

★ HIGH HOPES

Hudson

These stadium-bound LA rockers aren't in it for the easy money - or the free beer.

"WE ALL FEEL very strongly that we'll be playing stadiums," says vocalist David Hudson. "It takes a lot to get there but we honestly have no doubts."

It's a bold statement, but Hudson aren't like other bands with an 'if anyone likes us it's a bonus' attitude. A muscular-sounding four-piece, with a swagger reminiscent of mid-70s Zep, their ambition is nothing less than hauling rock music back to the centre of our culture.

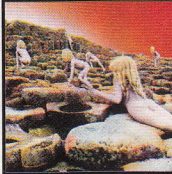
The way they formed is very different too. Chris Llewellyn (guitar) and Brian Cohen (bass) were an LA-based production team who knew their way round the industry but yearned to form a proper band. The problem was finding the right vocalist. Then they caught an old acquaintance of theirs - David Hudson - belting out The White Stripes' *Seven Nation Army* at an open-mic night. "We were like, 'Woah, where did that come from?'" Llewellyn remembers. "He had this amazing raspy tone. It was different, new and absolutely unique."

The duo started working with Hudson, initially as a solo artist, before they decided the band format fitted them all a lot better. Christian Thierbach IV (drums/harp) completes the line-up. "For me and Brian, it was like having to prove ourselves all over again," explains Llewellyn. "But I'm a performer at heart and it was either now or never. This is what I always wanted to do."

The band cut their live teeth with a two-month residency at The Viper Room in their home town last year. They've released two EPs, the latest of which, *Cast Out*, flaunts their southern side. There's a Skynyrd influence on the title track, as well as a soulfulness often missing from present-day rock.

"Not just rock," protests Llewellyn. "Music in general. Everybody is looking for that number one hit, that quick money. That's not to say there aren't soulful artists, but they're few and far between. And that's because of the attitude in the business in general, which is 'let's get the cheque', rather than focusing on the music and the art form."

FOR FANS OF...



"Houses Of The Holy was the first Zeppelin album I bought," reveals Llewellyn. "To this day I still hear something new on that record every time. Just the energy when *The Song Remains The Same* kicks in, that energy is rock'n'roll to me. When I heard Zeppelin, that was it for me - I knew what I wanted to do with my life."

To this end, the band are proudly independent, releasing material through their own label, Custom Records, and insisting they're not interested in their music being used for advertising. "We've already turned down a beer company," claims Llewellyn. "We're not into attaching our music to brands at all."

Perhaps Hudson could be rock's Jeremy Corbyn figures, unlikely game-changers to show everyone else up as sell-outs. "I think people have been wanting this sort of attitude for a long time," says Llewellyn. "A lot of artists and writers agree with me but they only know 'the system', which is 'get me a hit right now'."

"We're playing the long game," his bandmate adds. "We're doing this the right way and it's slow but steady wins the race. As long as we put in the hard work and effort, it's just a matter of time before we're successful." **WS**

The Cast Out EP is out now on Custom Records.

|||||
**"We're playing the long game.
 Slow but steady wins the race..."**

Hudson: (l-r) Brian Cohen, David Hudson, Christian Thierbach IV, Chris Llewellyn.

