

GORILLAZ



DEMON DAYS ALBUM REVIEW

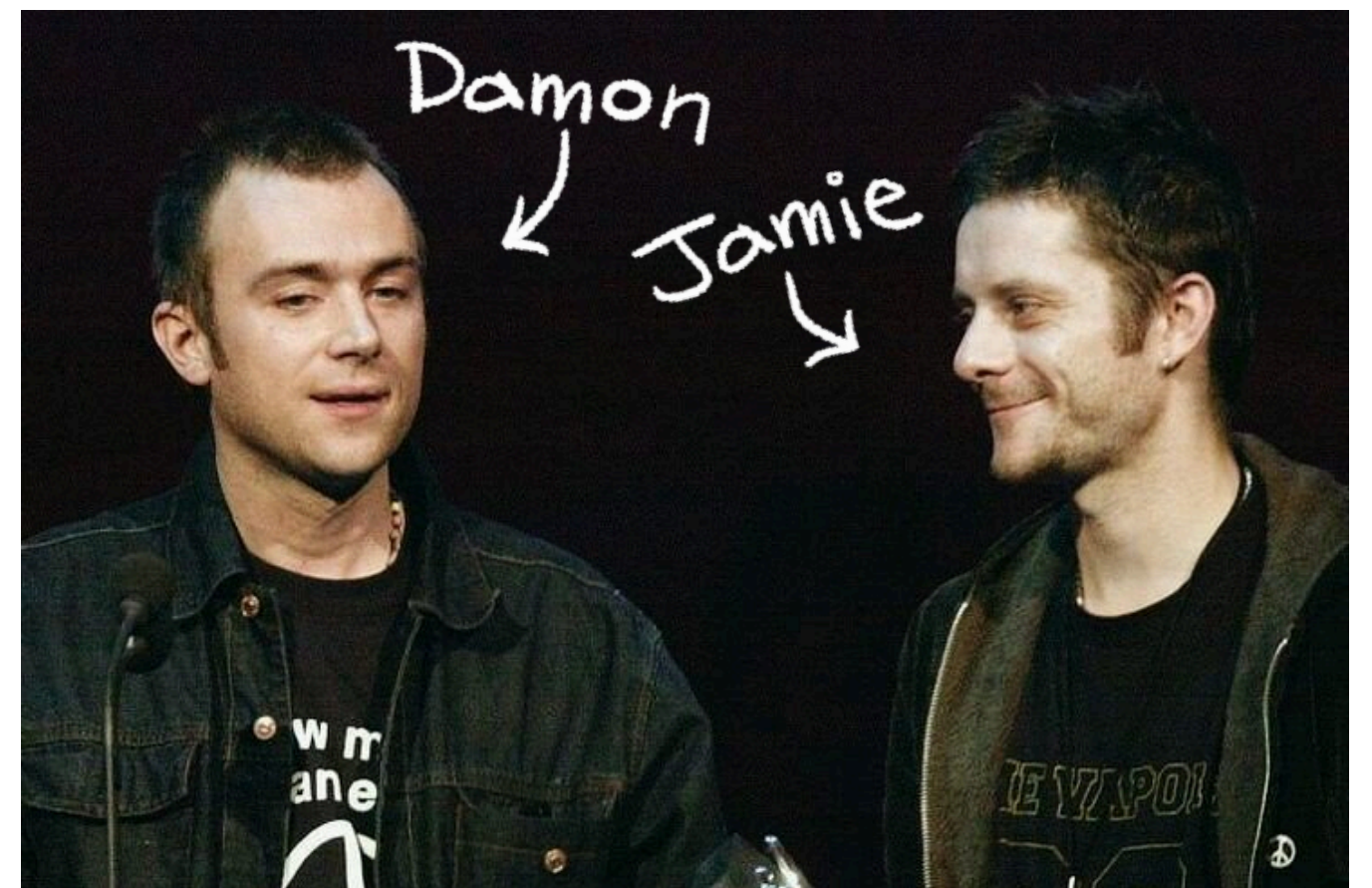
BY ELIANA PENALOSA



WHO IS GORILLAZ?

Gorillaz is an English virtual band consisting of four fictional members; 2-D, Murdoc, Russel, and Noodle. It was formed in 1998 by Blur's frontman *Damon Albarn* and comic book artist *Jamie Hewlett*.

Hewlett had become an acquaintance to the band *Blur* at the time, but he had thought pretty poorly of Albarn, leading them to often clash with each other. Despite this, they shared a flat together and became roommates after both of their relationships came to an end in 1997.



The idea to create this 'brainchild' band came from their experience with watching MTV. It was the start of the boy band explosion, and they both thought it felt so manufactured, and lacked some sort of substance. So, they decided to create a manufacture band and make it "kind of interesting", a satirical take towards the manufactured pop and MTV culture.

The band originally identified themselves as "Gorilla" before eventually adding the 'Z' and releasing their self-titled debut album "Gorillaz" in 2001. Damon is responsible for the music production, providing the voice of the band as well, and Albarn illustrates the characters of the band and the universe around them. Together, they create their stories through their music videos, interviews, comic strips and short cartoons.

WHO'S IN THE 'BAND'?

2-D



Stuart Pot, born Stuart Harold Tusspot, is the lead vocalist, keyboardist and frontman of the band. His nickname "2-D" stands for "Two-Dents", which was given to him due to his pitch black eyes. Before Gorillaz, 2-D had gotten into two car accidents caused by Murdoc on both occasions, which resulted in 8-ball fractures (hyphema) that made his pupils disappear. He is usually the punching bag of the group, mainly picked on Murdoc a lot after the accidents.

Murdoc Niccals

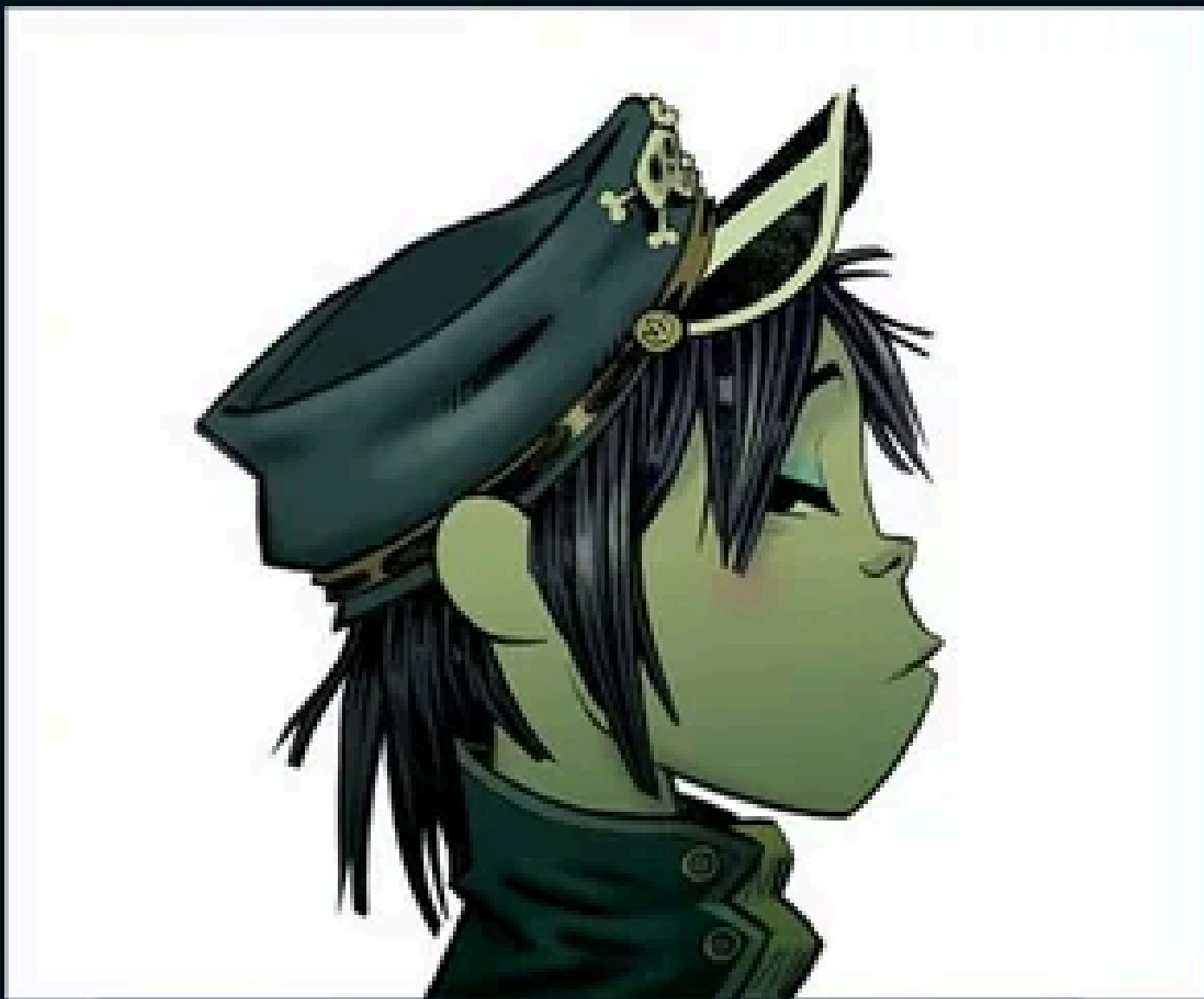


Murdoc Faust Niccals, born Murdoc Alphonse Niccals, is the bassist, self-proclaimed leader and founder of the band. He is known for his nasty attitude, charisma, and for being a notorious womanizer, along with being a pathological liar. Murdoc has come from a very abusive childhood, which could be result of his sour personality. After the two separate incidents with 2-D, he was impressed with his appearance and decided to recruit him for his band. However, this would lead him to pick on 2-D a lot more than the other members, he gets along with Russel sometimes and thinks of Noodle as his daughter.



Russel Hobbs

Russel Hobbs is the drummer and percussionist of the band. Russel has had a history of being possessed. When he attended Xavier School For Young Achievers he was expelled for attacking several students while being possessed by a demon. Later on in his life, his friends were killed in a drive-by shooting. After the shooting, the spirits of Russel's friends came to live inside his body, the most prominent being his best friend, Del the Ghost Rapper. As a result of this, his eyes have become permanently a milky white.



Noodle

Noodle, her full name is unknown, is the guitarist, occasional backing vocalist, and the youngest member in the band. Having joined the band when she was just 7 years old, with no recollection of her history, the rest of the band members have become her family. She is usually quiet and enjoys her own company, but can be easily peeved by the presence of the other band members, especially as a teenager. She has written most of this album herself!

ABOUT THE ALBUM

Demon Days is Gorillaz's second studio album that was released on May 11th, 2005. I personally believe it is their most iconic album out of their entire discography. The cover alone is recognizable right off the bat and a handful of the tracks on this album are very popular and well known. Albarn stated that the album is meant to be a journey throughout the night where you confront several 'personal' demons with each track. The album also includes political dark themes, such as war, greed, violence and depression due to post 9/11 and the Iraq war. Albarn, Hewlett and their collaborators on this album, dive into the difficulties of living in darkness, dystopia, and discontent.

TRACKLIST

★ = I've rated this song in this review

one INTRO

two LAST LIVING SOULS

three KIDS WITH GUNS ★

four O GREEN WORLD

five DIRTY HARRY ★

six FEEL GOOD INC. ★

seven EL MAÑANA ★

eight EVERY PLANET WE REACH IS DEAD

nine NOVEMBER HAS COME

ten ALL ALONE

eleven WHITE LIGHT

twelve DARE ★

thirteen FIRE COMING OUT OF THE MONKEY'S HEAD

fourteen DON'T GET LOST IN HEAVEN

fifteen DEMON DAYS



KIDS WITH GUNS

FEAT. Neheh Cherry

7.5/10

It's a very simple and plain song, but it has a strong message that gets across. I really like the bass lines in this song and the build up that happens throughout the song, especially near the end with the instrumental.



[Watch video on YouTube](#)

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Originally released as a double A-side with "El Mañana" and reached #27 after its release in the UK. The song is based off a child who had happened to bring a knife to Damon's daughter's school. Albarn quotes, "A nice boy just decided to pick up a knife and show it to his friends at lunchtime. It's a very real problem, but I'm not treating it as one. It's part of the brutalization of a generation that's going on at the moment." This song is a complaint about children's obsession with violence, concerned by the lifestyles that have been glorified by popular media that corrupts the youth. Children are "sponges", and the older generations are at fault for ruining society and their innocence with guns.

FEEL GOOD INC.

FEAT. De La Soul

10/10

A very memorable song. Each and every member plays a huge role in this song. I really love 2-D's vocals along with the collaboration in this song. Very catchy and danceable to.



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The best, if not, one of the most iconic songs out of this album and the entirety of the band's discography. Released as the lead single and peaked at #2 in the UK and #14 in the US. It was nominated for three Grammys in 2006, including Record of the Year, ultimately winning for Best Pop Collaboration. This song is a criticism towards consumerism, and fake happiness, inspired by how society chases pleasure while ignoring emptiness underneath. The innocent laugh that descends into maniacal laughter at the start of the song represents the representative of the Inc.'s overwhelming and sadistic control over the people in the town. In the music video, there is a scene where 2-D has a megaphone, and is trying to speak to the residents who have been brainwashed by the evil Feel Good Inc.

DARE

FEAT. Shaun Ryder

8.5/10

One of my first Gorillaz songs I remember listening to before I fully got into them. Another iconic song, the instrumental and music is one big catchy melody. You can't not dance or sing along whenever this starts playing.



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Alongside "Feel Good Inc.", this song is also one of Gorillaz's well known songs. As a follow up to Feel Good Inc., "Dare crashed into the UK charts at #1, being the first Gorillaz song to do so." The song was originally supposed to be called "'It's There", and there is an unmastered promo CD version of Demon Days with the song track titled "It's There" instead of "DARE". According to Murdoc, the lyrics had to be changed due to Shaun Ryder singing the lyrics "incorrectly" because of his accent. Shaun Ryder debunked this, stating that there were no initial lyrics or title to begin with since the chorus was an outtake.

IN CONCLUSION...

Demon Days is a catchy album with such political themes within their songs. If I had to recommend an album to someone who wanted to start listening to Gorillaz, it would be this one. This album solidified the band as a musical force, winning Grammy's for their singles and topping the charts both in the UK and the US. Gorillaz has such a way with their music and art, they can really tell a story and spread messages with their creations. This album is one of those albums that can stick with you, regardless of what message was sent or how catchy the music is. You can't deny that this album is one of Gorillaz's best albums.

