

before that is your favorite record. I wanted to have a favorite record at this time and I want to talk about it and this is my favorite record. I'm glad to be able to say it because the last one I wasn't able to say it and the one before that I wasn't able to say it. There's an energy that was lacking on the last one, that and the one before that, Rob Collins died. I didn't like that. My favorite memory was Charlatans *Charlatans*.

Ben: That makes sense. *Tellin' Stories* was a fantastic record, but that must have been such a dark time.

Tim: It's tainted. I can't listen to that.

Ben: "North Country Boy" is one of your signature records though.

Tim: That is a great record. Also, to be fair to The Charlatans, that was a song written by me and Mark. Yeah, it was a big hit so we've got to play it. You have to make sense out of everything. We must have written 200 songs and you have to make sense out of every single song.

Ben: How has the group's dynamic changed now that you're living out here?

Tim: I'm responsible for words and inspiration and encouragement, really. Musicians are fucking lazy, you know. Naturally, I'm always lazy. They don't believe in how good they actually are. Once they learn how good they are, they just stay the same all of the time. You have to try to encourage them to change their style and drop everything they've ever learned and rediscover. The first reaction I got when I said I was moving to L.A. was "Well, that's the end of The Charlatans." That was one person in The Charlatans. From then on I've had to prove that it's going to be a great move for The Charlatans that I live here. There's insecurities always in a group of people and the first reaction was that there will be no Charlatans if you move to L.A. So you've got to deal with that, then you've got to go through four other members and ask if they're prepared to throw this away. The answer was that we'll fucking do it. It doesn't matter where you live or whether you're separated. I prefer the separation and these many miles away because me and Mark Collins wrote a lot of the songs together and we lived a mile away from each other and I'd try and get together with him and he'd be like "I can't do it this week." How about next week? "No, actually next week I'm really busy." It has to be planned. Tim's coming for a month so you've got to be there. It's more concentrated, rather than six weeks of I can't make it. Does that make sense?

Ben: That makes sense. You being apart forces people to take more action instead of taking it for granted.

Tim: That's the point I was trying to make and

that's the point I proved I'm right.

Ben: Was the last record recorded in England?

Tim: It was recorded in England. This one was half L.A. and half England. Actually you couldn't tell from listening to the record what was done where. I think starting off here was a really good call. We did seven songs in two weeks and then finished.

Ben: So it was recorded pretty quickly?

Tim: Yeah, and then we go through discourse and think about what we've done for a while and if there's a reason to change something, we'll change it really carefully so you don't lose the vibe but you make what you've done sound better and more direct. So we had a couple of months of that.

Ben: Could you describe the new record in more detail? You were saying that it has more of a dance element.

Tim: We caught a vibe and that's all I can say. We captured a moment and it's our moment I think. I think people will fucking jump on it. I do. They will because it's such a fucking great moment that we captured. If you tried to capture it now, no, but we caught that moment and I'm really excited.

Ben: That's what I've liked about your group. I think groups like Radiohead and Blur have become too self-indulgent. They kind of lost the plot. You make challenging records without losing people in the process.

Tim: Just by being out of sync almost. I think Charlatans fans look to us because we're intriguing. I think that's the only way you can describe our band. You don't know what's going to happen next, but you've got a fondness in your heart that you know that you're going to trust where you go. Fans might not like everything, but they're still going to buy it and they'll come back to it when the next record comes out. We've got a strength that people believe in us and we might make bad moves, we might make great moves, but people will always be intrigued about our band.

Ben: I think people are impressed because you're survivors. 99 percent of bands wouldn't be able to continue after losing someone like Rob. It think it shows your love of music, wanting to keep the whole thing going.

Tim: That's the key.

Ben: How long have you been DJing? Is that fun for you?

Tim: I'm not a DJ. I like playing records when people come around to my house. I had the honor

of being a DJ a number of times with the Chemical Brothers at the Heavenly Social and they looked to me because I didn't try to copy them. Everyone who used to DJ with them would try to compete with them and beat them and have the brand new records with the best beats and they would watch me in admiration because I would go [makes sound of needle dropping loudly on record]. I just played the records I wanted my ear to hear and they'd just watch and go, "you're definitely not a professional but I like what you're doing!" I just like playing records at home for my best friends.

Ben: The few times that I've DJed I'm fine once the music is playing but I'm always nervous about getting things set up right.

Tim: I only use one hand! For some reason, I only use one hand to do anything. It's my computer hand and my DJ hand. I can't cross fade. I'm not a good DJ. I like the fact that DJing is now punk deejaying.

Ben: That's definitely true with Radio 4. It's bringing rock 'n' roll back into the clubs.

Tim: The key with Alan is he can afford to fucking broaden his horizons with a simple idea. He got rid of this idiocy of daft DJs. Alan has expanded it so he can make it like a traveling circus. That's a new idea. It's an old idea but it's a new idea. Perry Farrell did it. Every idea that we've had before can translate into a new idea. What McGee's doing, I fucking love it and it's given my wife a job. She's now a promoter. It's fantastic. I live by records, you live by records... I love records and I love the importance of records.

Ben: You said it all on "Here Comes A Soul Saver."

Tim: I love that song and I forget about it because I do.

Ben: There were so many on that album, "Crashin' In," "I'm Just Looking"...

Tim: That was a great record. I think we did it in three months.

Ben: I think that record was really important because at the time the UK press was going crazy about Oasis and you had to prove yourselves.

Tim: That's right. There was one review that said The Charlatans have stopped copying The Stone Roses and now they're copying Oasis. A journalist called John Robb wrote a book about us. He had the fucking cheek to write a book about us after seeing Oasis. I was watching Oasis because a friend of mine at the time was working for Creation. This journalist guy comes up to me and goes, "Are you getting tips?" I was like, "I'm just fucking watching, you fucking idiot." He wrote a