

The Foo Fighters – by Ferris Kennedy

On June 28, 1993, Robert Lang Studios in Seattle Washington, where Robert Lang himself was cutting a slab of Chinese marble for the floor of his of studio, a blinding flash of light interrupted his work - which led to further evidence that his studio is a special and spiritual place. It was in this studio that the following summer Dave Grohl would take his first steps towards his creative rebirth.

After the suicide death of Kurt Cobain, Grohl was indeed sad, and lost - there was a void missing in his life, a portion of that void got filled when he married his girlfriend Jennifer Youngblood, but with the loss of Kurt, it definitely played an emotional ride on him, with good reason, loss of a bandmate, colleague, and most importantly a friend.

Being called alongside Krist Novaselic, they did some appearances at live shows, and were invited to in studio recordings: you don't want to be known as the rhythm portion of Nirvana, you still want to be known as you.

Does the name Mike Watt mean anything to anyone? Well, he was the Ex-Minutemen/Firehose bassist who called upon Grohl to lend his talents to the recording of his debut album Ball-Hog or Tugboat? Signed to Columbia Records in the post Nirvana gold rush. Watt had already recruited the likes of Eddie Vedder, Thurston Moore, J Mascis, Beastie Boy Adam Horowitz, Frank Black, Henry Rollins, Circle Jerk's Bassist Zander Schloss, and Jane's Addiction drummer Stephen Perkins for the project: needless to say Grohl did not require a second invitation.

Grohl had made selected recordings with Barret Jones in the basement of the Bellevue home they lived in. He selected twelve songs to re-record in the Robert Lang's soundproof bunker, in the aftermath of Cobain's death he had recorded 3 songs, "this is a call" "I'll stick around" & "Oh George", and they were re-recorded in the studio. In October 1994 15 songs were recorded and "this is call" was done in two takes.

In November of 1994, Dave Grohl was invited by Tom Petty and the heartbreakers to appear on SNL with them as they were without a drummer, and Dave turned them down as he just finished completing an album which would become the Foo Fighters first album. If it wasn't for Barrett to play Dave's Demo to a Seattle Radio Station DJ heard the song "I'll Stick Around", and with a little mixing, he decided to pursue this, and release 100 copies on cassette. Inspired by the former drummer of the Police Stuart Copeland to release the album under Klark Kent, he went with a more fictitious name FOO FIGHTERS, which came from the Second World War where US air Force patrol German skies and encounter strange aerial objects that resembled UFO's. The concept was to not draw any attention that it was Dave Grohl.

Originally Grohl only gave his demo tape to a select group of friends including Krist Novaselic, Nirvana tour manager Alex MacLeod, Gary Gersh, Mark Kates, and Ernie Bailey the former guitar tech for Nirvana who later became Foo Fighters guitar tech. It ended up spreading like Ebola and another impressed Seattle Luminary named Eddie Vedder got hold of it, and loved it so much he played it in the 3rd quarter of his 4 hour DIY Self Pollution radio show and aired some of the tracks. This happened on January 8 1995.

Foo Fighters was unofficially a band in late December 1994, and Grohl needed members as playing all these instruments live at a concert would be impossible, it was time to look for musicians and the second member is Bassist Nate Mendel, born and raised in Richland Washington.

Nate played in a punk rock band called Diddy Squat, he also played for Christ on a Crutch, Brotherhood, Sunny Day Real Estate, and Chewbacca Kaboom. In that same month, December 16 to be exact, Dave left a message for Will Goldsmith, a drummer who was with Sunny Day Real Estate, the call came when Dave found out that the night before he actually attended their last concert, figured if he wasn't going to be in a band tomorrow, he can be in the Foo Fighters.

Ironically enough Goldsmith did call back, he asked if he and Nate want to join him and Pat Smear in a band. Since Cobain's death, Pat wasn't doing much, sitting on his couch channel surfing and smoking cigarettes, Dave met up with him left him a demo tape in hoping Pat would like it. Once Pat listens to it, he said I want to do this and expressed he not only liked the tape, but is interested in joining up, and Dave Grohl's Foo Fighters were now officially a band... with that in mind there is always changes.

Prior to the release of Foo Fighters' 1995 debut album Foo Fighters, which featured Grohl as the only official member, Grohl recruited bassist Nate Mendel and drummer William Goldsmith, both formerly of Sunny Day Real Estate as well as Nirvana touring guitarist Pat Smear to complete the lineup. The band began with performances in Portland, Oregon, Goldsmith quit during the recording of the group's second album, The Colour and The Shape (1997), when most of the drum parts were re-recorded by Grohl himself.

Smear's departure followed soon afterward, though he would rejoin them in 2006. They were respectively replaced by Taylor Hawkins, and Franz Stahl. Taylor Hawkins was introduced to Grohl, by Alanis Morissette. He was the touring drummer for her, as well as the drummer in a progressive experimental band called Sylvia. Being introduced by Alanis is a nice little Canadian Music trivia, and in 2004, Hawkins formed his own side project, Taylor Hawkins & the Coattail Riders, in which he plays drums and sings. He was voted "Best Rock Drummer" in 2005 by the UK drumming magazine Rhythm.... (Micro Trivia). As for Franz Stahl, he got fired before the recording of their third album there is nothing left to lose. (1999) Not much to say there. The band continued as a

trio until Chris Shiflett joined as the band's lead guitarist in 1999. Chris being the younger brother of Scott Shiflett, Chris was part of a punk rock band No Use For A Name, as well as the punk rock cover band Me First & the Gimmies, Gimmies. Did I mention in 2006, Pat Smear returned, Smear was a founding member of the influential punk band the Germs and was touring guitarist for Nirvana, from 1993 to 1994. On September 15, 2017, the band released their ninth studio album, Concrete & Gold which became their second to reach #1 in the United States and was the band's first studio album to feature long time session and touring keyboardist Rami Jaffee as a full member, who was with the Wallflowers from the beginning.

Studio albums

- Foo Fighters (1995)
- The Colour and The Shape (1997)
- There Is Nothing Left To Lose (1999)
- One By One (2002)
- In Your Honour (2005)
- *Echoes, Silence, Patience, & Grace* (2007)
- Wasting Light (2011)
- Sonic Highways (2014)
- Saint Cecilia EP (2015)
- Concrete And Gold (2017)

On July 4, 1995 The Foo Fighters was released to the world on Grohl's own Roswell Records, distributed by Capital Records, featuring the artwork by Jennifer Youngblood, the wife of Dave Grohl. Now Foo Fighters are not Indie Rock, just in case people get bright ideas, as Roswell Records was distributed by Capital Records. This is not your typical independent label, its Dave Grohl, which today his name alone should speak volumes. In 2011 Grohl did an interview with Guitar Magazine discussing his song writing and he quoted "I approach every song trying to write the biggest chorus I possibly can. But then what I'll do is use that as the pre chorus and go ahead and write and even bigger F&\$%#@ chorus." There are 3 effective singles that this formula has proven to shine, alone + Easy Target, This is a call, and I'll stick around. Which fuse the Beatles & the Beach Boys to name a few.

In the tail end of 1991, Grohl recorded Alone + Easy Target, Floaty, and For All The Cows in the basement of the home he lived with Barrett James, Grohl wanted Kurt Cobain to hear Alone + Easy Target, Grohl went to Kurt's hotel room in LA at the time, played him the song on his Walkman and when it ended, Kurt took his headphones off, kissed Dave and said " Oh, Finally, now I don't have to be the only songwriter in the band" Grohl answered "No, no, no, I think we're doing just fine with your songs" and that was funny as Nirvana would play the " Alone + Easy Target" riff at sound check sometimes, and Grohl thinks Kurt really liked the chorus. A little micro trivia there for the one and only Dr. Ian Clarke. The start of the Foo Fighters and the big me song, will always be a big part due to Mike Watt, calling on Grohl to perform and record a few

songs, due to these moments in time, we have something legendary, and more micro trivia.

Foo Fighters have inspired many cultures as the years have passed, and lyrics for any band is always their trademark, each artist or writer is inspired by many different acts, trials, and most importantly life experiences. I was reading an article that highlighted Foo Fighters stunning lyrics.

What if I say I'm not like the others? - The Pretender

There goes my hero, watching as he goes - Hero

One day I'll have enough to gamble, I'll wait to hear your final call and be it all -

February Stars

Make my way back home when I learn to fly - Learn to Fly

I am in the sky tonight, there I can keep by your side - Next Year

It's time like these you learn to love again - Time like These

Maybe the season, the colours change in the valley skies, dear god I've sealed my fate, running through hell, heaven can wait - Long Road To Ruin

You and I were two old and tortured souls, repaired by a love of broken things - Statues

People I've loved, I have no regrets, some I remember some I forget, some of them living, some of them dead, all I want is to be home - Home

One of these days your eyes will close, and pain will disappear - These Days

Lay your hands in mine, heal me one last time, though I cannot forgive you yet. No I cannot forgive you yet, you leave my heart in debt - I Should Have Known.

The Foo Fighters are imperfect, and that makes them the Perfect Rock Band. They still are a garage band who never leaves the garage, and when they have to actually get up and go, they take the garage with them, and all the tools that are in it. Taylor Hawkins, drummer for band had said in an interview with Sirius XM's Lithium that they still perform in small clubs, and bars as they like to be interactive with the audience. In my opinion, this is the best thing for iconic bands, as there is no pressure to put on a show, it's just an opportunity to share the music, and for me, an individual who appreciates music and its relativity, this is the passion that will make any band successful, they still write new music to keep up with the times, and they do not go overboard. "The Musician Comes First" Dave Grohl in 2013 gave a keynote speech at South by Southwest, which is an annual conglomerate of film, interactive media, and music festivals and conferences that take place in Austin, Texas, United States. It began in 1987, and is held generally in mid-march.

Grohl is successful in his own right, he recently released "PLAY" a solo performance that is approximately 23 minutes in length, where he plays all the instruments himself, lets date back to his debut album self-titled Foo Fighters, he wrote all the lyrics to the songs, wrote all the music and played all the instruments which was recorded in the Robert Lang Studio's in Seattle with one exception of a guitar part played by Greg Dulli of the Afghan Whigs' on the track X-Static. This little micro trivia is thanks to Jeff Gorra of Artist waves who writes music articles. To prove a point that Foo Fighters are still the classic garage band, the album "Nothing Left to Lose" was recorded in the basement of

Grohl's Virginia home. Their Album "Wasting Light" was recorded in Dave Grohl's Garage. The Album "in your Honour". I have no idea where it was recorded but it may have been in a crawl space in Ian's home or on Sesame Street. How About "Sonic Highways", well that was recorded in 8 different cities, and it was an HBO special, but hey it is possible that it could have been recorded in 8 different garages, attics, basements, or even sheds.

They are so influential and to show how much respect they receive, when i saw them for the second time this past summer at blues fest in Ottawa, the chorus of the song "Hero" sung by the crowd was perfectly in sync that it hit viral on all of Foo Fighters social media apps History has been made. When Grohl sings it the passion and emotion is in it, you can feel it and he often discusses how Edgar Winter and punk rock made him recognize his voice, in his words "it's your voice. Cherish it, respect it, nourish it, challenge it, stretch it, and scream it until it's gone, because everyone is blessed with at least that". Dave Grohl Not bad for a guy who had to restart after the loss of Kurt Cobain, he started his own label and went back in doing what he truly loves.

Everlong, has to be one of my favourite Foo Fighter songs of all time. There are two versions, the original version which is, in Ian's words, the much heavier one and it was recorded 21 years ago, and it's off the 1997 Album the Colour and the Shape. Then there was an acoustic version released on the Greatest Hits Album in 2009. Now how did this acoustic version come about, it was March 18, 1998 when Grohl went on the Howard Stern Show 21 years ago and performed it there.

During that studio performance, it was just Grohl and Drummer Taylor Hawkins. This song became so popular, that Grohl never recorded acoustic, as he always does acoustic version when he writes songs. The performance was a spur of the moment on a 7 O'clock time slot. From that performance on the Howard Stern Show to the last line "You've got to promise not to stop when I say when", made history for this song and its acoustic version, which in my view is the best. The Stern Show Campfire Style went on to energize this song as their trademark hit ever since.

This solo rendition was performed at Howard Stern's 60th birthday special, & memorable performance on Letterman's last show. When this song was originally recorded, Grohl played the drums, as Hawkins had not joined the band yet, and when this was written, it was at a time that Dave Grohl's assets were frozen, he was living in a sleeping bag in the back room of Vocalist Pete Stahl's house.

Dave Grohl states:

"The first time I went on the show I was horrified. He really was someone I grew up listening to. I was really intimidated and kind of nervous. I hadn't done much with an acoustic guitar live. I used it for writing, not really for performing. We got into the studio and he asked if I'd play a song. I was kind of nervous; A. - because it was so early, but also just because I hadn't ever really done that with an acoustic in front of people.

I don't remember if he requested "Everlong" or if I just started playing it, but it turned out really well. I hadn't realized what I'd done until later when he started playing it on his show and people at our record company were really into it. They wanted to kind of start working it as a single. I think this is long after it had been a single, the rock version.

Something happened that morning that was really special. And I don't know if it was because I was just so spooked by being there, or you know, sitting next to someone that you've grown up listening to and looking up to. Having to play a song like that on acoustic guitar at 7 o'clock in the morning, there was something about it that sort of changed the direction of our band. Up until then, we really focused on rock stuff. Something happened that morning where we thought 'Wow, maybe we can do this too.'

That song blew up all over again because of that version and it was purely because of Howard. It sounds crazy, but I don't know where we'd be right now if it hadn't been for that morning in his studio. Or what we would've done if we hadn't open up that door to doing acoustic stuff. So you know, we owe that guy a drink for sure."