At the urging of Little Steven and a host of others the band made plans to record an Album of new material ultimately titled **HEADS UP** – released on Shock Records in late 2007. Recorded in Perth on all analogue equipment and mixed in Cincinnati by producer John Curley (White Stripes, Afghan Wigs, Greenhornes and Ronnie Spector) the album was released to rave reviews and sells solidly around the world.

“It’s incongruous to think that Heads Up is only The Stems’ second full length album, and the band’s first new release in twenty years. Incongruous not just because The Stems remain one of Australia’s most virtuous garage and power pop bands, despite a playing and recording history that lasted a mere few years in the mid 1980s, but also because Heads Up is so pure, fresh and potent that it could have been recovered from recording sessions shelved at the height of the band’s original popularity or – better still – found lying dormant on tapes discarded at the apex of the halcyon days of the 1960s garage rock era.” - PATRICK EMERY (BEAT MAGAZINE 7 NOV)

“Comeback albums, even if they're done by legendary acts, are hit and miss; either it's great or it doesn't measure up to they're earlier days. Heads Up is telling you to listen again, or if you listen for the first time, you'll hear your new favorite band, but the announcement seems both internal and outward. The reason for that is because Heads Up is loud and wild, but comparable, if not better than their earlier work, which is seminal. In other words, this is a great album, but it also shows how great The Stems ARE, not were. They haven't missed a beat during their long hiatus. Instead, they've returned with an album that shows a real band that rocks better and harder with age. There are few, if any bands like that which come to mind.” - THE UMBRELLA (AUSTIN TEXAS – March 2008)

The promotion of **HEADS UP** began in earnest Around Australia in late 2007 with a sold out “CLASH OF THE TITANS” tour with Radio Birdman and the Hoodoo Gurus. A successful tour of Australia and Japan soon followed that year.

They continued to tour Australia and internationally in 2008. Highlights include sold out shows in Spain, Italy, The UK, Norway, Japan and the US including Austin Texas’s SOUTH BY SOUTH WEST Festival to much acclaim.

In October 2009 The Stems played their farewell shows across Australia.

The group regrouped for a final tour of Europe in May/June 2010 playing shows in Spain, Italy and Greece.

www.thestems.com.au