

SPARKS

Sparks return to Island Records for release of 26th studio album



January 24th 2023, London. Most other musicians, when they've been working for over half a century, are resting on their laurels, basking in the warm glow of their heritage, accepting the odd Lifetime Achievement Award, playing the odd Greatest Hits tour and concentrating on shifting their back catalogue. But Sparks are not most other musicians. They are utterly unique.

With the release of their 26th album, *The Girl Is Crying In Her Latte*, on May 26th Ron and Russell Mael continue on that unique and uncompromising path. And, in a move that is as unexpected as it is unsurprising, the new bold, genre defying, modern masterpiece will be released by Island Records, the label that released their astonishing breakthrough record *Kimono My House* in 1974.

"Funny how things work! One of the most memorable periods for Sparks, the one that forever cemented our relationship with the UK and also exposed Sparks to a bigger audience around the world, was the 70s Island Records era. Chris Blackwell, Muff Winwood, and Co. went all in on our album, Kimono My House, and released a truly non-conventional first single, This Town Ain't Big Enough For Both Of Us. Their belief (and ours) proved right: that there was a place for both bold creativity and commerciality in pop music. And here we find ourselves in 2023, almost 50 years later, re-signing with Island Records, again with an album that we all feel is as bold and uncompromising as anything we did back then, or for that matter, anytime throughout our career. We're happy that after so much time, we've reconnected with Island, sharing the same spirit of adventure that we all had way back when, but with our new album, 'The Girl Is Crying In Her Latte.'" **Ron and Russell Mael**

“Sparks have always been one of the most original, ground-breaking and creative groups in pop and their longevity is partly down to their ability to constantly reinvent themselves. It’s an honour and thrill having Sparks back on Island. Next year it will be 50 years since Island released “Kimono My House”. That album sounded like it came from the future and once again with “The Girl Is Crying In Her Latte”, Ron & Russell have created a pop masterpiece that sounds like no one else.”

Louis Bloom, Island President

*“Levels of interest in Sparks, worldwide, have never been so high. In part this is due to the releases of the Edgar Wright directed documentary *The Sparks Brothers* and *Annette*, the musical film *Ron and Russell* wrote, but it is also due to their seemingly inexhaustible creativity and sheer hard work. Each album is more ambitious, each tour larger and more far reaching. It was important to partner with a label who could match the band’s ambition on a global scale.”*

Sue Harris, Manager

To coincide with the album release Sparks will take to the road for a world tour that will include 2 sold out headline shows at London’s Royal Albert Hall and, in America, the soon-to-be-announced largest headline show of the band’s career.

About Sparks

Levels of interest in the work of Sparks are at heights unsurpassed in their 50+ year career, with the ultimate cult band now centre stage in the full beam of the spotlight.

Most people, with even a passing acquaintance with Sparks, will know the basics by now. How Californian brothers Ron and Russell Mael, both students at UCLA, began making music together in the late Sixties, originally under the name Halfnelson. How their *Top Of The Pops* debut with “This Town Ain’t Big Enough For Both Of Us” stunned a generation and nearly scored them a UK No.1. How their career moved through many phases, including (but not limited to) art rock, glam, big band swing, electro-disco, new wave and synthpop, taking in collaborations with Todd Rundgren, Les Rita Mitsouko, Tony Visconti, Franz Ferdinand and Giorgio Moroder.

How keyboardist and songwriter Ron’s intricate staccato arrangements combine with the acrobatic vocals in which Russell delivers his brother’s always-on-point lyrics. How Ron’s stillness and stern, intimidating visage contrasts onstage with Russell’s hyperactivity. How their popularity has spiked unpredictably in different territories at different times: Britain, France, Germany, Scandinavia, Japan, and their homeland the United States. And how the influence of “the greatest band you’ve never heard of”, or “your favourite band’s favourite band”, has been recognised by successive generations of artists from Joy Division to Duran Duran to Depeche Mode to Bjork to Beck to The Darkness and beyond. Their influence on music cannot be overstated - as super-producer Jack Antonoff recently declared “all pop music is re-arranged Sparks”.

Now into their sixth decade of making music, Sparks have never been more relevant.

Once more Top 10 regulars, with studio albums *Hippopotamus* (2017) and *A Steady Drip, Drip, Drip* (2020) both reaching No.7 in the UK and receiving global acclaim, the lauded career-spanning documentary film *The Sparks Brothers*, directed by Edgar Wright (*Shaun Of The Dead*, *Hot Fuzz*, *Baby Driver*) and released in 2021, brought an awareness of Sparks to parts they previously hadn’t reached.

Sparks' 2021 film musical *Annette*, directed by Leos Carax and starring Adam Driver and Marion Cotillard, which almost swept the board in France at that year's César and Lumières Awards with eight wins and seven nominations across the two ceremonies, including the César for Best Original Music, and also fared well elsewhere, with a Golden Globes nomination for Cotillard, and 'So May We Start' shortlisted for Best Original Song at the Oscars. Focus Features have recently announced the studio is developing *X-Crucior* a musical epic written by Ron and Russell.

www.allsparks.com

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