

# THE 88

The 88 have been hailed as one of the finest pop/rock/alternative bands in recent memory; a distinction proven all the more relevant by their soon to be released LP, entitled *FORTUNE TELLER*. The ten-song collection from the Los Angeles-based band grabs the listener at the first note and never lets go, from the piano-driven opener “I Saw The Light That Day” to the longing beauty of ballad “The Clouds Rolled In”. Songs like “You Are In Love” and “Deep In Your Heart” boast all of the vitality and craftsmanship of a seasoned band in full flight, brimming with both confidence and creativity.

Founded in 2002 by high school pals Adam Merrin (piano/keys) and Keith Slettedahl (vocals/guitar), and solidified as a band with the addition of bassist Todd O’Keefe and drummer Anthony Zimmitti, The 88 made their bones on the Southern California indie scene, releasing two well-received albums and earning acclamation as “Best Pop/Rock Band of the Year” from *L.A. Weekly*.

The band’s lively stage show soon attracted major label buzz. In 2007, The 88 signed with Island Records, releasing their major label debut the following year. A mutual parting of ways came in 2009, allowing the band to return to the independent landscape that allowed them to thrive. Slettedahl spent the early part of the year making home recordings, which were later finished by the band and released digitally as 2009’s “unofficial album” *This Must Be Love*.

Shortly after recording commenced on their 2010 self-titled record, The 88 received word that Ray Davies was looking for a band to both support and back him on a U.S. tour. Avowed fans one and all, the band recorded a half-dozen Kinks classics for Davies to assess. The result: The 88 found themselves on the biggest tour of their career, alongside one of their greatest musical inspirations. “I still can’t believe it,” says Slettedahl. “I mean, he’s my hero.”

A few months later, The 88 crossed the Atlantic for Davies’ UK tour – culminating in an incredible show at London’s historic Royal Albert Hall – as well as their own first-ever British headline shows. Davies also invited the band to record a number of songs at his world famous Konk Studios for a Kinks tribute compilation, *See My Friends*. The 88 played on tracks by Davies with both Lucinda Williams and the late Alex Chilton, as well as dueting with the legendary Kinks frontman on the classic “David Watts”.

“To all of a sudden find ourselves playing the Royal Albert Hall with Ray Davies and recording at Konk Studios... it was pretty magical,” as O’Keefe remembers it.

The *FORTUNE TELLER* LP continues the same spark and ingenuity that has kept the band a focal point on the music industry’s radar throughout their career. In addition to touring with such artists as The B-52s, Matt Costa, Smashing Pumpkins, and the late Elliott Smith, the band has sustained itself in large part thanks to a seemingly infinite series of high-profile song placements – spanning films, commercials, video games, and

TV shows – as well as resourceful projects like self-produced YouTube videos and the digital single, “Love Is The Thing,” recorded entirely via iPhone app.

“We’re always trying to discover new things, and come up with new ideas,” says Merrin.

The 88 returned to the road with Ray Davies in late 2011; a run that also included a string of television appearances on shows like *Live With Regis & Kelly* and *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon*. At the start of 2012, the band earned the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform a Kinks medley with Davies at Clive Davis’ annual Pre-Grammy Gala, sharing the stage with Jackson Browne and Elvis Costello. “Musically, the high point of the night,” as *Rolling Stone* stated of the performance.

Currently, The 88 continue to see their film and television presence rise to the top of the heap, with music featured in the Universal film *The Lorax*, as well as their song, “At Least It Was Here,” serving as the theme song to the NBC comedy *Community*. In March, the band added a new credit to their resume: scoring a movie. For the Lionsgate release *Friends With Kids*, the band co-scored the Jennifer Westfeldt film, while also contributing three original songs.

By remaining true to themselves, The 88 have crafted an immensely satisfying LP that stands tall among their impressive catalogue. And with so many projects in music, television, and film both ongoing and upcoming, the band shows no signs of slowing down. But like any true craftsman, their best is never enough.

“It still feels like a beginning,” says Slettedahl.

Adds Merrin: “We have huge ideas for this band.”

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