



IRASCIBLE MUSIC



LAMBCHOP (USA)

Album: TRIP

Label: City Slang

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Web: <https://www.lambchop.net>

EPK: irascible.ch/releases/lambchop/trip

In the fall of 2019, Lambchop's Kurt Wagner had a unique idea: In lieu of going on what would become an economically disastrous tour, he would invite the band to Nashville to make a record as a way to provide them with similar financial support and realize something tangible in the process. Each band member was tasked with choosing one song for the band to cover, and leading the recording session to completion each day.

Wagner says, "My idea was to see what might happen if I removed myself from the process and the content as much as possible. In doing so, what surfaced were elements that have always been there but maybe got overshadowed by my songwriting and process."

Recorded December 2–7, 2019, at Battletapes in Nashville, TN, and produced, engineered, and mixed by Jeremy Ferguson (with the exception of "Reservations" which was co-mixed by Ferguson and Matthew McCaughan), *TRIP* sounds like a culmination of the band's older work and current work. There's a looseness and freedom that recalls their older sound mixed with a group sophistication and innovation derived through the process of playing together for so long. The title *TRIP* refers to the circumstances surrounding its creation and the endeavor of "touring" itself. "It also seems to describe a life in music and the situations we created in our life as a band over the years," Wagner adds. "It's been a trip..."

Song notes from the players:

"Reservations" (Jeff Tweedy) 12.04.19

chosen by Matthew McCaughan

I'd like to say that Wilco's "Reservations" is a song I've always wanted to cover. But honestly, after a friend had mentioned it in a story, I had to go back and give it another listen. Picking out a cover is stressful for me.

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It's kind of a dumb thing to stress about, but so many songs have memories tied to them, and I don't want to cloud those memories. I usually pick one of those songs that I feel would fit the band, but then I go back and forth, wondering the best way to approach the arrangement. Should we honor the original and try to faithfully re-create all the sounds and performances that make the song special to me, or should we take it apart and start over? Then, add in the fact that the cover would be recorded and preserved forever. I could not think of one song that I couldn't make an argument for both approaches, so it always ends in a one-person stalemate. So I decided I would pick a song that, while I love it, and know it, it wasn't one that had been on repeat for months at some point in my life, nor was it one that is permanently tied to some memory of my own. Instead, I used my family's and friends' collections and recollections with and without their permission. That way I'd just ruin it for them. But it's the thought that counts.

“Where Grass Won't Grow” (Earl “Peanut” Montgomery) 12.02.19

chosen by Paul Niehaus

Upon having recently become familiar with the George Jones version of the tune, I loved it. It had the right amount of pity, hard luck, and redemption for a proper Lambchop cover, and a vocal melody that I knew Kurt could do something great with. We changed it up a bit, but somewhere exists an even more country version of “Grass.”

“Shirley” (Jamie Klimek and Jim Crook) 12.03.19

chosen by Matt Swanson

I first encountered the magnificence of Mirrors when Lambchop splinter group CYOD opened for the Styrenes at Betty's Grill, April 2010. They played “Shirley” during their mesmerizing set, despite their earlier trepidation concerning the “swamp gas” permeating the room. “Are we gonna blow up... ya know, if a spark or open flame ignites the air?” mumbled keyboardist Paul Marotta meekly on the sidewalk. The affable local promoter assured them the stench was perfectly normal, and with some gentle coaxing, they sheepishly reentered the bar after a brief huddle and proceeded to blow our minds instead. The very next day, I borrowed the sprawling and essential compilation *Those Were Different Times: Cleveland 1972–1976* and a CD of various singles, including “Shirley,” from a local fanatic and was instantly hooked.

When Kurt first asked the band to start thinking of a cover choice, I didn't have to think too long. “Shirley” came on during a long drive to North Carolina and it felt possible, at least as far as murder ballads interpreted by Lambchop are concerned. So I hit repeat several times somewhere east of Dollywood and started scheming. I managed to get the address of Mirrors lead singer and guitarist Jamie Klimek from former Mirrors/Rocket from the Tombs bassist Craig Bell. Found a cool antique postcard of Tahiti at a dusty shop in Boone and wrote a short message asking permission to cover the song, some questions about the lyrics, and included my phone number. Three weeks later, I answered an unknown number, and with that unmistakable north Ohio accent, the voice on the other end said, “I gotta give you points for your approach, kid,” punctuated with a charming chortle I am happy to say I've heard many times since that call. “The band still give me a

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lotta shit for wearing that white button-up shirt you see on the cover of the *Something That Would Never Do* album,” Jamie sighed on another call, “but it was 1975 and I was young and I didn’t care. I still don’t.”

“Golden Lady” (Stevie Wonder) 12.05.19

chosen by Andy Stack

I wanted to choose an earnest love song, a chance to display the tenderness that we’ve come to know from Kurt, Tony, and the boys. But love is complex, and we discovered that you never find tenderness without a hint of melancholy, darkness, and maybe a little Xanax.

“Love Is Here and Now You’re Gone” (Brian Holland, Edward Holland and Lamont Dozier) 12.06.19

chosen by Tony Crow

We’d tried to work up “P.Y.T.” years ago at a soundcheck and it didn’t really click. So, when Kurt was soliciting cover songs for this record, I suggested “Love Is Here...,” not even thinking about the Supremes’ huge #1 hit from 1967. To us, it was the flip side of “Rockin’ Robin.”

“Weather Blues” (James McNew) 12.07.19

chosen by Kurt Wagner

This James McNew song is, as far as I know, unreleased, and being our friend, it seems to come as close as you can get to a special appearance on this type of release. He sends me stuff to hear from time to time, and this one haunted me. I liked it on a lot of levels. I was visiting my mom like a month before she passed away. She was really fading in and out of awareness at that point. But when I came into the room and stood next to her, she sort of lit up a bit and looked just like a baby. It kinda blew my mind. James’ song reminds me of that moment.

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