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Veteran American rockers the Supersuckers.

A young man's game? Hardly.

Increasingly, if you want rock done dirty, done straight-up, done the way it was meant to be, you're going to need to tap the back of the old-timers, and send 'em off the bench to see that it's done right.

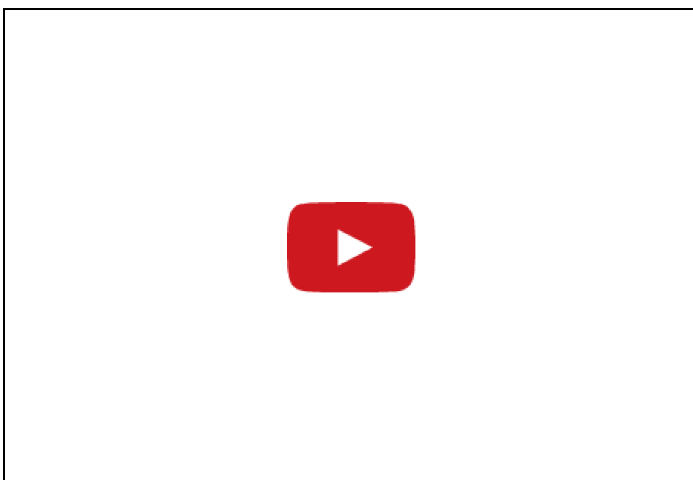
Seattle vets the Supersuckers, for example, pull of some fourth-quarter heroics for the home side with *Get the Hell*, the ninth studio album in their 25-plus year career, and one that shows they ain't quite ready to relinquish the title of Greatest Rock 'N' Roll Band in the World.

"Yeah, it's pretty great, right?" says frontman Eddie Spaghetti. "We really have no business putting out a record this good this late in the game. It feels really good to have done it and we'll continue to do it hopefully."

Hopefully. Because the foul-mouthed, finger-flipping, face-smashing, liver-taxing, superfun results on the 12-track *Get the Hell* are like red meat manna from somewhere way south of Heaven, and most definitely the best the quartet has released in ages.

There's a reason for that, actually, as they represent, Spaghetti says, the "cream of the crop" of the material written in the six years since their last album, *Get It Together*. He likens it to a band releasing its debut, having a lifetime to come up with material for that first record, and being able to come out of the gates strong.

Helping the cause is some no-nonsense, spit-and-polish mixing from longtime friend Blag Dahlia, of veteran punk nutters the Dwarves.



"He really knocked it out of the park," agrees Spaghetti of the collaboration, which came about after the album had already been recorded in Austin. "I was travelling through San Francisco doing some solo shows and I played him the songs that we had recorded. He was, like, 'The songs are so good, it just doesn't really sound right. You've got to let me mix it.' I was, like, OK."

"And it was a really good idea."

So, too, was including a couple of Supersucker-punched covers on the album, including Gary Glitter's *Rock On*, which wraps the album up properly, and a pretty great, almost unrecognizable version of Depeche Mode's *Never Let Me Down Again*, which guitarist Dan (Thunder) Bolton has been bringing to the table for the past decade or so.

“I think it sounds more like the Dead Boys in our hands more than Depeche Mode,” says Spaghetti.

Local fans will get the opportunity to hear how they handle it live when the band comes through on yet another lengthy cross-Canada tour, that includes two Calgary Dickens dates — a Saturday night rock show showcasing the best of their brawny fare, and a Sunday evening display of the more country side they’ve displayed over the years including on an EP with Steve Earle

And while the tour itself is ostensibly about getting Get the Hell the hell out and into fans’ hands, the C & W show here, and presumably other one-night-stands on the tour, will also see them testing out new material they’ve already written for a future cowpunk release.

After so long in the biz and on the road, that is, Spaghetti says, what keeps things from getting too “tedious.”

“The thing that really fuels me still is making up the songs ... That’s what keeps us fresh. That’s the fuel that keeps the band alive is the songs. It’s not the shows, it’s not the T-shirts, it’s not the merchandise, it’s the songs that fuel the fire — just trying to have a legacy of quality behind,” he says, before expanding on what he thinks that legacy will actually be.

“I picture a world where one day everybody’s thinking, ‘Why weren’t we paying attention to these guys when they were around.’ It’s going to be like the Ramones, after everybody’s dead and gone then we’ll get appreciated like we should.”

Which begs the question of why he keeps doing it, why he’s kept the band alive for all this time with only a smaller yet rabid cult following to show for it while other acts — especially acts from the scene in which they planted themselves in the late ’80s — either broke big, have come and gone, or both.

“It can be bothersome if you let it. It’s a matter of perspective: I’m proud of our work and I’m proud of the songs that we’ve written and recorded, and that’s what I focus on,” Spaghetti says. “I try not to focus on being jealous of other people’s success, but do I feel like we should have that success? I totally do. I feel like we’re as good as any band out there and have been for years.”

Perhaps making it easier is that, these days, there are fewer and fewer bands out there that are doing it, let alone doing it as dirty, straight-up and so, so right as the rock the Supersuckers done do.

“I feel like it’s become a very retro art form, which is kind of surprising because I don’t feel retro or like a relic at all.”

Spaghetti laughs. “But I guess we are.”

Supersuckers perform Saturday and Sunday at Dickens Pub.

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