

Lying down in a daydream state, thinking about pop sensibilities, sometimes I wonder about the ultimate attributes for a band, and what makes a band great? Hours of different combinations can be mulled, but the only thing I can ever agree on is that a band's sound and vibe should be like crack for the ears. A band should be addictive, make you wanna get crazy, and help you forget everything.

So, in desperation, I went looking for that elusive high. On a rainy night, I found a dealer, sampled their wares, and now, I have a confession to make: I've found my musical crack, and it is You Say Party We Say Die.

But it's not bad, not at all. In fact, there's a happy ending at the bottom of this crack rainbow, which for some strange reason, seems to have started somewhere out in the Fraser Valley.

We all know the story, of small towns, with their lack of culture and the sitting around in parents' basements listening to "alt" music while dreaming of being on stage, anywhere else than the small armpit hometown.

One day, I got a call from a friend from the small town I grew up in (Abbotsford, sigh...), and he said that I had to check out this band. He told me their name, and I agreed to check them out, seeing how hard it was for most Valley bands to leave their smoky pot filled basements and make the long drive into the city.

That night seemed different from the start. There was something in the club that I hadn't felt in a long while at a show, almost like an air of expectancy. People were excited to be there, and eventually, when You Say Party We Say Die took the stage, I swear fifteen years of jaded alt indie too cool for school college radio baggage left my shoulders, and I smiled... at a concert. I've survived grunge, so you don't know how weird it was for me to smile at a show...

You Say Party played the show like they were on day parole, getting everything they could in, before the guards came and took them back to the lockup. There was nothing left to be said; they got their message across at a hundred thoughtful clicks an hour, and in the process, reeled me into their addictive embrace. Deep down though, I couldn't believe that they were from the Valley, but as later explained by member Stephen O'Shea, it didn't matter where they were from. "The members of YSPWSD were never really that bored in Abbotsford because we were a part of the community that made sure we weren't bored... we recognized that Abbotsford was boring but we refused to let it be that way. We partnered up with whatever resources Abbotsford had." This made sense, and the DIY attitude that they had was as catchy as their music, almost like if you did it and had fun, the music was it's own reward. "It plays in to our attitude that we're a band because we like to play music," he said, "not because we want to be famous."

That YSPWSD gig was almost a year ago, and damn, they have been busy in that time. You Say Party recorded a full-length album (Hit the Floor) that is versatile yet subversive, toured across the country, and created a buzz that's well worth listening to. Hell, even Pitchfork loved them, which is a miracle in itself and led me to wonder about if the sudden keen interest in the band felt a bit daunting. "The attention was flattering. We never really expected to play more than a show..." O'Shea explained, "everything that happens to us are dreams we never thought possible. We never thought we'd get to play Vancouver, but we have. We never thought we'd tour, but we have. We never

thought people would care, but they have. It's really quite amazing to us." Their success isn't just limited to Vancouver and the west coast either. You Say Party's music has reached far across North America, as well as Europe, leading them on some more jaunts in the near future. O'Shea said that "in the winter and spring we're touring again, potentially a solid 2.5 months including playing Canadian music week and south by southwest, and hopefully playing New York and San Francisco. A basic square of the continent." And if I can venture a guess, Europe isn't too far behind as well for You Say Party We Say Die.

Tireless and eager to go, You Say Party have mastered the covert get up and dance song, subtly woven with a lyrical call to arms that doesn't overbear, and imagine, if you could, something along the lines of the early B-52's fueled fun compiled with the Clash's urge to fight in the streets. It's a long stretch, but a stretch that is made easy with You Say Party We Say Die's haunting pulsating beats over the trademark din of their party that seems to be moving from stereo to club, torching everything in their path as they go, and all along, doing this with huge smiles on their faces.