**The Offspring – Bio**

The sound is recognizable in the first few seconds. The rumbling bass lines, the thundering drums, breakneck guitar riffs that explode out of the speakers and that voice, a searing howl equal parts snarl and desperation. This is **The Offspring**, kids, singer **Dexter Holland**, guitarist **Noodles**, drummer **Pete Parada** and new bassist **Todd Morse**. SoCal legends ready to plant their punk rock flag in the sand once again with their blistering new album *Let the Bad Times Roll.*

The album is the band’s 10th, but their first new offering in eight years. There wasn’t a break up, no hiatus (they’ve kept up a steady level of touring during the span between albums), simply the band likes to take their time. And Holland had something else he needed to wrap up, finally getting his Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from USC, a 30-year odyssey that culminated in his thesis on the makeup of the HIV virus. “I had kept in touch with my professors and they encouraged me to come back and finish it up,” he says. “The band was cool about it,” before adding with a laugh “and that only took five years.”

The material on *Let the Bad Times Roll* was written and recorded at various times during the last eight years. Highlights include the devastating urgency of “The Opioid Diaries” and the horn-fueled skank of “We Never Have Sex Anymore” a song that nods to the band’s cheeky humor but underneath is the story of a guy who just wants his wife to feel anything towards him, love or hate. “I had written most of that song five years ago and finally put it together,” says Holland. “We do better when we work in spurts.”

*Let the Bad Times Roll* finds the band collaborating with mega producer **Bob Rock** for the third time, working in Rock’s studios in Maui and Vancouver as well as the band’s own recently completed studio in Huntington Beach. Rock has become an increasingly important part of the band’s creative process. “First off, he’s an amazing guitar player so he’d play a small part and we would go back and forth with it and it usually turned into something we used,” says Holland. Rock also pushes Holland on his songwriting. Nicely of course. “I’ll have a line and he’ll like it,” says Holland. “But a few minutes later, he'll kind of put it back on you in a way that makes you feel like, okay, maybe I can, maybe I can get a little bit more out of this.”

The album contains some of Holland’s most direct and intense lyrics to date. The scourge of mental illness hovers throughout, especially on the fierce “Army of One” that has a surf guitar line that would make Dick Dale proud and the epic “Breaking These Bones” which slots next to classic Offspring anthems such as “Gone Away” and “The Kids Aren’t All Right.” Says Holland: “We've been talking about mental illness in rock and roll especially, for a long time, but it seems to be more on the table to me now. I think that that's great. I don't want to put too fine a point on it in songs like ‘Breaking These Bones’ and ‘We Never Have Sex Anymore’ because I want people to be able to interpret it on their own so hopefully that makes it more relatable.”

Holland remains unafraid to pen topical material, but instead of taking the easy route in, say, bashing Trump, the title track and first single takes a more nuanced look around and what is happening in present day society. “I feel like we're in a unique period in history where instead of our world leaders saying ‘we’re doing our best’ it’s more of a stubborn mentality where they’re not making the slightest attempt to fix things, it’s like ‘fuck it, bring on the North Korea nukes, bring on white nationalism.’ It's a much different attitude than I've seen in the past. And it’s really fucking scary.”

In times of tumult, punk has been the leader in addressing what ails society, but in 2020 it’s a weird time to be in a rock band. The ‘rock is dead’ trope is uttered as often as the latest trap banger gets played on the radio. But with other legendary acts such as Green Day, Bad Religion and Rage Against the Machine along with up-and-comers like Idles and PUP, rock and roll is still vital component of today’s culture, a genre that can smack you upside the head with nihilism but then offer a ray of sunlight through the darkened windows. “This album is probably the most cathartic thing we’ve done,” says Holland. “The messages might be dark, but at the end what’s left is that communication is important, working through feelings is important and most of all, hope is important.” Then let the bad times roll for now, in the hopes that good times lie ahead.