

# MOSA WILD

## BIOGRAPHY 2019

The sofa that Mosa Wild are gathered on in the living room of guitarist Alex Stevens' family home in Ashford is not spacious enough for four grown men to sit on, but Mosa Wild will always make room for one another. Theirs is a pact that has strengthened through both adversity and communal ambition as they've deepened their bond and brotherhood. It's a fraternity firmly rooted in friendship but its origins were in urgency; an urgency to realise the most immersive, nuanced and passionate vision for vocalist and songwriter Jim Rubaduka's storytelling. Via bassist Edwin Ireland and drummer Charlie Campbell, Jim and Alex – who met at school – found the missing pieces to a puzzle they'd been faced with while getting a taste for performing and figuring out music's power for a certain kind of social currency...

“I remember Jim supporting a band and I didn't know he could sing or play guitar. But the two songs he played were absolute bangers,” says Alex, bigging him up. The front-man taught himself how to sing. At home he and his brother would make mixtapes in their joint bedroom while recording songs off the radio. “I remember making a mixtape for a crush when I was about eight-years-old.” What was on the tape? “Do you know Babyface?” he laughs.

The landscape of British music when Jim and Alex started playing together was heavily influenced by a new wave of excitingly progressive British guitar bands: Bombay Bicycle Club, Foals, The Maccabees to name a few. These beginnings make sense for them. In need of a more widescreen sound, the pair realised they required bass and drums.

Cue Charlie, who responded to a lonely hearts ad for a drummer and drove to play with them. After losing their first bassist, the three lads found themselves complete with Ed from the town of Bedford – a face they kept seeing around London gigs. He grew up playing cello, then bass in bands and studied jazz. He also agreed to try out. “They were bored enough to say yes,” says Jim. “After our first jam, I had this real eureka moment: Oh snap! This is what I've been looking for.”

A newly forged quartet who all had played in previous bands, they began to inform each others tastes: from Radiohead to Bruce Springsteen, Jai Paul to Arcade Fire, The Smiths to Ed's jazz leanings, they'd nerd out on music. Inspired by each other's skills, they improved their individual musicianship mainly as a tool to impress one another.

They taught themselves how to be a band. It was something they grew up romanticising. They made it official with the name Mosa Wild, which stems from Jim's family. His grandfather was called Mosa. "He wasn't a particularly wild guy," he says. "But he was a real force of nature, a good man."

The space these four men clearly allow for each other's sensibilities and innermost vulnerabilities is exquisitely conveyed in their debut EP, 'Talking In Circles'. It's an EP about love, loss, feeling stuck, heartbreak - "all the stuff people deal with again and again," smiles Jim. Partly produced by Jim Abbiss (Arctic Monkeys, Bombay Bicycle Club), partly by James Kenosha (Pulled Apart By Horses, Dry The River), there's a cohesive experimentalism that's grounded in guitars, synths and walloping drum lines, but it's the gentle lilt of Jim's smooth vocals and the songs' spacious backdrop that elevate their collection of songs beyond typical British indie tropes. No surprise given they've written it all while sequestered miles away from civilisation in Alex's aunt's house in a village during an eight month period of intense work. To keep sane they played boardgames, of which they kept tallies (the geekish details are to remain off-the-record).

Beautifully crafted, their songs and process are evolving in a thoroughly modern direction. 'Smoke' which was released in 2016 to critical buzz via The Line Of Best Fit and Gold Flake Paint, came easily. Other tracks were more of a battle. The rallying cry of 'Night', for instance, took weeks of figuring out, but with the eventual solutions come the best highs Jim could ever dream of. Most thrilling is their hunger to explore all the directions and it's a good problem to have. "We don't feel tethered to an instrument in any way," says Jim. "In this setting anything feels like fair game to us."

Thinking back on those early plaudits, the boys are itching to release their pent-up energy and build upon that momentum. Taking cues from granddad Mosa, they've required some heroism of their own. It hasn't been an easy arc but the one constant has been their oath to stick together. They've learned patience. In 2017, they got a taste of festivals playing the BBC Introducing Stage at Reading & Leeds. Last year they supported a run of dates with Maggie Rogers. Now signed to Glassnote, and all in their mid-20s they are eager to get out onto their own stages and build their own fanbase. "We're so ready to start," says Jim, ravenous. "We really really really wanna get out of Ashford," says Alex. And they flail about the couch laughing.

- Eve Barlow

---

**For Further Information contact:** Ellie Jones at Stay Loose | [ellie@stayloose.co.uk](mailto:ellie@stayloose.co.uk) | +44 7849 844 143