

Good Times

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Our Night on the Town

Thirty Seconds to Mars finds its way to top itself

By MIKE CHAIKEN
EDITIONS EDITOR

"The Beautiful Lie" would be a tough act for any act to follow.

The album by Thirty Seconds to Mars (singer Jared Leto, drummer Shannon Leto and guitarist Tomo Milicevic) racked up the awards. And the tracks "The Kill" and "From Yesterday" were staples on video music channels and modern rock. "The Beautiful" raised the stakes for the band.

But rather than offer up "The Kill Pt. 2" as a follow up, Thirty Seconds to Mars is obeyed its own muse and offered up the nuanced and rousing, "This is War," featuring such tracks as the soaring first single "Kings and Queens" and the powerful title track.

We caught up with Tomo via email as his band toured the globe before coming back to the States in a club tour that brings them to the Webster Theater on Thursday, Sept. 9.

Q: "The Beautiful Lie" had some serious legs, getting steady airplay for several years, with "The Kill" becoming a pillar of programming on video music channels. Heading into the studio for "This is War," what did you want to do and what did you not want to do when you followed up "The Beautiful Lie?" What were the challenges in following up a record like The Beautiful Lie?

Tomo: To follow up "A Beautiful Lie," we really just wanted to do something different. We knew that we had an opportunity to completely re-invent ourselves and had no intention of repeating what we did on "A Beautiful Lie."

Q: The sound on "This is War" is very epic, majestic, and musically complex. What inspired such a broad sound for the band on this record?

Tomo: We were inspired by each other for "This Is War." We all had the same drive and will to do something different and pushed one another past our comfort zones in order to achieve the



KENNETH CAPPELLO

Thirty Seconds to Mars comes to the Webster Theater in Hartford Sept. 9.

sound. If the record sounds epic, that's just a product of what we feel sounds right in the end, it isn't really a conscious thing.

Q: The band's sound

seems ready made for arenas. But for this tour, you're heading into the clubs. What do you like about performing for smaller more intimate crowds?

Tomo: We really enjoy

playing all sized venues. Small clubs offer the intimacy of a tightly packed room and the energy between the crowd and the band, where playing arenas is more about putting on that fantasy show

for people.

Q: How will the band approach its set to make the most of a smaller setting like The Webster in Hartford?

Tomo: We really just rely on the songs, no mat-

ter what sized venue we play. The set list will be a mix of old and new but mostly focusing on songs from "This is War".

Q: What does the band like about being on the road as opposed to the studio?

Tomo: For us, those are two totally different worlds, and we treat them that way. The studio is all about creativity and the search for something different. Whereas, the live show is the reward for that work we did. It's the celebration of the songs and the point that we get to share it with everyone.

Q: What, in general, can fans expect from Thirty Seconds to Mars on this tour?

Tomo: Total... anarchy!

Q: The band has collected numerous awards in its existence... for instance "The Kill" was honored as best alternative song of the decade and the current album is up for some MTV VMAs. How does it feel to receive such accolades?

Tomo: It's always nice to be recognized for ones work, but for us the awards really belong to the fans, they the ones that vote for us to win them so its all for them.

Q: Beyond this tour, what's on tap in the future for Thirty Seconds to Mars... are you beginning to tinker with new material?

Tomo: The future for us is to continue touring until Christmas, and then after a short break in the new year, we will continue touring through 2011. The conversations for new music have started, but we still feel like "This is War" is quite new and that there is still many people out there to share the album with.

Thirty Seconds to Mars comes to the Webster Theater on Monday, Sept. 9. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. Violent Soho, Waking Elliot, Seven Days Of Grey, Rivera, and Tremont open.

For more information, go to ThirtySecondsToMars.com or WebsterTheater.com

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