



FILTER

On their latest, the unorthodox rockers welcome back the drum machines

THROUGHOUT THE LAST 20 YEARS, Filter has covered a broad spectrum, from intense industrial rock to shiny pop. On their sixth full-length album, *The Sun Comes Out Tonight*, they strike a balance between electronic and acoustic. Their loud/quiet contrast, exemplified by 2002's hit single, "Take a Picture," led a Warner Bros. exec to refer to the band as "musical schizophrenia." But frontman Richard Patrick considers this duality an important dynamic of his musical expression.

"I know some really scummy people," he says. "They've taken advantage of me. They've done some bad things to me. I've got to write about that," he says of aggressive songs like lead single "What Do You Say?" "At the same time, when my 3-year-old attacks me with a lightsaber, I'm going to play and have a good time," he continues. "That's what I wrote 'Surprise' about. I'm certain even the most aggressive, mean heavy-metal guys on the planet are surprised by something joyful."

Filter used a drum machine on their debut, *Short Bus*, but has employed live drums on subsequent albums and on tour. "It was complete necessity in the beginning: 'Do you know any drummers?' 'No.' 'How do you record drums?' 'I don't know,'" recalls

Patrick. "We had this computer, and we were like, 'I think a drummer would do something like this here.' Complete Neanderthals hitting the keyboards and just trying to figure it out."

After watching Foo Fighter Dave Grohl's documentary *Sound City*, Patrick decided to bring back the drum machine for *The Sun Comes Out Tonight*. "It was a little off-putting, some of the things they were saying," he says of the film. "It starts with the drums. It has to be miked, go through a Neve. And it's got to be this room! Dude, you're just saying your way is the *only* way it could be done. So right at the end of the recording of it, we were like, 'Let's leave the drum machine and not have drums, not have a drummer period—just go ahead and have the computer in the middle of this.'"

The album was also impacted by recent lineup changes. Filter has featured a rotating backing band since the departure of founding member Brian Liesegang, but Patrick found a songwriting partner in replacement touring guitarist Jonny Radtke. "He's the guitar player I've been looking for my whole life," says Patrick. "Because he listened to Filter when he was growing up, he understood that there has to be some guitar riffs. He's a huge addition to this whole thing."

—Amanda Farah

