

Hard work paying off

FRIGHTENED RABBIT



SUCCESS, the old saying goes, is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration. Well, if there's even a shred of truth in that old chestnut, one band that must surely be destined for the big time is Selkirk five-piece **FRIGHTENED RABBIT**.

Anyone who had the pleasure of hearing their last record, the reputation-making *Midnight Organ Fight*, knows this is a band positively bursting with inspiration.

It was an album packed full of great songs and heart-wrenching lyrics that established the band as true contenders.

Similarly, anyone who takes a gander at their current touring schedule knows these lads are not afraid of hard work.

"We are really, really busy," said lead singer and songwriter Scott Hutchison. In what must surely rank as a candidate for understatement of the year considering the band are playing 20 gigs in the next four weeks — including a leg in Dundee.

Hogmanay

"We have got a bit of a break for Christmas, but we're even working New Year. We're doing the Hogmanay party in Edinburgh which should be great."

Further proof of the band's impressive work ethic is found in the fact Scott was speaking to me on what was officially a day off before recording a session for Marc Riley's *Six Music* radio show later in the day.

Unsurprisingly, all this hard work is already showing signs of paying dividends. *Midnight Organ Fight* was met with almost universal critical acclaim, won the band a devoted following and impressed some major movers and shakers in the music industry.

The lads have recently supported American icons *Death Cab For Cutie* and Glaswegians *Biffy Clyro*, both of whom have expressed their admiration for the band's work.

"It is great to have the respect of bands like that," said Scott. "*Death Cab For Cutie* have been really supportive and do all they can to tell as many people as they can about us."

"I first saw them in 2000 in a really small venue and since then they have just exploded. To be able to go out on tour with a band like that is sort of the ultimate accolade."

"I mean, to know a band like *Biffy Clyro* admire you is quite an achievement — it is one of the

major achievements in music as these are people that understand what you're doing."

The runaway success of *Midnight Organ Fight* means *Frightened Rabbit's* new album, *The Winter Of Mixed Drinks*, is already shaping up to be one of the most anticipated releases of 2010.

But Scott has relatively modest ambitions for the next 12 months.

"We have always said that, as long as there is a general sense the band is progressing, we would be happy," he said.

"You always want that sense of forward motion."

"But obviously it would be stupid to say that we don't want more people to hear our music and come to our shows. That is clearly something you always want."

The popularity of a previous album is a mixed blessing, of course, but Scott doesn't seem too nervous about living up to expectations.

"It was always going to be difficult," he told me. "There are a lot of people who the last album meant a great deal to — some of them even listen to it on a daily basis."

"Some of them will obviously never feel the same about the new material."

"Personally I think it is a better record, but I don't know what to expect because we have never really experienced that second album syndrome before."

"Lyrically, the themes are much different to the last one. That was all about a break-up, but there is none of that this time round."

"It is much more positive and there is more joy in it. I hope it is the sound of a band that is more positive about itself — I certainly felt a lot more confident when I was making it."

Major tour

But, with the album done and dusted, *Frightened Rabbit* are now concentrating on a major tour that sees them call at Dundee next week for their sixth gig in the city.

"We have got a couple of mates in Dundee that have put us on in Dundee pubs several times," said Scott. "But we were normally playing to an empty room!"

"The last time at *Fat Sams* it was a great surprise because we had a great reaction and a good crowd. It was a great gig so we are really looking forward to playing there again."

The Winter Of Mixed Drinks is released on March 1, 2010. *Frightened Rabbit* play *Fat Sams Live* on December 2.