



## THE HIVES BIOGRAPHY 2007

**“The Black And White Album” Released 15<sup>th</sup> October 2007 on Polydor**

Fools, misfits and miscreants of the earth! What have you been doing with your time? Eating big piles of chipped potatoes? Watching substandard football on TV? Erroneously imagining the non-riff-based travesty that is modern rock music to be exciting?

People, it is as if you have existed only in pathetic colours like beige, or pastel pink. For two years, you have felt listless, wishy-washy and largely kicks-free. Bad! But it has been bad for a reason: so that you fully appreciate the return of the good times. And these only come in two colours: BLACK & WHITE! Yeah!

**THE HIVES**, the curators of that perfectly balanced colour scheme, have been away far too long. During their absence, they have not been mucking about, oh no. They are now ready to bring the BLACK & WHITE again, only more so.

**THE HIVES** have made a record which has everything that you originally loved them for – kicks, riffs, good times, etc etc etc – while also being snazzy and new and longer and generally different from everything they did before. You might almost say it’s like making the transition from monochrome TV to colour TV, except **THE HIVES** are more BLACK & WHITE than ever, so that would be misleading.

That’s why the record is called: **‘THE BLACK & WHITE ALBUM’!!**

Here’s their singer, **Howlin’ Pelle Almqvist**: “We promised ourselves when we were 17, he says, “that we’d make 3 half-hour-long records of blistering punk rock, and so we did, culminating in ‘**Tyrannosaurus Hives**’. This time, we didn’t want 12 fast songs, then it was over. That would’ve been the 4th time. They work in sets of three, you see, then it’s a new period, so we had to come up with a new plan.”

To recap: **THE HIVES** first imposed their B&W vision in the late 1990s, touring Sweden (their home nation) and Germany like crazy, until 2001, when they took the world by storm alongside strapping young rockers like The Strokes and White Stripes.

Their first 2 records were collected on a British compilation, called **‘Your New Favourite Band’**, which went not silver, gold or even multi-platinum, but diamond! Yeah! From it, came the hits **‘Supply And Demand’**, **‘Main Offender’** and **‘Hate To Say I Told You So’**.

With 2004’s **‘Tyrannosaurus Hives’**, they successfully patted down the earth around the flag they’d placed atop this measly globe, consolidating their repute for rocking brouhaha with further hits ó **‘Walk Idiot Walk’**, **‘Two-Timing Touch & Broken Bones’** and **‘A Little More For Little You’**.

Without even **THE HIVES** knowing it at the time, the first seed of Phase 2 Hives was sewn during the Tyrannosaurusí øra, when they met **Pharrell Williams** ó the Numero Uno production dude from the kicks-hungry world of hip hop.

øPharrell was always saying he wanted to record with us,ö notes **Howlin’ Pelle**. øThen, when we started this record, we finally just figured it’d be more fun to say yes than to say no. This is **THE HIVES**ømajor label adventure ó an honest attempt at a sell-out, maybe. We see it as the last major-label rock & roll record that anybody’s ever gonna put out. So we thought we’d better spend some money on it.ö

Pharrell may come from the state of Virginia, and **THE HIVES** from Fagersta, Sweden, but when these two giants of modern entertainment came together, the union of their differing talents worked like magic, setting **‘THE BLACK & WHITE ALBUM’** ó yeah! yeah! ó on its long and unwavering path towards massiveness.

øWe assumed he’d have all these synths and beats,ö sez **HP**, øbut he has all this enthusiasm for rock music, because he only just discovered it. We started talking about Creedence Clearwater Revival, and he was going, Hey, I saw them on an infomercial last night, they sounded great! We’ve been listening to Creedence since we were kids.

øIt kinda meant we got to see rock with new eyes. We’d just hit a chord on electric guitar, and he’d freak out, and think it’s so cool. When you see someone react to it like that, you think, -Yeah! Loud, stinky guitar! This is really fun!ø and you get into it all over again. The best thing with Pharrell was, it’s mainly about having fun.ö

In the past, **THE HIVES**øunrivalled excellence has been achieved via a pain-staking collective process, whereby the 5 members have lovingly slaved over songs in rehearsals, and in the studio, often for many weeks, until all 5 were 100% satisfied that it rocked in exemplary fashion. Pharrell’s methodology was the exact opposite.

øIt’s like he throws 500 pancakes on the ceiling and sees what sticks,ö reflects guitarist **Nicholaus Arson**. øWhereas, we would have one pancake, and work on it forever. We wrote one song with him in 7 minutes. He’s always on the edge of his seat, doing stuff on the phone while he’s writing a song ó maybe opening a restaurant in Japan, or starting a clothes line in South America. For five minutes he wants to sound like Stevie Wonder, then he’s onto something else.ö

“Working with Pharrell helped kickstart the whole record,” concludes **Howlin’ Pelle**. “After that, there was a lot less questioning going on. The last record I really love it, it has such a straight, narrow vision. Making this one was a lot more, “Yeah, but this feels good, too! .and this! Why can’t it all be on same record?”

With the 21st-century disco-fied ‘**We Rule The World**’ and the woo-hoo **rockin’ ‘Well, Alright’** under their belts, **THE HIVES** rounded up a considerable batch of demo tracks in Fagersta, and soon hooked up with another blade whose hotness as a producer equals theirs as a band, **Jackknife Lee** (U2, Editors, R.E.M.), who brought his hi-tech skills to ‘**Hey Little World**’ and an early version of ‘**Tick Tick Boom**’.

From there, the 5 Swedes zipped over to Oxford, Mississippi, where they spent some weeks carving out the rest of ‘**THE BLACK & WHITE ALBUM**’ (say it again: yeah!) with **Dennis Herring** I another “man of the moment” whose credits include Elvis Costello, Buddy Guy and the last two Modest Mouse records. For a band who’d never hired a producer before, his methods, again, came as quite a shock.

**Howlin’ Pelle**: “In the South, it’s all slow. At times, the temperance and efficiency of us Scandinavians didn’t gel with the old Jamaican attitude of the American South. Like, there’s nothing you can do today, that can’t be done tomorrow. But this had an impact on our sound. Some stuff was better because we took longer.

“The big difference is: the record actually has bass I it has a bass register, which we really never wanted on our records before. But you should do it at least once, and now is the time!”

Yeah! It’s no coincidence that “**THE BLACK & WHITE ALBUM**’ is **Dr Matt Destruction**’s favourite Hives record I he’s the bassist! But it will almost certainly end up being most people’s favourite Hives record, because it’s all about opening out the band’s horizons I including the lengthening of how long each song lasts.

“The first two Hives records were designed to be played at a 200 capacity club, tops, whereas now we play to 1000s of people,” says **Pelle**. “The bigger the crowd, the slower they react, so there’s a natural progression in making the songs longer. When the last row of the audience hears the first chord, it’s already over for the first half of the audience, so basically we’re doing it for the people at the back.”

Having vaguely intended, initially, to get away from the sound of adrenalized punky rock, **THE HIVES** found themselves gravitating back towards righteousness. **Pelle**, again: “We were missing the rock riffage. Plus, no-one’s doing it now, at all. There’s a complete lack of proper, good rock riffin’! It’s sorely needed!”

Damn right, **HP**! When **Vigilante Carlstrom**, **THE HIVES**’ other guitarist, came up with the title for the record, all were agreed I even drummer **Chris Dangerous** I that it brilliantly encapsulated the mood of confidence in the record.

**Arson:** ðIf The Beatles could make a ðWhite Albumøand Metallica could make a ðBlack Albumø there was only one band who could make a record twice as good as those two combined. And as far as sales go, The Beatlesø ðWhite Albumøsold 11 million copies while Metallicaø ðBlack Albumøhas sold well over 16 million copies. The logic is undisputable: **THE HIVES**ø‘**THE BLACK & WHITE ALBUM**’ will go on to sell 176 million copies, thus exceeding sales-wise anything **THE HIVES** have released before, or any modern artist since 1968.ö

**THE HIVES** are now ready for global supremacy. Back in action lately at the notoriously red & white 100 Club in London, they imposed a **BLACK & WHITE** regime so emphatically, that one UK newspaper breathlessly reported: ðThey used to be our new favourite band, now theyøre the best band in the worldö.

Yeah! And one last time: Yeah!

Andrew Perry  
London, August 2007

**ALBUM DISCOGRAPHY:**

The Black And White Album 2007  
Tyrannosaurus Hives 2004  
Your New Favourite Band (compilation) 2001  
Veni Vidi Vicious 2000  
Barely Legal 1997