

**A&C013**The American Analog Set // **Set Free**Available September 20, 2005 (cd and vinyl) in stores and online at arts-crafts.ca**So it begins: 1995-1996**

Rising from the ashes of a previous living room band, which included Kenny, Mark, and Lisa, the group who was to become The American Analog Set recruited friend Lee on bass and began in earnest in the spring of 1995. Work was begun on what would eventually become *The Fun of Watching Fireworks* in the winter of '95 at the Legend House in Fort Worth, TX. The record was comprised of songs they had been working on since their inception the previous spring and the majority of the record was done in about three weeks. Recording this album was kind of like trial by fire as none of them, except for Ken, had the slightest idea how to record a song, let alone an entire album. And although dedicated to recording, the members were actually living in different cities within Texas, which made recording, practicing and playing shows a more arduous task than usual. Perseverance paid off, however, and *Fireworks* was released in the summer of 1996 on Trance Syndicate/Emperor Jones Records.

The Living Room Years: Late 1996-1997

Kenny and Lee moved to Austin soon after *Fireworks* was released, and set up house with Mark with the intention of having one roof under which to live, practice and record. Their dream of having a house, which doubled as a place to practice and record, was shattered rather quickly by their intolerant new neighbors who complained to their landlord. As a result, their second album, *From Our Living Room to Yours*, was recorded under the threat of eviction. No longer novices, and fearing homelessness, The American Analog Set recorded quickly and diligently, releasing *From Our Living Room to Yours* in the summer of 1997 on Trance/EJ, and the EP *Late One Sunday*, recorded at the same time, in October of that year as part of the Darla Records Bliss Out series. Upon release, the band toured the states extensively for the first time, until...

The Golden Band: 1998-1999

Early 1998 found The American Analog Set broke, homeless, and scattered over the state of Texas once again. Rehearsals and shows were rare for a short while, but a summer tour with the Magnetic Fields gave the band a more structured schedule. That winter, work subsequently began on what was to become their third album, *The Golden Band*. The album was completed in February and released the following July, resulting in the most consistent of The American Analog Set's albums to date. A lengthy, strenuous tour followed, resulting in a couple months of some downtime for The AmAnSet. However, an autumn's worth of distance couldn't keep real life from moving forward and Lisa left the band at the end of 1999 to pursue a career.

New Equation: 2000-2001

The AmAnSet existed for a few weeks in the uncertain no man's land common after a band member leaves. Shortly after New Year's Day, Ken, Lee and Mark began rehearsing with Tom Hoff who joined the band a few hours later. Tom picked up the large back catalog fairly quickly and they rehearsed through the spring as a four piece. The AmAnSet played all of two shows before Sean Ripple was asked to join the band as a guitar and vibraphone player, thereby completing the lineup. Although they managed only one show all summer, they polished the material that would eventually become *Know By Heart*. The American Analog Set came out of hibernation in November with an album's worth of new material and a fresh spin on a few classics. Their show in November at the Mercury in Austin was followed by their first show overseas in Amsterdam the following week. The trip lit a fire under these kids and shortly after their return; they began recording *Know By Heart*. The group set out to make their fourth record a departure from their previous efforts and so the recording process drifted on for nearly two months. Whips were cracked, wills were broken, and a few of the members became intimately familiar with what's called "the overdub". The band also took time away from the tape machine to put together a collection of 7" singles and unreleased material called *Through The 90's*, which would be their last release for Trance/Emperor Jones. In honor of their new record and new lineup, the band chose Tiger Style Records as the new label to release *Know By Heart*; it hit stores on September 2nd, 2001 to much critical acclaim. In the year that followed, The AmAnSet spent six months on the road, marking their first extended tour in Europe and the UK.

Updates: 2002

In between touring for *Know By Heart*, vocalist/guitarist Ken decided he wanted to go back to school, settling on a PhD program at Columbia University. Prior to the journey to New York City, a remix EP and tour with Her Space Holiday occurred in summer 2002, just prior to his departure. The EP entitled *Updates* featured remixes from Styrofoam, Her Space Holiday and The American Analog Set themselves. Three days after returning from tour to Texas, Ken moved to New York, sparking break-up rumors like a wildfire, but The AmAnSet are non-committal and have put in too much for too long to simply die out like that. In a surprise move, it became known to the crafty label execs in NYC that in between tours and the pending move, The American Analog Set recorded their fifth proper full-length album *Promise of Love*. The songs on *Promise of Love* mostly came together as a result of being on the road, as the band continued writing songs in a similar vein to the more expansive sound of *Know By Heart*.

A Promise: 2003

And so it goes. After a year, Ken decided school was not where his heart was and began to focus more of his energy on The AmAnSet. Tiger Style released the lush soundscapes of *Promise of Love* in summer 2003, again prompting an incredible critical response that established The American Analog Set as a mainstay in the indie community. Internationally, *Promise of Love* was picked up by Wall Of Sound's imprint, We Love You. Prior to a massive tour of the UK, Europe and the US in summer 2003, Tom learned he would be unable to accompany the band on their trek, resulting in the hiring of old friend Craig McCaffery to replace him on the keyboards. The subsequent tour solidified The American Analog Set's place as a tour de force on the road, their new line-up as fierce as ever.

The band continued to tour through the fall while also writing new material. In October, The AmAnSet visited the west coast with Ester Drang and also played their first major festival, All Tomorrow's Parties. In December, the band returned to the south and east coast with friends and former labelmates, The Album Leaf.

The New Goth: 2004

In January of 2004, The AmAnSet began work on what was to become *Set Free*. The band intended to complete the record over three writing and recording sessions in January, March and May. The first session found the band back in Fort Worth, TX where they set up their studio in the Legend House where they produced their first record nearly nine years before. In the past, the band had always relied on recording at home as a leisurely alternative to the stress of a studio. For the first time The AmAnSet had members spread out over the country (Kenny in New York, Craig in Chicago and the rest in Austin) and were determined to take advantage of the limited time they had together. Despite the time limitations and learning of Tigerstyle Records demise, just two days into the process, the sessions were upbeat and produced some of the most memorable songs on the album.

For the next two sessions, the band returned to Austin and began recording in the house that produced 2001's *Know By Heart* and 2003's *Promise Of Love*. The session in March was less fruitful than the first but the tour with Pinback the following month allowed the band to work out many of the new songs on the road. As a result the session in May yielded much better results. Still, the record was far from complete as the band was forced to return to their homes around the country and say goodbye forever to their studio in Austin.

The summer found the band back in Europe for a three-week tour in June and another big festival, this time in Taipei. A reservation snafu nearly stranded the band in Taiwan for a month, but they managed to return to the states in time to play the Austin City Limits festival in beautiful Austin, Texas.

The record, though, was still not complete and the band no longer had access to their beloved studio in Austin. Without a home, money, or the support of a label, the band needed something good to happen. And his name was Chris Michaels. Chris, a former member of Austin's the Furry Things, was opening a studio in his hometown of Jackson, MS and invited The AmAnSet to be his first project. The band agreed and spent nearly two of the next four months flying and driving back and forth to the newly opened Laboratory in Jackson. In between sessions, the band also played its first show in Spain, at the Tanned Tin festival in Santander.

The record was finished up at Kenny's apartment in Brooklyn in early 2005 and finally mastered in Austin on February 8th, 2005, some thirteen months after tape began rolling. Two of the forthcoming songs were featured on a free split EP with White Magic called *Songs of Hurt & Healing*.

The band is currently planning their last worldwide tour in support of *Set Free*. The record and the tour will hit in the fall of 2005.