



ERASURE 2017

NEW ALBUM - WORLD BE GONE

"There comes a point where you realise that as much as you love pop music, it can be a bit facile. You want to explore and be truthful to who you are. And I think that goes hand in hand with the current political climate." – Andy Bell

It's hard to think of another songwriting partnership as golden as that of Erasure. For 32 years, without a break or break-up, Andy Bell and Vince Clarke have mined a rich seam of creativity that has led to chart-conquering singles, a string of immaculate albums, a BRIT, an Ivor Novello Award and now *World Be Gone*, their seventeenth studio album.

Produced by the band themselves and recorded shortly after their 30th anniversary celebrations – during which they scored yet another UK Top 10 with their hits package *Always* – it sees the duo enter their fourth decade with renewed creative charge. Instead of the heady, euphoric dance music of their 2014 album *The Violet Flame*, on *World Be Gone* the mood is thoughtful, reflective and reminiscent of 1995's lush, experimental album *Erasure*.

"We've been doing dance albums for the past few years and I wanted this album to sound important, with a bit of soul searching," says Vince. "Obviously the current political climate lends itself to lots of ideas."

Andy adds: "I think there's an underswell of opinion and people are slowly waking up. I'm hoping that people will take the album in a positive way, that they'll use it as optimistic, rabble-rousing music."

Erasure's buoyant grooves have often contained allusions to serious subject matter, but on *World Be Gone* they explicitly confront dark forces, while continuing to celebrate love's light. 'Lousy Sum of Nothing' is a heartbreakingly beautiful ballad for our post-truth age, with a sublime, sky-scraping chorus. The title track aches with gorgeous melancholy for "*the loss of our souls*". 'Oh What A World' is dramatic and dystopian, "our version of an angry rap song," says Andy.

Throughout the album, Vince creates a resonant, gospel feel by layering Andy's unmistakable vocals. "I think Andy did an amazing job with the vocals," he says. "On the very early Erasure records, he did a lot of backing vocals and I wanted to make it really backing vocal heavy again."

"I loved doing all the choirs," Andy says. "The music is quite churchy in places, so it's definitely uplifting, melody-wise."

Recorded in London, New York and Miami, the starting point for the album was a mutual decision to slow things down. "My dancing days are over," grins Vince. "And

it's easier for both of us to tackle important issues with slower songs. It's a real art if you can make a disco song political. When you have a slower pace, you can get the words in, you can get the emotions in."

Andy agrees. "I'm in my 50s, I'm not going to be going around doing the splits any more. There comes a point where you realise that as much as you love pop music, it's a bit facile. You want to explore and be truthful to who you are. It's about growing up, really. And I think that goes hand in hand with the current political climate."

With the largest catalogue of high-gloss singles in British pop, Erasure are not a band that many associate with protest politics. But the spirit of resistance has always fuelled their gloriously uplifting music, and *World Be Gone* is no different. Opener 'Love You To The Sky' is a swooning love song that floods the album with light. 'Still It's Not Over' is a reminder of their place in the gay rights movement.

"We had to fight for our rights, had to steal the scene."

'Sweet Summer Loving', reminds us that all things will pass and is about Andy finding love again after the death of his partner. "You always want to be honest, but this time I wanted to be more honest. It's a lot to do with life experience and losing your partner. You have to be brave enough to let it all out and not be clichéd."

Vince says he hopes the album's sense of optimism will shine through. "That's really important. You want to make people feel good and feel that actually, while it might feel like everything is going downhill, it will go back up again. This isn't the end of the world."

The pair chose to close the album with 'Just A Little Love', a track where the joyful synth-pop of old bubbles to the surface. "That's the old-fashioned Erasure, saying hello, goodbye," smiles Andy. "The first track is upbeat so we thought it would be nice to end with an upbeat track too, because otherwise it's depressing!"

"Just a little love, not the hate that's calling. Just a little love and the walls start falling."

Since releasing their first single in 1985, Erasure have sold more than 25 million albums worldwide. Their 30th anniversary celebrations saw them deliver a Top 10 collection of singles, a 13-disc career-spanning box set and vinyl editions of their entire back catalogue. Since then, they've been busier than ever. In addition to recording *World Be Gone*, in 2016 Vince Clarke set up his own label, Very Records, releasing 2Square, his collaboration with Paul Hartnoll, and the Reed & Caroline debut, *Buchla & Singing*. Andy Bell continued to explore the character of Torsten through the critically acclaimed theatrical production *Torsten The Beautiful Libertine* and an album of the same name. A remix album, further detailing this "polysexual semi-immortal" character was released in 2016. Bell's solo debut album, *Electric Blue*, has been remastered and repackaged for release in 2017.

Erasure are delighted to have been invited as special guests on Robbie Williams' 2017 stadium tour, taking place in the summer.