

Lush's Emma Anderson on the guitars and pedals she's using on tour

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British band Lush have evolved musically more than most. Their early days saw them labelled as 'shoegazing' while their highly successful final album is more frequently described as Britpop. Now, eighteen years after the band split (after the tragic suicide of drummer Chris Acland) Lush have reformed, not just to play their old material, but to write, record and tour an entirely new EP called *Blind Spot*. We caught up with guitarist and vocalist Emma Anderson to find out what motivated her musically and gear-wise to get the band back together...

MPS

You kicked off your reunion tour by releasing the *Blind Spot* EP; how does it feel to be back making music as Lush after all this time?

EA

It feels really good. A lot of people just play live when they reform their bands but we thought it would be miles better to come back with some new music too as it would show we were still into the creative side of doing this and not into just playing songs from 20/25 years ago (though there is nothing wrong with that per se!).

MPS

Do you generally prefer gigging or do you find songwriting and studio work more satisfying?

EA

Songwriting is actually my favourite activity in relation to music. I also love recording and generally being in the studio and being creative. I really enjoy playing live too but touring can be very exhausting (especially at our age!) and it means a lot of time away from home and when you have children, as we all do, that can be hard. There is nothing like playing a great gig with a really appreciative audience though.

MPS

Your 2016 tour is primarily throughout the U.S, are there any upcoming dates you can pick out that you're particularly looking forward to?

EA

Yes, we did a lot of work in North America back in the 90s and the result is we have a loyal fanbase there. At this point in time, we have done our first North American leg and also the two London Roundhouse shows which were fantastic. Upcoming we have some European festivals which I am really excited about as we didn't do that many back in the 90s (there WEREN'T that many then!) and then we are going back to North America in September. I am looking forward to going back to New York as I haven't been there for a very long time and we are doing two gigs in the city.

I am also really anticipating the Icelandic Airwaves festival we are playing in Reykjavik in November. We've never played in Iceland before so it should be very interesting (and hopefully lots of fun).

MPS

Can you pick out a favourite gig from the formative days of Lush?

EA

Oh gosh - so many. We used to play at The Falcon in Camden a lot. In fact we played there so much that we became the band that they would call if someone cancelled last minute! That was always good and where we cut our teeth live, I guess. Later on, Lollapalooza 1992 in North America was fantastic. It was a two month tour all over the continent and we were touring with six other bands, some of whom we were pretty petrified to share a stage with! We needn't have worried though as the tour was actually quite easy with us going on very early in the day so we had a lot of time to hang out afterwards. The atmosphere on the tour was great and everyone (well, nearly everyone) was super friendly and most really liked Lush. Band members used to regularly 'guest' on other bands appearances. I made some great friends, most of whom I still know to this day.

MPS

Who do you count among your musical influences?

EA

So many, I will just list them some of them without explanation, if that is OK...

Siouxsie and the Banshees, Echo and The Bunnymen, Roxy Music, Gene Clark, Kate Bush, Cocteau Twins, The Carpenters, Goldfrapp, The Fifth Dimension, Air, Penetration, Wire, Velvet Underground, Blondie, Ladytron, The Beatles, Abba, Bjork, Aphex Twin, Big Star,

MPS

If you could go back to any musical era what would it be?

EA

Ooh....London in the mid-to-late 1960s. Chelsea, in particular.

MPS

What was your first guitar? And what guitar are you playing at the moment?

EA

My first guitar was a Gibson SG BUT it had a Melody Maker neck. My parents bought it for me for my 21st birthday (though I chose it). They told me in the shop it was two guitars fused together but I was told later on that it was actually a model Gibson made for a while and is actually quite rare. I still have it though I hardly ever play it.

My main guitar is a Fender Telecaster Thinline which I have had since about 1989 (and bought new). I also have a

Fender Strat that I bought new around the same time but only use on a couple of songs live. I have had a couple of vintage guitars over the years, namely a late-1950s Jazzmaster and an early-1960s Jaguar but I sold them when times were hard!

MPS

Is there anything else you have parted with that you really miss?

EA

No. What I DO NOT miss is the Roland GP-16 effects unit I used to use in the 90s. It used to regularly 'break down'

MPS

Tell us about your [Mobius](#) and [Timeline](#), what made you chose them?

EA

The [Mobius](#) and [Timeline](#) were recommended to me. I hadn't been playing music live for quite some time when Lush got back together so was a bit out of the loop with what was out there pedal-wise but these ones haven't disappointed! I mainly use them for delay (Timeline) and chorus, flange and rotary sounds (Mobius). I am aware there are so many more things I will be able to do with both of them but I haven't had time to really explore them yet. I shall. (I didn't have the Mobius and Timeline when we made the Blind Spot EP which was a shame).

MPS

What else do you have on your pedalboard?

EA

I also have a Boss OD-1 Overdrive, a Turbo Rat, A Boss tuner and a Whammy pedal. I am not using the Whammy at the moment as the one song I use it on we are not doing (for the time being). I also have a Gigrig G2 switching system to control them all. For the live show at the moment I am mainly trying to recreate the sounds from the 90s but as time goes on I think I will start trying some new sounds and effects. This will probably most likely happen when we make an album.

MPS

Can you think of anything that really changed things for you?

EA

Hmm..I think as time goes on recording songs using software is really going to come into its own for me. I can use Garageband a bit but need to step it up to use Logic and all the bells and whistles that come with that. From using a 4-track Portastudio in the 90s, being able to write and record on a computer is a massive leap forward and something I still really need to get my head around properly. However, I predict I will always write the basics of any song on my old Spanish guitar whilst sitting on my sofa!

MPS

Is there any advice you can offer to people starting out on their musical journeys?

EA

Just don't give up and believe in that you are doing. Even at the start of Lush I had people personally telling me we were no good and we should jack it in as it was 'embarrassing' (well, one person said that) but we persisted and it paid off (I think!).

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