



# THE OLD FIRM Casuals

**INTERVIEW WITH VOCALIST/GUITARIST LARS FREDERIKSEN  
BY JANELLE JONES**

**W**hile on the road in the U.K., The Old Firm Casuals vocalist and guitarist Lars Frederiksen opens up about the band's latest release, the spirited and fiery 12-track album, *Holger Danske*, out via Pirates Press Records on March 15. At these well-attended shows, the band have been playing a number of new songs, which have been very well-received. "There's a good buzz," he explains, adding that for the band, the U.K. is like "a home away from home."

They don't have any concrete plans for a U.S. tour in support of the record, as it's sometimes hard for all the band members to get together for long stretches of time given their schedules. They did, however, schedule a record release show—and video shoot—in their hometown of San Francisco on March 16 and another date on Aug. 12 in Chicago.

Now, onto this powerful, multifaceted record. Yeah, multifaceted. The Old Firm Casuals may be categorized as Oi! and street punk, but the band feature a welcome array of sounds on *Holger Danske*. As Frederiksen relates with a laugh, this record is "a snapshot into our record collections. We love punk and Oi!, and we also love AC/DC, Rose Tattoo, and Slayer." Name-

checking one of the new album's songs, he explains that their style can be summed up as "Casual Rock-N-Roll! It's our own thing."

"We really put a lot of effort into it," he confides, saying that some of the songs were written "a few years ago but just never really came to fruition until now." One song that they resurrected from an earlier time is the affecting closer, "Zombies." He notes that it fit nowhere when they first came up with it during the 2016 *A Butcher's Banquet* sessions, but it "seemed totally appropriate for *Holger Danske*."

Taking a broader view, Frederiksen elaborates, "Everyone in the band contributes," explaining that "Casey [Watson] being the other lead vocalist brings a totally different perspective and style to what we do. Paul [Rivas] is literally one of the best drummers I've ever played with and has a swing and style of his own." He says, with the addition

of guitarist Gabe Gavrilloff, "our sound got wider and fuller, and we are able to do more on the song-writing end of things."

Frederiksen says that as a whole, "We have a chemistry that only comes once in a lifetime," though he's quick to note, "In my case, it's come a few times," referring to, one can only guess, Rancid. It helps that there's "no drama, no bullshit," he adds. "We are honest and transparent with each other. No egos. All for one, one for all."

There are a good number of Denmark-inspired tunes on *Holger Danske*, as the album title, song titles, and subject matter evince. Frederiksen explains, "My mom is from Denmark, and I grew up with that culture. I'm a Pagan. I don't subscribe to the commodity gods and the zealots who think their god is better than someone else's. I'm spiritual, which is different than being religious, [and] that's what

'Motherland' is about. It's about how I wanna leave this realm. It's about how I view life and death."

Another song, "Thunderbolt," is about the Norse god Thor. "We use Thor as a metaphor, lyrically, about smashing fascism and going against the grain," he shares. Getting deeper, Frederiksen says his 7-year-old, Soren, who is way into punk and thrash, came up with the title. "I would jam that riff, and he loved it," he recalls. "Casey is his favorite guy in the band, so he was stoked when he heard Casey singing it."

An instrumental on the record entitled "De Ensomme Ulve" is named after "a book written [by Gunnar Dyrberg] about the Holger Danske Danish resistance movement in WWII," the frontman explains. He says his uncle was a part of that group and that the entire record is dedicated to him. 🐾🐾🐾