

Baby Jesus - Biography (2020)

Fiery, raw, and raucous, four-piece garage rockers, Baby Jesus, are keeping rock and roll alive and well in their hometown of Halmstad, Sweden, with psychedelic flare, a punk edge, and enough energy to heat up a hearty dinner of Sjömansbiff for 12.

Founding members and long time friends. Fredrik Kristoffersson (guitar/vox) and Elis Jäghammar (bass/vox), spent a few years together in various metal and hardcore punk projects.

It wasn't until they both moved to Oslo, Norway, in 2011 that they discovered and became infatuated with the 13th Floor Elevators—a legendary mid-sixties rock act from Austin, Texas largely credited with coining the phrase “psychedelic rock.” The Elevators’ music hit Elis and Fredrik like a rock. That experience opened their ears and writing sensibilities to the music of Night Beats, Black Lips, a range of Back From the Grave compilations, and—funny enough—Pugh Rogerfeldt, Träd, gräs och stenar, Philemon Arthur & The dung, and other great Swedish talents who made the rounds on their country’s turntables in the late sixties and early seventies with their wild and often experimental amalgamations of rock, psych, folk, and country music.

Channeling these newfound influences, Fredrik and Elis teamed up with Björn Axetorn to start cranking out some songs, culminating in a show in Oslo, followed by a trip to India where the idea for Baby Jesus was born, and a move back to Halmstad where Rasmus Högdin joined in on drums to help explore the project further. The resulting songs were eventually recorded mostly as live takes in their own studio channeling the energy of their hardcore punk days into walls of fuzz, gut-punching surf licks, and piercing organ melodies capturing the fierce and wildly fun rambunctiousness of their sweat-soaked performances across Sweden, France, and other parts of Europe. As a writer at Lo-Pie described it, it was almost, “... as if *Billy Childish and Link Wray conceived a demon baby while on honeymoon in Halmstad.*” A strange description perhaps, but certainly indicative of their unique take on the garage realm.

Shortly after the release of their 2015 album and tour, as well as a lineup change bringing on Svante Pålsson in place of Björn, the band wanted to move to tape recording for their follow-up album to give the songs they had been writing a deeper and more diverse feel.

Finding such equipment in their neck of the woods proved rather difficult, but the solution surprisingly came from a local Halmstad priest, who sold the band an old but functioning Teac 4 track recorder. Tackling both the recorder and tape in their own homemade studio proved tricky, but a highly rewarding strategy for fleshing out their new songs that had taken on a greater range in style, pace, and composition.

The result was Baby Jesus’s second offering, “**Took Our Sons Away**”, out August 11th, 2017 on Yippee Ki Yay Records. The release brought the band a couple of trips and many miles in a sweaty van around the clubs of Europe. In between, stopping by back home in Halmstad the creation of their third and latest album started. “**Words of Hate**” took its’ time and grew out of the wooden cabin in which it was created during long, cold nights.

“**Words of Hate**” (2020) is released on May 1st 2020 by Italian Garage label Area Pirata, consists of bottled live energy, sweat, blood, tears, chants and dances. Its’ 13 tracks is the, so far, best summation of what Baby Jesus is all about.