

'THE BAND ARE A FLAWLESS LINE-UP OF MUSICIANS'
MUSICHOST NETWORK



BISCAY

THE FUTURE OF MUSIC FROM THE PAST

Biscay's songs are **shamelessly retrospective, fusing jazz, funk and soul grooves**. This contrasts with the songs' **contemporary subjects**, which wryly bemoan the state of the modern world.

Biscay thrive on this contrast - much like the part of the Atlantic from which they take their name, their music combines smooth sounds with the turbulence of **21st century urban life**.

Their debut, 6-track EP '**Burnt Mementos**', released on **Friday March 24th 2017**, explores a range of topics from the **flawed worship of good looks, the pointless pursuit of status, bad dates and worse relationships**. The lyrics are **semi-autobiographical**.

PERSONNEL

Biscay's 6-strong line-up hail from London and Birmingham, making their ideal gig location Newport Pagnell services. They remedied their post-Brexit gloom in 2016 by recruiting 21-year old, French lead singer, Eléa May. Originally from Montpellier, and now a London resident for two years, she is still coming to terms with the weather and the appalling cheese.

The driving force behind Biscay is guitarist Phil Danter, who writes all the original music and lyrics, and pays for everything. Eléa and Phil are joined by drummer Ben Haines, keyboardist Kris Chase-Byrne, Bassist Rich Beardmore and Saxophonist Mikey Davis.

Biscay's primary objective in 2017 is to take themselves much, much more seriously.



[LISTEN TO THE EP HERE](#)



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FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT
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SONG NOTES

The six tracks on *Burnt Mementos* are all written by Phil (with the exception of the French rap lyrics on *Your Cold Heart*, penned by Eléa and Thomas Melograna). Phil's songs have seen considerable past success, 4 of them winning categories in the Indie International, Hollywood and UK Songwriting Contests in 2014/5.

Here's the track-by-track guide for *Burnt Mementos*:

1. **Pretty People** – A light, poppy groove recalling Michael McDonald, which contrasts with the bitter polemic about the annoyingly good looking.

2. **Little Miss Kryptonite** – A Steely-Danesque bluesy shuffle, with a dark tale of a woman so disappointed by men that her default mode becomes attack.

3. **Good Odds, Odd Goods** – A retro Acid-Jazz groove combines with a thoroughly modern tale about men's less than reliable dating profiles.

4. **Arromanches** – Slowish blues with unconventional chord changes and a story contrasting the heroism of D-day soldiers to the lives of today's lazy beachgoers.



5. **Space Dust** –

An old band favourite was the Dutch group Focus, which this recalls a little (with Hammond but without yodelling), whilst the lyrics espouse a mechanistic view of the universe.

6. **Your Cold Heart** – This mixes up pop, prog riffs, Brian May guitar and French rap! The lyric conveys the raw anger of being dumped, which we're sure feels the same in French or English.

REVIEWS

"Biscay juxtapose sweet, infectious melodies with sardonic lyrics...Elea May's vocals are underpinned by a crisp, simmering, guitar-driven backbeat, and augmented by mellow Rhodes piano, and horns, whose jazz-infused arrangement betrays shades of Steely Dan."

- Charles Waring, *Soul and Jazz and Funk*

"...another British concern coming into the scene that will only add to (the UK's) dominance in the field (of Jazzy, R&B-inflected pop)... most impressive are the tracks that convincingly evoke the kings of 70s jazz-pop, Steely Dan"

- S. Victor Aaron, *Something Else!*

"Biscay's smooth, saxophone-laden sound is firmly rooted in the 70s heyday of the genre...with catchy turns of phrase, offbeat timing, intricate harmonies and stylish keyboard runs...Far from just recycling the genre, this retrospective adds a post-modern twist with contemporary lyrics"

- *Photo groupie*



INTERVIEW

You say the future of music is in the past....can you expand on that?

Phil: I think the fact Mark Radcliffe still presents Glastonbury symbolises the continued significance of past decades, and the revenge of the granddads can be seen everywhere: the honouring of icons who passed in 2016, their peers who remain and continue to headline festivals, the significant growth in vinyl sales, the fact that The Stones are still Universal's biggest artist.....all suggest the elephant in the room is that popular music simply was better in the 70s, but then I would think that wouldn't I.....

Eléa: I agree! My musical taste has been so heavily influenced by my father's record collection, which is almost all 60s and 70s jazz, funk and soul.....it was why I really wanted to join Biscay! I could see we had a shared passion for this music, so I ignored the fact that most of them are in their 30s...

So does this mean that you think all contemporary music is rubbish?

Phil: Not at all!! But I definitely find that I have a preference for artists who honour the past, even when their music sounds incredibly fresh and innovative. I think Everything Everything and Tuneyards are perfect examples....There are also artists who brilliantly bridge the past to now - Radiohead do that better than anyone.

Eléa: There's also an extraordinary bunch of young jazz musicians who make jazz sound like rock and rock sound like jazz....I love Snarky Puppy and Esperanza Spalding. I think there are many young artists who share our love of things past....

Your music is hard to put into a genre....it's not jazz but it's not pop or rock either....is this a problem?

Phil: I think it is to the industry but it isn't to us....we live in a world where everything has to be categorised in order to be marketed and artists are forced to think that way by record companies. The irony is that many of the older artists who still make the record companies oodles of cash refuse to be categorise. Bowie was probably the best example....

Eléa:and he used a jazz band on Blackstar....



Phil: Yeah, Donny McCaslin's band...amazing musicians! I think the fact that the guys in Biscay have all played in so many different bands from 80s tributes to Hardcore Klesma, we're just not concerned with 'genres'....

Eléa:it just needs to be good, and sound like 'us'....

So your influences are pretty wide?

Phil: Yeah, we could give you a long list of achingly hip artists to sound impressive, but our guilty pleasures are probably more interesting...some of us have been known to like Barry Manilow, Kenny G, Slipknot, Roger Whittaker, The Smurfs....

So why the name Biscay?

Phil: We wanted something that had French connotations because of Eléa, and ideally something that hinted at the nature of our songs. Biscay did this because the Bay of Biscay is a particularly unpredictable stretch of ocean off the coast of France....

Eléa:and Kris our keyboard player first thought we said 'Biscuit' and he eats loads of them....

How about the recording process for 'Burnt Mementos', was that similarly retro?

Phil: Well, Ben our drummer is profoundly allergic to Iron Oxide so we couldn't record to tape, but we used Vale Studios in Worcestershire, which has a lovely old Neve desk and recorded the band live, plus a few overdubs, so it really sounds like how we are on stage...

Eléa: I did a guide vocal at The Vale 'cos I was really sick, and then did the final recordings at Oliver's Studio in Gloucestershire.

Phil: We then did a 'mix-off' competition between 5 different mixing engineers on one song, and chose Bobby Holland who works at Pentavarit Studios in Nashville....he's done an awesome job.

So if we come to see you what can we expect?

Eléa: Well, we do gigs in various combinations of the line-up... Phil and I sometimes do duet gigs and then it can be anything up to a full 8-piece with a full horn section. Our launch gigs for the EP will be the full line-up.

DEBUT EP BURNT MEMENTOS FIND MORE AT BISCAY.CO.UK

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