



The Places Between: The Best Of Doves
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"We've always been sonically adventurous" says **Jimi Goodwin**, talking about **Doves** stunning career retrospective ***The Places Between***. "We take all our musical influences and put them through a filter and the result ends up as Doves. There's a chemistry between us which is as strong as ever. And looking back over the last twelve years I'd say it's a pretty good run of music out of three people."

As self-analysis goes, it's typically humble, but then what else would you expect from Doves? In a pop world driven by arrogance and artifice, they stand alone as proof that rock'n'roll and integrity can go hand in hand.

In the course of a decade long affiliation with Astralwerks/Heavenly Recordings they've become one of Britain's best loved bands, achieving worldwide record sales of over two million amid universal critical acclaim, notching up two UK number one albums en route (not to mention Mercury nominations for *Lost Souls* and *Last Broadcast*). Perhaps most importantly of all, they've remained true to the ideals forged as teenagers growing up in the suburbs of Manchester.

"We've always been pretty stubborn and that self belief has carried us through" explains **Jez Williams**. "The thing about Doves is that we've always managed to bubble away just underneath the mainstream, which can be great and frustrating at the same time. But it's allowed us to follow our own path. And in a funny way I think the fans appreciate that."

Their history you probably know by now. About how brothers Jez and **Andy Williams** met Jimi Goodwin at 15 and forged a lifelong friendship from their shared passion for music. How the trio's incarnation as Sub Sub -inspired by ecstatic trips to UK legendary club The Hacienda - saw them hit number three in the UK with the sublime "Ain't No Love (Ain't No Use)" in 1993 only to lose their way until their rebirth as Doves. How the success of 2000's debut album *Lost Souls* spawned the widescreen vision of *The Last Broadcast* just over two years later. And, more recently, how the civic concerns of 2005's epic *Some Cities* paved the way for *Kingdom Of Rust* - most sane people's album of the year in 2009. None of which, of course, tells you anything about the beauty and majesty of the music they've created over the years.

In your hands then, is *The Places Between*, a painstakingly compiled look back at Doves first twelve years. From the opening chorus of "There Goes The Fear" ("*Think of me when you're coming down/ But don't look back when leaving town*") through classic debut single "The Cedar Room" to the sonic maelstrom of "Jetstream", CD 1 is a seamless reminder of Doves unique knack of blending nostalgia, euphoria and social comment with gleaming musical modernism.

Taking a cue from some of the band's favorite Best Of and collections by their favorite recording artists, Jimi, Jez and Andy thought it was important to compile and sequence the album themselves. Rather than a singles collection or a simple chronological run through their career, for the *The Places Between* they've sought to create a combination of album tracks, singles and B-sides to take you on a very personal journey of their 12 year career so far.

"There are some that I absolutely love" begins Jez "like Neil Young's *Decade*, which got me into him in the first place. So we deliberately set out to show both sides of Doves. There are the

songs people might know and then there's the more experimental side."

Andy cites Leonard Cohen's *Greatest Hits* as a perfect introduction to a favorite artist, while Jimi highlights another broodingly enigmatic band from the North who's crystalline. "My favorite would be Echo and the Bunnymen's *Songs to Learn And Sing*" he says. "It's a singles collection but it's so good and compiled so beautifully it becomes an album in itself."

Which brings us neatly to CD 2. From the shiver-down-the-spine acoustics of "Northenden" to a heart-wrenching "Friday's Dust" –recorded in the basement of The Capitol Records building in LA– it's a goldmine for diehard fans and newcomers alike.

"On "M62 Song" we recorded the vocals under a motorway bridge" laughs Andy." We recorded "Ambition" in an Abbey in Scotland which was due to be demolished. I've got lots of great memories of recording in cottages in Cumbria, Wales and Darlington searching for the right sound."

Rummaging through their back pages inevitably brought back a lot of personal memories. "It was really poignant listening back to "Almost Forgot Myself"" adds Jez. "It's one of those songs which came together very quickly. We recorded it in some mad barn south of Newcastle, and the demo had this amazing soul quality we never captured again."

"I hadn't heard "Sulpher Man" for years" adds Jimi. "Listening to it I was right back in the moment when we recorded and arranged it, sitting in my front room doing the lyrics together."

Doves aficionados, meanwhile, will welcome the three brand new tracks. If barnstorming new single "Andalucía" is a reminder of a band still at the peak of their powers, and "Drifter" (featuring Cherry Ghost's Simon Aldred) a delirious, hug-your-mates anthem, it's the inclusion of the epic "Blue Water" that neatly ties in with the sense of old and new. "Blue Water" is a song which has been knocking on our door since 2001" laughs Jimi. "But we finally cracked it."

"It feels like we've finally tidied up the house" adds Jez.

Oh, and that title? "It's inspired by a brilliant book by Rory Stewart called *The Places In Between*" explains Jimi. "It's about this guy's travels through Afghanistan just after the first invasion in 2002. It also links in with a DVD we did called *Where We're Calling From* which was inspired by a collection of short story by Raymond Carver (*Where I'm Calling From*). It just seemed to feel right and capture a feeling. And besides, we can't call it a greatest hits because we've only had one!"

"Lyrically, a lot of the songs are based around travel" adds Andy. "They're more about the journey than when you arrive. We've been in the band a long time, but we've always felt restless. We've never wanted to settle. We've always wanted to do new things."

Which is where we came in. Sit back, then, and enjoy over a decade's worth of music from the best band in Britain (just don't tell them that). They hope you enjoy it as much as they enjoyed compiling it.

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