



CHAPTER 7

Getting Mashed

Next to halt progress was somebody jumping in front of a tube train in June 2007. Let me explain. Joe worked for London Underground (still does) as a train driver and one day somebody committed suicide by jumping in front of the train Joe was driving. Joe is a tough guy mentally and physically, but this seriously fucked him up. He was signed off sick and needed to take some time out from everything to get his head back together, which meant from Clinker too. We couldn't rehearse without him (well we tried a few times but it didn't really work) so we waited for him to get better.

Meanwhile we carried on recording. Marcus, with help from his other band The Shagmunroes, was recording proper drums for the tunes in their cellar and the difference that made to them was astounding. We even re-recorded an old Reg Varney Trio tune "What You Done" (funnily enough Marcus didn't play on that one). Tomoko even learnt Seans guitar solo pretty much note for note from an old recording.

By now I'd decided to name the album "Clinker" as a statement about Clinker now being a band and not just me (or me and Tomoko).

We even got some radio airplay in June on the irreverent Old Jock Radio a Scottish internet station that goes out weekly. They did a track review thing where the panel talk about the tune and vote it either a hit or a miss. The listeners also get to vote and comment using MSN. One of the panel was Steve Mason (ex-Beta Band) who's a bit of a hero of mine (though I don't really do or believe in heroes). They played "Overspill=Calamities" and Steve actually said it was "quite interesting, probably one of the best on the night" though did moan about the lack of a chorus, whilst admitting he could be "talking out of his arse" cos some of the Beta Band stuff didn't



have choruses either". He said he wanted to hear more of our stuff, so I reckon he liked it. More quotes from the panel....

Andy Cook - "I like that...I like that thing where you think its gonna be quite folky and run of the mill and then weird stuff happens and it all goes a bit Syd Barrett or something....I like that disrespect of the three minute pop song...I'm gonna say it was a hit".

Richard Bray - "I quite liked it...hit".

Then a sample from the notoriously tough OJR listeners...

"Got Better...hit"

"I don't get it, but it's nice to hear Pinky and Perky are still giggling...miss"

"Had quite a nice milkshake through it...hit" (dunno what he means but...)

"Make it stop!"

"It's an orgy of a bad John Lennon impersonator, military drummer and Alvin and the chipmunks. Quite liked it...hit"

"Its ok-ish....copyright Beta Band...hit".

"I was thinking this song was ok until the Alvin and the Chipmunks bit...miss"

"The best song tonight by a mile. Sounds like Dr Dre producing Pink Floyd. Superb, loved it, a definite hit".

All votes counted though, it was A HIT!

Tomoko had also started doing her own material as DTT, which was more dance orientated, around the concept of space travel. We also made a few new Opera Dog tunes too.



On top of all that, we started doing mashups as Opera Dog in September. So many came together in a short space of time. Tomoko also made videos for each mashup and uploaded them to youtube. They proved to be really popular straight away, so we uploaded them onto various other mashup sites. On one that had a top 50 chart we had various number ones and at times dominated the chart. We also got some favourable reviews...

*A review of "**Sweet Block Rockin' Annie**"*

"Here is something a bit different from our usual posts here. From Opera Dog comes this fantastic video mashup! This is a real funky track with a real funky video to match! There is something very "right" about putting the oddities of the Eurythmics 80's artsy videos mashed with the chemically induced raving Chemical Brothers. They somehow meet in the middle to make a happy ending for everyone. Yay to happy times!" - Mashupciti

*A review of "**Austin Powers, That's Not My Name**"*

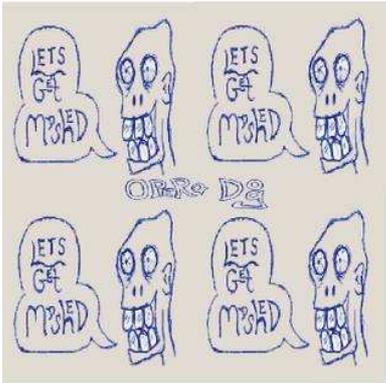
"From Opera Dog comes a sweet quality video mashup that deserves a pat on the back and possibly a mashup cookie. This tune makes me a happy masher. It just gets that itch!" – Mashupciti

*A review of "**Daft Gorillaz**"*

"Sweet video/tune mashup from Opera Dog! This one is pretty cool with its upped tempo for daft punk and the cool vocals of Noodle from the Gorillaz. Good stuff!" – Mashupciti

Jules from The Ting Tings liked the mashup we created, using their song "That's Not My Name" (mashed with the Austin Powers theme). He got us free tickets for their gig at Brixton Academy to say thanks.

He's even mentioned it in interviews. On the flip side Simian Mobile Disco weren't happy we'd used their tune at all and nearly got us taken off Myspace (we set up a "Let's Get Mashed" mashup Myspace too). Fuckers! Still we were declared the "Kings of Mashups" by one listener (though surely it shoulda been King and Queen, haha).



Also in September I did a remix of The Girobabies "Smoking Ban" and Lifeforms made a great video for it. The original was just a live recording of vocals and acoustic guitar. It's a brilliant, on the ball, witty observation about the government taking our rights away from us. The Girobabies are from Scotland and they had the smoking ban first up there. I gave it a dubby trippy kind of backing. I think Tomoko may have added a few bits too. It got a bit of airplay on internet radio and was the first of a few remixes we've done for them.

In October, I was interviewed over the phone by Paloma from America for one of their Pirate Podcasts. It was weird being interviewed by phone. As many people know, I'm not a great lover of the phone, but it went ok and Paloma is lovely. I've met her a couple of times since, when she came to London.

Also in October I did a collaboration with a Serbian act Blackbox7 called "We Chase" which was a bit Primal Scream, a bit Krautrock and a bit 80's sounding. Most of the music was done by them. I added new beats (theirs were a bit cheesy), a bit of scratching and wrote and recorded the vocals.