**Meryl Streek**

**Bio 2024**

Born and raised in Dublin, avant-garde punk producer Meryl Streek remembers his childhood in Ireland fondly. *“Growing up it was great,”* he says. *“I had a lot of family around me and things were good, we were a working class family of independent screen printers.”*   
  
During the leaner and more difficult years that followed, Streek grew up and the world changed around him. He lost several family members, and austerity closed in on the country. As the recession hit and work became steadily thinner on the ground, he moved to Canada—a 7 year experience that shaped Meryl Streek both as a person and as an artist, as he explains, *“Seeing how countries work outside of Ireland, and seeing how unfair Ireland's work ethic and living situations are, I came back here fueled to try and make a change.”*

With his father a talented drummer in his own right, and the call of punk rock’s ethics and morals so strong, it was perhaps an inevitability that Streek would eventually fall into that same world. *“My dad was an unbelievable drummer,”* he enthuses, *“Like unbelievable. I was raised being around punk bands like Crass and anarcho-punks Rudimentary Peni. I remember seeing him play growing up as a kid and that was the start of my growth as a musician.”*   
  
Fast-forward to 2021 and holding over 15 years of touring and drumming experience under his belt in various projects, Streek had developed a taste for life on the road, despite its many challenges—but something had to give. *“It's tough, and very shit financially,”* he sighs. *“Also dealing with people you don't like on a daily basis isn't good for the head.”*   
  
Playing the same beats in *“absolute car crash bands”* for years and relying on others to make money to survive, Streek was delighted when he found a new way to crossbreed different beats and genres electronically. *“I love all music but I find I have a great ear for hitting strings that touch the heart. I actually listen to a lot of more dream pop records and easy-going music. I'm not always walking around screaming,”* he quips.  
  
The producer’s latest solo project, Meryl Streek, began in earnest when he finally quit his former band to try and give a voice to those he saw struggling in his home country. *“I just said ‘I need to do my own thing’ and try to help the ordinary people in Ireland who've been suffering,”* Streek says. *“I do it for my father who has now passed on. I know what it’s like to feel betrayed and hurt, and I want to devote my life to helping others as best I can. The music may sound vicious to some, but times are changing and the government here in Ireland aren’t.”*

Mostly recorded at home in his Vancouver apartment over the best part of a year, his debut album *796* arrived on 4th November 2022 and cemented itself as one of the most visceral, important political records of the decade so far with one critic praising it as *“the most incendiary and important punk rock album of the year”* (Paul Brannigan/Louder). It shone a light on the 796 bodies of children found in a septic tank at Bon Secours Mother and Baby Home in Taum, Ireland, a maternity home for unmarried mothers and their children run by Catholic nuns.

Armed with just a microphone and a laptop, in less than a year Meryl Streek went from playing his first show in a Dublin squat to performing live at Kentish Town Forum supporting post-punk pioneers Public Image Ltd. The combination of news samples, rumbling bass and a front-man marching through crowds spitting out truth like his life depended on it cemented the Irish poet as the punk scene’s new saviour, embodying the essence of the genre while simultaneously reinventing it.

It became clear that the songs on 796, though rooted in Irish socio-political commentary, resonated with people around the world and the single ‘Death To The Landlord’ was quickly regarded as the anthem for those challenging oppression. Soon enough, Meryl Streek was not only headlining tours in the UK, but also making festival appearances across Europe venturing as far as Gran Canaria.

Much like the first album, ‘Songs For The Deceased’ saw Meryl Streek enter the Dublin recording studio Darklands Audio with producer Dan Doherty (Fontaines D.C.). *“The album came about in bits and pieces due to the amount of gigging. I got so carried away with playing live I forgot about the recording side of things and what matters the most to me.”*

To push the music into new spaces, Meryl Streek invited guest musicians to collaborate on tracks along the way. Benefits front man Kingsley Hall provides spoken word to the album’s ‘Interlude’, Cal Graham from UK punks The Chisel appears on forthcoming single ‘Dogs’ and influential musician Oliver Ackermann from A Place to Bury Strangements contorts his guitar sound for a truly experimental outro on the song ‘Murder’. *“I'm delighted to have some of my favourite artists on this record with me and very thankful that they are.”*

The songs move from the deeply personal (‘Paddy’ is a tribute to his uncle Paddy, a unique individual who chose to live life by his own terms), political (‘Bertie’ directly targets controversial Irish politician Bertie Ahern), social (‘Gambling Death’ deals with gambling addiction head on), to tragedies from Irish history (‘Stardust’ remembers the victims of the fire that took place at the Stardust venue Feb 14th 1981, killing 48 people and leaving families begging for answers as to why the disaster happened in the first place). *“It was only when I finished recording the new album I realised I had made a record that revolved around people and events around my hometown of Dublin. Now, I admit it's not always a pretty picture I'm painting, and it probably never will be, but these are cases that desperately need awareness.”*

For Meryl Streek it’s business as usual. *“This is a collection of stories about Betrayal, Murder, Injustice, and Corruption. It’s not just happening in Ireland, it’s happening around the world and we’re supposed to just take it lying down?”.* ‘Songs For The Deceased’ isn’t just about Streek’s hometown, it’s an album about people and their relationship with a society that continues to let them down. It’s a tale as old as time, on a global scale. There will always be stories to tell and injustices to highlight, and Meryl Streek won’t let us forget quickly.