



Home / Articles / Music / Music Features / **Who is Yuck?**

Search

Tuesday, Apr 12, 2011

# Who is Yuck?

Under the spotlight, British buzz band struggles to explain itself

By Sammi Skolmoski



I abide by a standing edict to never judge a band by its coverage. While I thoroughly enjoy the exploits of fellow music writers, my tastes are ultimately determined by the

[Tweet](#)

[Share](#)

To Yuck's Daniel Blumberg (second from right), talking about music doesn't come naturally.

offerings of the artists themselves.

The strength of this virtue was recently tested by Yuck, a London quartet that's the new favorite fuzzy pet of the indie-music industry for their hook-driven melodies, interesting haircuts and marketable age. They solidified their "buzz band" status last month at South by Southwest, the Austin music festival, when they executed a run of 10 shows in three days—including showcases for *Spin* and NPR.

Critics and fans are divided in their opinions of Yuck. Some praise their flannel-draped, lo-fi '90s riffage; others scorn them as a poorly ripped-off re-make of '90s alt-gods.

But what does Yuck have to say about all this? Who is Yuck? When I interviewed guitarist and singer Daniel Blumberg, it became obvious why his viewpoint was missing from almost all of their press—he doesn't know any more about Yuck than any of us do.

"As soon as we put out a 7-inch, we had an interview after that, and it was just, like, I literally don't know what I want to say," Blumberg explains by phone from the U.K. in a conversation riddled with the use of "I don't know" and "like" and topic-hopping half sentences of an uncomfortable public speaker being prodded into the spotlight. "There's nothing really I want to say."

The unpreparedness is forgivable, to an extent. The boys and girl in Yuck—Blumberg, Max Bloom, Jonny Rogoff, Mariko Doi—are young, all 20 or 21. Their self-titled debut came out in February, and they hadn't been a band very long before that.

Their infancy adds a layer of authenticity: It proves they're practicing their instruments instead of Grammy acceptance speeches. "It's not like we wanted to, like, go crash the music scene of the U.K. or the world or whatever," Blumberg says. "We didn't really, like, say, 'Hey, we gotta be part of this.' Because I'm not really enjoying all the people that we meet at the moment."

Blumberg explains that talking about himself, his music or his band does not come naturally, so he wants to avoid it by letting the songs fully represent Yuck on their own. The problem is, the album is almost as confusing as Blumberg's attempts to explain it.

"We didn't really have a plan about, 'This is how we want it to sound,'" Blumberg says. "That's why it sort of spirals off in different directions, because it was more just about just making those the songs."



- Music Newsletter
- Red List: Events picks dining & shopping
- Nibbles: Food news & events
- CityBeat Weekly Newsletter
- CityBeat Perks: Deals & Promotions
- CityBeat Beer Club
- Canvassed: Arts news & events

Email\*

First Name\*

Last Name\*

Zip\*

\* Required field

## Reader Comments

**David:** Great conversation. Glad to have inspired it. Many good points. I diss SD but

**Sandi:** Seems this reporter is scared to death to learn the truth and deal with it, so

## Follow Us



[Calendar](#) | [Dining](#) | [Movies](#) | [Clubs](#) |

WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

### A TALK WITH SUSAN DAVIS Aug 31, 2011

The congresswoman discusses the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell from an insider's perspective.

[25 other things to do on Wednesday, August 31](#)

[Most Read](#) | [Commented](#) | [Emailed](#)

The result, unsurprisingly, is a disjointed group of 12 songs—"We weren't thinking of a body of work until we put it together," Blumberg says—some cutesy ballads, some simple summer ditties, all fuzzy, with some more powerful melodies like "Get Away" and "Holing Out" that have drawn comparisons to Dinosaur Jr. and Sonic Youth. They're undeserving comparisons regarding any other aspect of Yuck. Sonic Youth acted as a bold representation and brutal reflection of their culture. Blumberg admiringly acknowledges this and adds, "It is a bit weird. Genuinely, I don't feel any sort of responsibilities. There's no intentions to do anything on any sort of scale other than making a record that we've written."

But lest you think Yuck is merely a lucky group of Pavement fans with guitars and a killer management team, Blumberg explains that they just don't take it too seriously. Writing songs and playing shows is fun, and it isn't any more complicated than that.

"Lyrically, our songs are just what they are," he says. "I find it easier to talk about other people's music than ours and we're not an established band. We just released a record, so maybe I have less of an excitement but more of an understanding.

"Do you know what I mean," he adds, "or am I just being quite confusing?"

*Yuck perform with Porcelain Raft and D/Wolves at The Casbah on Friday, April 15.*  
[myspace.com/yuckband](https://myspace.com/yuckband)

Editorial

**Debt deal is another defeat for progressives**

How will the United States ever raise enough money to serve the people?

News

**San Diego mail carrier removed from post**

CityBeat's 'Mailman meme' story gets a local postal worker in trouble

News

**County approves retroactive funding for Christian camp improvements**

Supervisor Bill Horn succeeds in channeling \$20,000 to Green Oak Ranch Ministries in Vista

04.13.2011 at 01:41

Reply

Sammi is the best young music writer in town. That's it.



Seth

[About](#) | [Contact](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) |

Web Design for magazines

[PASADENA WEEKLY](#) | [VENTURA COUNTRY REPORTER](#) | [INLAND EMPIRE WEEKLY](#) |

© SAN DIEGO CITY BEAT 2010. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

San Diego Internet Marketing Company - SEOhaus