



The Inspector Cluzo

Sowing The Seeds Of Love

NEW ROCK

Fierce, funky blues'n'roll freak-outs from proudly independent French farming duo whose geese dictate their tour schedule.

WORDS: PAUL BRANNIGAN

MOST ROCK bands don't factor in the dietary requirements of geese when plotting out their schedules, but then The Inspector Cluzo aren't most rock bands. For the past six years, Laurent Lacrouts (vocals/guitar) and Mathieu Jourdain (drums) have balanced their commitment to stripped-back blues-rock rifferama with the day-to-day running of a five-hectare organic farm in Eyres-Moncube in Gascony, south-west France, where they raise, feed and cook exactly 200 geese per year.

"In January we can't tour because we have to feed our geese, in April we can't tour because we plant the seeds," says Lacrouts. "It's an unusual situation, of course, but we need to have our feet in both worlds."

With their name suggested by Fishbone frontman Angelo Moore – "because of our accents," Lacrouts helpfully, and rather charmingly, explains – The Inspector Cluzo formed in 2008, and have racked up over 1,000 gigs in 55 countries since, an achievement all the more remarkable for the fact that the duo are entirely self-financed, have no manager or booking agent, and release their records on their own fabulously named label Fuckthebassplayer Records.

"To be free men you have to be independent," says Lacrouts, speaking to both his artistic and agrarian life.

Recorded in Nashville with producer Vance Powell (Jack White, Seasick Steve), *We The People Of The Soil*, TIC's sixth album, looks set to bring them to a wider audience, with Planet Rock radio playlisting the title track and quirky opening cut A Man Outstanding In His Field. The latter calls to mind Clutch, with whom The Inspector Cluzo shared UK stages in December.

That eye-catching jaunt was only made possible by Lacrouts's wife and neighbours rallying around to man the farm's stall at St Roch market in Mont-de-Marsan every Saturday, an example of the community spirit which the duo firmly espouse. Tracks such as *The Globalisation Blues* and *GMO And Pesticides* (on 2016's *Rockfarmers*) leave the listener in no doubt to their attitude to big business.

"We belong to a generation who chose to come back to the countryside because we think it's the future, not the past," says Lacrouts, who speaks warmly of Neil Young and Ry Cooder's commitments to their own rural communities. "We have strong convictions about the consequences of globalisation, and we don't want to just talk, we want to act. Our attitude is to act locally, think globally. One of our ambitions is to make a school on the farm to pass on ideas about autonomy to young people."

And beyond the farm? The duo simply want to continue their mission to scatter their musical seeds across as much of the Earth as is possible.

"The word is spreading," says Lacrouts. "We played in Bogota in Colombia last August, and immediately got offered 15 South America gigs, in places such as Costa Rica and Panama. That's how it's been everywhere. It's cool to play in England, where rock music has such an incredible history, but it's just as important for us to play in Beirut or Madagascar. Music belongs to everyone."

LISTEN TO: **WE THE PEOPLE OF THE SOIL** (LP, 2018)

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