

AKIRA SUNSET

The grass is still greener here in New Zealand for Pine

By Benji Jackson



It's May, and contrary to what Neil Finn has said in the press, New Zealand Music Month is a showcase for some of the bands that get overlooked in the New Zealand music scene. Is it, then, a coincidence that jangle-indie-pop stalwarts Pine have come to the North Island and tied in their release to this date? "It is absolutely coincidental" Aaron Beehre retorts, after having a laugh about the general NZ Music Month question being the lead in to this interview. "We've been working on [new EP *12 Hour Collision*] for a while now. One of the live tracks took longer and it's only just been released. It was always going to be May when we released it."

"We knew [that] question was going to come up!" a jovial Stephen McCarthy divulges. "We've been talking about this a lot, and to us, we tend to think it doesn't mean that much. It means a lot to the general public in a way but it doesn't really cater to us because we go and see New Zealand bands all the same. I think people aren't into it at times because the focus is what we're doing anyway."

"That said, we haven't changed what we do, we just carry on," Hannah Beehre quickly points out, and after a general throb of discussion, points out why NZ Music Month might be lost on a lot more people: "I think that with changes to how music is distributed now from ten years ago also has a lot to do with things now - there's MySpace and iTunes and stuff so people can access more New Zealand music now. It's still an important month, but I think it's become less so due to technological advances."

"The industry has become a lot stronger; there's more of an output of New Zealand music now than there was

ten years ago." Aaron adds, "I can totally understand how a band might want to work around that." For Stephen though, there still is some importance for this time of the year: "[...] someone I was talking to the other day who isn't really into our music or NZ music as a whole heard that we were played on *The Rock*. Our music isn't normally played on *The Rock*, but because it was New Zealand Music Month, it was relevant!"

12 Hour Collision takes Pine to a dirtier, retrospective sound away from 2004's *Akira Sunrise*. Such was the sound the group had, one publication claimed if they were from North America, they would be much more prominent. "I think it could be true due to distribution, but we're quite happy playing Auckland, getting on with our lives and not signing up to a multi-million dollar deal and having to play six months straight in a year and then having to go into a recording studio. I'm quite happy to spend time just hanging out with these guys and have them hanging out with me" Chris answers. Hannah adds "I think it also had to do with the fact we had more of a broad audience with the number of people in the population and how much more of a population there is in North America to support those claims. Obviously there's going to be the same proportion but in a large amount of people."

"The interest for us doing it here is that we can play a gig and if not many people turn up, it's ok, as long as they're enjoying themselves" Stephen elaborates on staying in New Zealand. "To have a number one single has never really been a big aim would never happen with us so... yeah."

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