

TO HERE KNOWS WHEN - GREAT IRISH ALBUMS REVISITED

I Want Too Much by A House



IT'S THE ULTIMATE IRISH INDIE GUITAR RECORD THAT MADE EVERYTHING AFTER THAT POSSIBLE..

I Am the Greatest is a fantastic album and Dave Couse and Fergal Bunbury rightly deserved their NCH/IMRO Trailblazer Award when they reconvened as A House is Dead to play the album in 2019, but its predecessor, *I Want Too Much*, has always been my favourite. I love everything about it, from its cover portraits of four men who wanted too much (explorer Captain Robert Scott, gangster Al Capone, speed record breaker Donald Campbell and Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceauşescu) to the unadulterated abrasiveness within.

I Want Too Much was recorded on Inisbofin, seven miles off the Galway coast, in the deepest winter of 1989. Inisbofin is only a short ferry journey from Cleggan pier in Connemara but the band were out of reach of their record company in London.

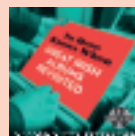
The remoteness of Inisbofin was all part of A House's plan. On *Our Big Fat Merry-Go-Round*, their debut album, didn't secure them a big hit. There was pressure from the label and the writing was on the wall: produce pop hits or face the chop. Rather than kowtow to label expectations they went to Inisbofin and recorded one of the angriest, rawest, and yet cohesive albums of its or any other time.

"We knew our only survival method was to go to Inisbofin and be single-minded in our approach to making this record," remembers Couse. "We knew we wanted it brash, we knew we wanted it loud and fast. We knew the cohesion was missing from the first album and we were absolutely determined to get it on this one."

I Want Too Much was produced by Mike Hedges using recording equipment that he purchased from Abbey Road when studio 2 was being upgraded in 1983. The console that he took out to Inisbofin had an astonishing musical heritage - Kate Bush and all four Beatles had recorded on it in the 70s. Most famously it's the console that Pink Floyd utilised to record *Dark Side of the Moon*. That doesn't impress me - to me it's the desk that was used to record *I Want Too Much*.

"It's the ultimate Irish indie guitar record that made everything after that possible," reflects Bunbury. "You can make a record that angry and cohesive with Mike Hedges on Inisbofin and release it into the world and be proud of it. There's not a note on it that I would change. You can do it, you don't have to be English or American, you can be from Dublin and make this record and make it sound this fucking good and this fucking hard."

Mike Hedges sold his Abbey Road equipment at auction in 2017 for €1.7m. A House's *Pre Extinction Tapes* (collections of demos, out-takes, live tracks and alt versions) is available on **Spotify**.



Dave Couse and Fergal Bunbury revisit *I Want Too Much* on *To Here Knows When - Great Irish Albums Revisited*, available on all podcast platforms. Episode notes and further information: www.paulmcdermott.ie/podcast