

COLLECTIVE

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Ed Roland – vocals / keyboards / guitar
Dean Roland – rhythm guitar
Will Turpin - bass
Jesse Triplett – lead guitar
Johnny Rabb - drums

As Ed Roland sings in “This,” the infectious first single and kick-off track on *See What You Started By Continuing*: “I got to go... where this song leads / Got to go... where this heart bleeds.” Collective Soul *have* followed their songs and souls to hits and multi-platinum alt-rock success, starting with 1993’s anthemic hit “Shine” and onto “December,” “The World I Know,” a duet with Elton John, a song on the hit *Twilight* soundtrack, and eight acclaimed albums.

But that was then. And this is now. *See What You Started By Continuing*, produced by Ed Roland, as were all the band’s previous records, is Collective Soul’s ninth album, and first in six years. After 19 straight years of an often-gruelling album-touring cycle, the pause was intentional. And it served to bring the Atlanta-based line-up back with a fresh enthusiasm and approach. “People take vacations for a reason; to recharge and enjoy yourselves,” Ed observes. On their time off, Ed’s younger brother Dean formed a duo; Ed created the Sweet Tea Project; Will Turpin released solo records. “When we came back, we were just so ready and happy to be together and make new music,” says Ed. “We had time to think about what we had accomplished, and we are very proud of that. We came back with a lot more confidence.” Plus, with the 2012 addition of drummer Johnny Rabb, and lead guitarist Jessie Triplett joining the family in 2014, the classic Collective Soul triumvirate were even further energized.

That’s evident in the master riffs, soaring melodies and tough, dynamic rockers that comprise the 11-song collection, which was engineered and mixed by long-time collaborator Shawn Grove (Sevendust, Stuck Mojo). Though some ballads were recorded—after all, Collective Soul’s poignant 1995 ballad “The World I Know” was a #1 hit—the energy ultimately proved more intense, and the band’s mantra became “let’s make a rock record.’ There are a couple mid-tempo songs, but it really is a rock riff record, which is what I think people like from Collective Soul,” says Ed. While “Without Me” boasts lovely piano, (real) strings and soulful female vocals, the edgy, mid-tempo “Exposed” is blunt in its accusations: “You took all my money, you took all my clothes / you took a little of everything, but it’s you who’s now exposed.” That’s ripped from real-life—though not Ed’s own: “I actually wrote that for a buddy; he went through something very difficult.”

“Tradition” has spoken parts, which Ed calls “the hardest thing I’ve ever done in my life. You’re used to hearing yourself sing; but to hear yourself talk on an album, you’re like ‘Ooh, yeah, I don’t know about that.’” The idea was spawned when he was noodling on piano, inspired by Bruce Springsteen’s “Candy’s Room,” and the drama between the drum, chorus and speaking. The song “AYTA” (Are You The Answer), raw at first, then all soaring

choruses, and a dramatic bridge, asks a romantic question, contrasted with “Hurricane” an unflinchingly self-referential song penned when Ed was “angry and tired.”

See What You Started By Continuing was fully realized by a cadre of musician friends who dropped by Ed’s studio to add programming, backing vocals, sax, strings, horns and general the good vibes that are evident in every groove of the album.

A multi-faceted musician who attended the Berklee College of Music, Ed is that rare combination of well schooled and intuitive. Riffs come easily to Ed and while he cites the irresistible riffs purveyed by Zeppelin, The Faces and The Stones as favourites, it was The Cars who a teenage Ed first emulated: “Gregg Hawkes was basically playing riffs on a keyboard; I just love The Cars.”

See What You Started By Continuing accomplished what the line-up intended, explains Ed: “We said ‘let’s not be a band that rests on what we did 20 years ago.’ It was the first time we recorded with Jessie and Johnny so there was that new flair and excitement. Dean, Will and I had done eight other records together, but the new guys and the break really helped our heads into, that ‘wow this is exciting,’ and attitude adjustment.”

The slightly inscrutable album title, if dissected, makes perfect sense for Collective Soul’s current attitude, as Ed explains: “I write down a bunch of stuff all the time, phrases and words and that came up, and felt like where we were going with this record. We started something so long ago and we really haven’t changed. We experiment with sounds but we are still a rock n roll band; we make no apologies for that. If people say rock’s dead--I don’t think so. We’ve got our second wind and are ready to go; we’re not starting over, just continuing, strongly, with the same thing we started. Or the simpler answer laughs Ed, “I don’t know it just feels good, dude.”

See What You Started By Continuing **does** feel good, and the album benefited from fan and on-the-road-feedback. Collective Soul hit the studio in early 2014, but booked shows in the midst of the recording process, so “we were going out and tweaking new songs in front of live audiences; it was a lot fun, it was like pre-production.” Ultimately, the powerful collection of tunes nods to the past, but is a big step into the future. “We really appreciate where we started, and now, where we are as a band,” concludes Ed. “I mean, we won the lottery, so let’s keep going, and going strong. We’ve got our second wind.”

Discography

Hints Allegations and Things Left Unsaid (1993)

Collective Soul (1995)

Disciplined Breakdown (1997)

Dosage (1999)

Blender (2000)

Youth (2004)

Afterwords (2007)

Collective Soul (2009)

See What You Started by Continuing (2015)