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TO HERE KNOWS WHEN - GREAT IRISH ALBUMS REVISITED

Chicks Dig Scars by Wormhole

“GNARLED, RAUCOUS POST-PUNK

NME

In last month's issue I reviewed *Parijuana Take 1* by **The Wormholes**, the Dublin band's long-lost second album that was originally recorded in 1996. For this month's column we go back a few years to the band's debut, 1994's *Chicks Dig Scars*. Back then the three-piece from Ringsend in Dublin - Graham Blackmore and twins Anto and Dave Carroll - were simply known as **Wormhole**: Graham played guitar and sang, Dave played the drums and sang, and Anto played the bass guitar.

Wormhole played their first gigs in 1992 in *Barnstormers* and the *Baggot Inn* but according to Anto, "we were really bad, doing covers that we annihilated - covers of Pixies' tunes, trying to do Nirvana, we were better off doing our own thing."

Wormhole's story is intertwined with the story of Dead Elvis Records, Fuse studio and the Dublin underground scene of the mid-90s. Dead Elvis was formed by Eamonn and Seán Óg Crudden, Eamonn Doyle and Marc Carolan.

"I was running gigs in an alcove in the basement of Fibber Magees. Jam Jar Jail played a gig and insisted on Wormholes being the support band," recalls Eamonn Crudden. "They blew me away. I thought it sounded like The Stooges."

Marc, who now does live sound for Muse, recorded and produced *Chicks Dig Scars*.

"Wormhole were not part of the main music scene in Dublin," he says.



"In the same way I wasn't one of the real recording engineers, or real producers so that's why we fitted together quite well. We were buzzing off each other, we didn't know about things that we weren't supposed to do."

The album was released on the Dead Elvis label. It was pressed on CD and sold for £5. At the time this seemed revolutionary and it inspired bands all over the country. "It was the first time that you could get a CD produced in Dublin, it was a big game-changer," says friend of the band and archivist Stephen Rennicks. "Wormhole and Dead Elvis seemed to be the first of that generation to put out a CD album themselves. Lots of other bands saw how easy it could be."

Wormhole signed to the metal label Roadrunner Records and *Chicks Dig Scars* was reissued with distribution and marketing clout behind it. Roadrunner released 'Lay It On' and 'Chopper' from the album as singles and the band toured the UK several times. The NME called *Chicks*: "gnarled, raucous post-punk" and Melody Maker wrote, "there's not been a debut like it since, you guessed it - Psychocandy".

A Wormholes' compilation was in the planning stages when Dave suffered a stroke, was diagnosed with cancer and died three months later on the fourth of June 2019. He was 49.

Allchival Records have released *Parijuana Take 1* and the compilation *You Never See The Stars When It Rains 1994-99*, both albums are available on Bandcamp.



Graham Blackmore, Anto Carroll, Eamonn Crudden, Stephen Rennicks and Marc Carolan revisit *Chicks Dig Scars* on *To Here Knows When - Great Irish Albums Revisited*, available on all podcast platforms. Episode notes and further information: www.paulmcdermott.ie/podcast



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