

Four-eyed Esoteric Charm

Written by Albie Cyclone

'And you'll ask yourself, where is my mind?' The Pixies.

In an attempt to grasp the 'in your mind' of 'Richard In Your Mind' – Sydney-based psychedelic four-piece – I had too much coffee one clear sunny morning with front man Richard Cartwright. The following is a representation of some of what he had to say about everything. (This interview sort of takes the form of statement/answer more so than question and answer but such is time and too much coffee with Richard's mind)

TIME.

Time is amazing. It's so valuable. Justin Heazlewood, The Bedroom Philosopher, once said to me (in a voice of one imparting knowledge) 'Rich, you know, if time's a commodity, then I'm a rich man'. So I might not have heaps of money and I might be technically unemployed but I've got all the time to do what I want to do and that makes me happy and in a way, very wealthy, and that's brilliant.

Fact: *First year out of high school Richard went on a six-month tour with the Bell Shakespeare Company. The production? Stormboy and yes of course, Richard was Stormboy.*

ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIENCE.

I don't know exactly what I believe as far as religion or stuff like that but I do believe in the power of the mind and that it does amazing things. I think to sit and explore your mind is a really valuable thing for a human being to do. Music, and altered states have always gone so well together. If you listen with headphones on it's like there's a landscape to the music... you certainly don't need drugs, of course, to explore music and feel that landscape but if you do you can often discover some things you might not have otherwise. You can have different experiences and obviously every experience you have effects who you are as a person...

...I know that I've had weird teleportational experiences and 360 hallucinations where I've put my hand on a wall and it started to breath and my hands started to move and I thought, this is like the stomach of a cow breathing, but my hands are moving, this is really happening – obviously this is happening in my mind somehow, but it did still happen. Whether an experience happens on drugs or whatever, you still had it. I think some people discount them and say you were on drugs and you were tripping out but I think no matter how it happened something amazing happened. I've had other experiences that weren't on drugs and have been like that too. I'm sure people have them whether it's through family, love, sex, meditation or whatever and I think all of those experiences stay with you.

Fact: *Richard has a dog called Ravi. It stares at me across kitchen bench from Richard's lap. Unnerving.*

SONG WRITING.

I like the concept of just words where people put together their own meaning. You know, if you put the words BLUE CAT together - some people will think of a sad cat and others a bright blue glowing neon one. The fact that when you leave words ambiguous and go on a bit of a stream of conscious thing people may follow your train of thought and find similar things to what you found or something different. I've started to be a bit craftier than I used to be. I think in the beginning I would just write a stream of conscience song and maybe not be happy with some of it but be like, that's the way it came out so that's the song. Whereas now I might actually try and make it better.

One that I edited a bit more is the song about dark energy. That's a really crafted song where I go into the physics concept of dark energy and gravity and the forces of the universe pushing and pulling and stuff like that. So I did research and tried to find concepts and words that fit into a song so I could tell the story a bit better. Also, I knew if I was going to talk about physics or anything like that there was going to be millions of people who know shitloads more than I did so I shouldn't try to say anything like, this is the way it is. But I definitely think there's a balance between trying to craft a song and letting a song happen. I think sometimes it takes a bit of both but sometimes it just happens and sometimes you can work hard.

FACT: *A corner of Richard's lounge room ceiling is held up by a stick!*

THE DAY JOB?

At the moment I'm unemployed and doing music. But that's been a very conscious decision. You can sort of half do something as long as you want until you kind of go – I'm going to do it! And since I've been focusing we've done things like won Triple J unearthed and played at The Big Day Out, so it seems to be working a bit. It can be frustrating when you're working too much and trying to lead a creative lifestyle plus have some sort of normal life. Sometimes it works really well for creativity - battling against something but I like having time and being able to wake up in the morning and practise songs and write songs.

Fact: *Richard worked at Vinnies for five years.*

ART=MUSIC?

The development of a sense of self goes hand in hand with the development of how you create your art... I feel like I'm having a good life if I'm having successful art creation. But, RIYM is a pop band and we don't want to make music that's too self-indulgent and too inaccessible; while maintaining some sort of reflection of an artistic, creative ideal... which is probably one that has to do with a peacefulness.

Fact: *In Richard's kitchen there is a picture of Buster Keating and one of Charlie Chaplin; both of whom he is a little reminiscent of me thinks...*

VISUAL AESTHETIC.

We try not to let it get too gimmicky. We want to have really interesting band photos and present ourselves in an interesting way and not do it just for the sake of it, make it another artwork in itself. For the live shows our friend Nick does lights– that's the one way we add to our visual aesthetic. We've had a go with actual visuals but I really like –

now I wouldn't say I'm an egomaniac – people to look at me! (laughs and laughs)... Not that I think I do things that are that weird, but I still try to express to people as a performer, so I found the visuals distracting.

We want to try and develop the live show a bit more, it's hard with the Flaming Lips thing, they've just done so many wonderful things visually and in the way they present themselves, it's hard to not seem like your ripping them off. I'd love to have people dancing around in giant suits and I wish I'd thought of pouring fake blood on me – even though they admit to ripping everyone off.

I do plan on getting a haircut before I play next (giggles). I don't think we're a band that worries too much about our look. We do in the way that I think humans inevitably do at some point, think about the way they present themselves and try to make it better.

Fact: *Richard's laughter can be giddy, boyish, goofy and sinister. At one point he goes to laugh and it comes out as an open-mouthed silent wheeze; like an old man. It's hilarious.*

HOW ABOUT THE NAME.

It plays with the fact that if you grow up being called Richard, you know, your name is also Dick, so obviously there's this weird thing of 'Dick in Your Mind'. It's something that we don't necessarily try to enhance or draw attention too but obviously people sometimes think of it. Some people have said, 'is that a clever way of saying mind fuck?' And I'll be like, 'oh, yeah that's interesting'. I could wax lyrical about all the weird stuff that comes with being called Richard, and Richard In Your Mind, but hmmm...

Fact: *I never even thought of that...*

RELEASING AN ALBUM.

More a mini album or swelled up ep, not quite a full mars bar but certainly if it were just a fun size it would be the best fun size you ever saw, yeah it's bigger than small and its called... 'A Field Companion' - like a guidebook, or a friend who hangs out with you in fields, or like a little spirit hovering around in your aura, like an energy field companion, something like that anyway and it should be out hopefully in June.

Fact: *Richard In Your Mind indubitably rocks the inner most corridors.*