

A blast of Rock'n'Roll cool with Mars needs Women.

## Bittles' Magazine | Interview: Mars needs women

Every so often a band comes along that breathes new life into that tired old world we know as rock n' roll. Last year it was **Royal Blood** bringing back the good old guitar riff. In 2015 the name to be noting is none other than **Mars Needs Women**. The trio are made up of three rock heroes who are introducing some much needed spontaneity, enthusiasm and, most importantly, fun into our lives, creating a sound that kicks sand in the face of those who say they are sick of guitars. Sounding as if the last 60 years never happened, the band bring to life a sunshine filled, tongue-in-cheek pop-rock confection that may give you tooth decay, but tastes so good that you simply don't care. By **JOHN BITTLES**



The three-piece are made up of **Commander Valentina Chichikov** (aka **Peta Devlin**) on vocals and bass, **Lieutenant Ivana Punkawitch** (aka **Barbara Hass**) on guitar and vocals and **Dr. Daphne Doublebind** (aka **Susie Reinhardt**) on drums and vocals. Together they make the type of rock music that is like a little swoon of happiness clasping you in its arms. Just check their debut single *Lover From Mars/Don't Peak Too Soon* for all the confirmation you will ever need. Their self-titled album is out on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March and is a fantastic collection of songs that are the aural equivalent of jelly bunny flavoured bubblegum. Sounding like no one else around right now, those sick of miserable indie boys with foppish hairstyles and nothing much to say should make a beeline to their nearest independent record store to check **Mars Needs Women** out right now.

In the following interview (which was conducted in zero gravity even though I'm terrified of heights) we discuss rock n' roll, Mars, the debut album, playing live, some killer German bands that you need to hear and lots more.

Hi there. Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions.

'Krkkk.. Communication channel ... krkkk ... **open and** ... krkkk ... **fully functional** ... krkkk. Mars Needs Women .... krrrrkkk.. **Over** .... krkkk. **Hello!** ..krkkk ... krkkk.

On the bridge today: **Commander Valentina Chichikov** and **Lieutenant Ivana Punkawitch** ... krkkk. Absent (repairing the warp drive): **Dr. Daphne Doublebind** ..krkkk ... krkkk.'

By way of introduction can you tell us a bit about who you are and what you do?

**Val:** We're a three-piece lady crew on a mission to further the cause of rock'n'roll and save that dusty old planet, Mars from its dull and colourless existence. Ivana plays guitar, Daphne drums and I play bass and sing.

What was it that made you decide that you wanted to create **Mars Needs Women**?

**Ivana:** I was convinced after our first rehearsal. I had my handy recorder with me and I cut the whole session. If you listen back, you can hear us burst out laughing after each song. You can literally feel the excitement and joy crawling out of the speakers. I think we're best when we're playing songs for the first time. When it's an adventurous three-minute-ride and you don't know where you'll end up.

If you had a market stall in Camden selling your band what would your pitch be?

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**Val:** Oh, we'd be up on a soapbox preaching to the crowds, dazzling them in our shiny silver suits: 'Get yourself a shot! A spicy dose of Red Hot! Cos you don't know you're livin', till you've tasted **Mars Needs Women!**'

**Ivana:** Beautifully fragranced with Rock'n'Roll and Trash, spiced with just a hint of Country, Soul and Punk to compliment, but not overpower.

The single *Lover From Mars* is in shops now and is a gorgeous blast of rock'n'roll cool. Why do people need this song in their lives?

**Ivana:** People need it because they need simplicity in their lives. Good, honest simplicity. No viral chichi. No over-ornated bubble. Just shameless honesty. Simplicity is the new cool. Old cool, too.



B-Side *Don't Peak Too Soon* is every bit as good as *Lover From Mars*. How representative of the **Mars Needs Women** sound are these two songs?

**Ivana:** Well, the songs on the 7-inch carry all the ingredients we love - a steady beat, some ancient dug-up guitar riffs with a beautiful voice topping. It's always the first take. We agree on a key and ready, steady - off we go. For me, it's more of an unconscious, uncontrolled creation process. Raw and unpretentious - that's what the music is about.

**Val:** Yeah, these two songs are a good representation of what we do. Our music is a mixture of everything that moves us, everything that has influenced us over the years as musicians and music lovers. So there are lots of different flavours in there but the constant is: go with how it feels. If I'm getting goose bumps by the end of the solo, I know it's right.

What type of reaction has the single been getting so far?

**Val:** Ecstatic to orgasmic.

**Ivana:** My little sister likes it.

Your debut album should be hitting the shops in February. What can we expect from it?

**Ivana:** The album is like a roller coaster ride - you hold your breath, feel kinda relieved when it's over. But you're hooked, you need to ride again right away.

**Val:** After you've changed your underpants, of course.

What is the album going to be called?

**Val:** **Mars Needs Women.** Enough said.

Are you going to tour the album at all?

**Val:** We'll be out and about in Germany in March 2015 and at selected venues in Europe throughout the year.

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What's the best thing about picking up an instrument and playing live on stage?

**Ivana:** It's like an away game, football fans know what I'm talking about. It's all the delirious excitement, the booze, the being-in-a-gang-feeling, the singing and the yelling. It's even better than an away game, because you're a fan and a player at the same time.

**Val:** It's the best feeling. It's like surfing on the biggest wave, riding the hottest wind - there's nothing you can't do or be. And although I wish it wasn't still such a big deal, I'm always pretty proud to be a woman up there in charge. It's a good feeling to believe it might just make a difference.

**Mars Needs Women** is a very cool name for a band. Are you called after the old sci-fi movie?

**Ivana:** Yes. We not only dig up geriatric guitar riffs, we also pull out rotten movies.

**Val:** According to the main protagonist: 'The dumbest film ever made'.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever been given?

**Val:** Don't peak too soon! Keep your juice for that one moment and then hit it with everything you've got.

**Ivana:** K.I.S.S. (Keep it simple, stupid)

With the likes of **Honeyblood**, **Savages**, and **Warpaint** all producing amazing music right now, it really seems like female bands are creating all the best rock music. Why do you think that is?

**Ivana:** Well, men had their share long enough. And didn't do much with it. Women of the world, take over!

**Val:** Yeah, about time too. There's hardly ever been a time when there weren't great female bands out there. It's not like we all appeared out of nowhere. Maybe just everyone else is finally noticing...

For anyone who is unaware of the rock scene in Germany, what bands should they check out?

**Herpes** (Listen: >[Very Berlin](#)<)

**Bonaparte** (Listen: >[Me So Selfie](#)<)

**Les Trucs** (Listen: >[Zur Situation von Konstruktionen](#)<)

**Die Goldenen Zitronen** (Listen: >[Der Investor](#)<)

**206** (Listen: >[Hallo Hölle](#)<)

What was it that first got you into music?

**Ivana:** **Little Walter** and **Howlin Wolf**. They addicted me to music. I wanted to be ready when the fairy godmother comes to me and fulfils my wish - time travel to 706 Union Avenue in 1951.

**Val:** My best friend's mum's record collection - seventies rock, sixties cool, fifties fire. And from early on, knowing that I wanted to be the one up there doing it.

What does the future hold for **Mars Needs Women**?

**Ivana:** A trip to Venus.

Do you have any final words for our readers?

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**Ivana:** Yeah. Go original.

**Val:** The universe is your oyster. Go crack it.

Thank you!

**Mars Needs Women** says ... krkkk ... thank you! ... krkkk ... And ...krkkk ... Over and Out ... krkkk.

| [JOHN BITTLES](#)

| *Fotos: Konstanze Habermann*