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Kitchens of Distinction in synch after 19 years



by **ANDREW EATON-LEWIS**

This month, Kitchens of Distinction (KOD) release their first album in 19 years. This news has had rather less coverage than the recent return of one of their contemporaries, My Bloody Valentine, which is a shame.

If KOD's equally expansive, effects-drenched guitar songs won them much acclaim in the early 1990s, this never quite translated into significant sales, despite the early promise of singles like *The Third Time We Opened The Capsule*.

However, the trio's third album in particular, *The Death Of Cool*, is a lost classic, and their signature sound can still be heard in bands such as Editors, British Sea Power, Bloc Party, Interpol and even Radiohead.

For those who loved Kitchens of Distinction, the good news is that *Folly* (despite being titled in reference to "the madness of trying to do this again") ranks alongside their best work – and that old habits die hard. One song, singer Patrick Fitzgerald notes, "has 50 bloody guitars on it".

"I've been very surprised at what fond memories people have," says Fitzgerald. Current single *Japan to Jupiter* echoes fans' nostalgia: "It's about being a teenager, the dressing up and how on earth we got away with it."




Folly, though, is also a new kind of Kitchens of Distinction record, as much a product of Fitzgerald's solo years (as *Stephen Hero*) as a return to the old KOD sound, with Fitzgerald playing piano as much as his one-time instrument of choice, bass guitar. Initially it wasn't a KOD record at all but a "more orchestral" collaboration between Fitzgerald and KOD guitarist Julian Swales. "As we went along it became clear that this was not dissimilar to what we'd done before," Fitzgerald explains. "I thought I needed somebody to help with the rhythm tracks and lo and behold Dan (Goodwin, KOD's drummer) seemed to pop into my head."

This, Fitzgerald hints, involved delicate rebuilding of relationships. "I left the band in 1997. It's like any other relationship. If you walk out you're the bad guy."

Even now he is reluctant to use the word reunion. There will be no live shows; there isn't even a new group photo – in fact, at no point during the album recording were all three band members in the same room together.

“I think we're all three very glad that this has happened, and Julian is muttering about wanting to do another one but I'm not. It's been a long time – it's taken two years to make this - but it's been a good learning experience.”

• Japan to Jupiter is out now on 3 Loop Music. Folly is released on 30 September.

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