

= Small Mercies =

Small Mercies were an Australian alternative rock group from Brisbane , which formed in 1997 . They used the names , Seventh Avenue and Blaik , before adopting Small Mercies in 2004 . Their final line @-@ up was Steve Blaik on lead vocals and guitar , Marty O 'Brien on drums , Danny Procopis on lead guitar , and Jeff Reeves on bass guitar . Small Mercies released two EPs , Is This Life ? (2003) and Off the Record (2004) , and one studio album , Beautiful Hum (May 2008) . Their highest charting release , " Innocent " (May 2007) , reached the ARIA Singles Chart Top 40 and was nominated at the ARIA Music Awards of 2007 for Breakthrough Artist ? Single . By December 2010 the group had disbanded .

= = History = =

= = = Formation and early EPs = = =

Small Mercies were established in 1997 in Brisbane by Steve Blaik (a.k.a Steve Martin) on lead vocals (later on guitar) , Marty O 'Brien on drums , and Danny Procopis on lead guitar ? all attended local secondary schools , St. Laurence 's College (Blaik) and Padua College (O 'Brien and Procopis) . The trio were initially named Psybin Trip before changing to Blaik (styled as blaik) . By 1999 the band were renamed Seventh Avenue and also included Simon O 'Connor on rhythm guitar and Shaun Spooner on bass guitar and backing vocals ? both also from Padua College and both were ex @-@ Nobenn , another Brisbane group .

During 2001 Seventh Avenue were finalists for the Brisbane Rock Award , which earned them the right to play at Queen Street Mall Basement . This performance attracted Shawthing Entertainment 's Greg Shaw , who became their manager . The band worked with Stuart Stuart (The Veronicas) , Dave Nicholas (INXS , Sting) , Trey Bruce (Faith Hill) and Randy Staub (Nickelback , Metallica) on song writing or recordings . They met John Woodruff (Savage Garden , Evermore) , after he had heard their early demos , who became their next manager in 2001 . He recommended them to Sony BMG .

In 2002 the band 's name returned to Blaik , they released material on their official website , such as a four @-@ track , Blaik Sampler (December 2002) , which includes an early version of " Innocent " . In June 2003 they recorded with Bruce producing at Rockinghorse Studios , Byron Bay . Blaik released a five @-@ track EP , Is This Life ? , in November that year .

Under the name , Small Mercies , in May 2004 they signed with Modern Music . They released a five @-@ track EP , Off the Record , on 10 September 2004 on Sony BMG and Modern Music . Their producer was Dave Nicholas . " Pellet Gun " , a track from the EP , was issued as a single , it was co @-@ written by Blaik , O 'Brien , O 'Connor , Procopis and Spooner . It was added to the Triple J play list and In October 2007 it appeared on Power On ? Rock Hits 2007 , a various artists ' compilation album . By 2005 the band 's line @-@ up was Blaik , Procopis , O 'Brien , and Jeff Reeves on bass guitar .

= = = Beautiful Hum = = =

Small Mercies contacted their next producer , Matt Wallace (Faith No More , Maroon 5 , Train) , after he left a message on their MySpace website : " Hey guys , love this stuff . Are you still looking for a producer ? " Wallace was at the top of their " wish list " of possible producers . The group recorded their debut album , Beautiful Hum (May 2008) , over an eight @-@ week span in late 2006 in Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley , working at The Pass and Sound City Studios . The recording was mixed by Tim Palmer , who had worked with Pearl Jam and U2 . The album was released on 24 May 2008 , which reached the top 60 of the ARIA Albums Chart .

The first single from the album , " Innocent " , was released on 28 May 2007 , which reached the ARIA Singles Chart top 40 . The track was co @-@ written by Blaik , Procopis and Stuart . At the

ARIA Music Awards of 2007 " Innocent " was nominated for Breakthrough Artist ? Single . It also appeared on the ARIA End of Year Charts : Top 50 Australian Artist Singles 2007 . " Innocent " was used on the TV promo ad for United States series , Prison Break .

The album 's second single , " Sorry " (November 2007) , made the top 60 . In November they appeared at the Bourbon Fest in Sydney , alongside Spiderbait and After the Fall . Small Mercies supported tours by headlining bands , Hinder (October 2007) , Nickelback and Daughtry (May 2008) . In April 2008 they travelled to the US to perform at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York , Musexpo in Los Angeles and backing Goo Goo Dolls at the Rose Bowl . Through the rest of 2008 they toured Australia to promote the album . By December 2010 Small Mercies had disbanded . In June 2014 Blaik performed as a solo artist after having been in a duo , the Associates , with Stuart McLean .

= = Musical styles and influences = =

Small Mercies and their antecedents ' music was influenced by numerous artists . In January 2001 Blaik described 7th Avenue 's connections , " bands like Live , Counting Crows and Pearl Jam so it ? s not too heavy ... We mainly play covers at gigs but we add our own flavour as well . It ? s a change that keeps us interested and our influence comes through in the music . " He identified his favourite albums : August and Everything After by Counting Crows , Live 's Throwing Copper , and The Joshua Tree by U2 . Blaik summarised that he " loves great storytellers " . As blaik , the band , in June 2003 their website wrote that their sound was " emotional folk pop " .

Blaik , the vocalist , described recording Off the Record as " five guys in a room playing rock music ... hoping that the music strikes a chord with those who listen to it . " It showed the influences of U2 , Counting Crows , Aerosmith and Pearl Jam . Jacqui Curtis of The Program felt the EP " offers listeners yet another melodic rock band with ever @-@ so @-@ catchy tunes to add to their rotation of summer jams ... [which] delivers five delectable rock tracks . " Curtis described how " Pellet Gun " , the lead single " couples hard @-@ hitting lyrics and memorable guitar riff ... and attacks every listener 's past loves with an attitude and vindictiveness that the heartbroken , dumped and hard @-@ done @-@ by deserve . Picture yourself burning your ex 's clothes and you 'll find the essence of ' Pellet Gun ' . "

In an interview on Australian Music Online Blaik listed his favourite Australian artists , and specified some of their attributes or albums : INXS and their lead singer Michael Hutchence 's ability " to create so much power and emotion " ; Powderfinger 's dedication and uniqueness , and Odyssey Number Five which had " everything that I love about Powderfinger " ; Crowded House especially Neil Finn 's song writing capabilities ; Silverchair 's Diorama which was " a journey from beginning to end " ; The Cruel Sea 's live performances ; and End of Fashion 's self @-@ titled debut album , which he opined " represent to us a place that we would want to be in the near future . " He also acknowledged AC / DC , especially their Back in Black album , as being highly influential , claiming " I don 't think I know a single musician who doesn 't have this record and this band in their record collection " , and asking " How can you not be inspired by this band ? "

For Beautiful Hum the band provided about 50 tracks and , according to Wallace , there was " not a clunker in the bunch . " He described Beautiful Hum as somewhat of a " best of " album , as there was so much content to choose from . Blaik told Tim Colman of The Sydney Morning Herald that " There are actually some songs on the record that are four or five years old , they 've sort of just evolved as the band 's evolved . The songs have progressed to a point where they 're really representative of where the band is now . " In November 2007 FasterLouder 's Melbjuz caught their performance at the Chapel in Melbourne , she felt they provided " Emotionally charged melodies ... ringing guitar work from Procopis and Blaik ? s charismatic stage persona " moving from " a real rock @-@ edged buzz " with " Sorry " to " a slower , evocative track " with " Fools " .

American Society of Composers , Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) reported that critics had found that Small Mercies ' " sound has elements of Matchbox 20 , Maroon 5 , Bon Jovi and Nickelback with memorable melodies , along with the heartfelt voice of Steve Blaik and the songs he creates with writing partner , guitarist Danny Procopis . " Elisa Scarton of Mediasearch described " how

distinctly international their sound is " on the album , where the " sound is fresh , Steve Blaik 's vocals are unique and appealing to the ears and the songs fulfill their rock agenda . " TheDwarf.com.au website 's MikeOwnsYourFace praised " Innocent " as " an epic rock ballad that beckons for lighters and mobile phones to be raised in salutation " but noticed that for the album 's later tracks " The band seems to run out of steam , with most of the songs ending up sounding the same as the last . "

In an interview in the Cairns community newspaper , Cairns Bulletin , O 'Brien described their musical forte : " Rock 's such a broad term ... we do a lot of harder stuff but we also do softer variations " and that his fellow members know " which buttons to press to make things kick in and when to give space when one needs it . "

= = Members = =

Steve Blaik ? lead vocals , guitar (1997 ? 2010)
Marty O 'Brien ? drums , percussion (1997 ? 2010)
Danny Procopis ? lead guitar (1997 ? 2010)
Simon O 'Connor ? rhythm guitar (1999 ? 2004)
Shaun Spooner ? bass guitar , backing vocals (1999 ? 2004)
Jeff Reeves ? bass guitar , backing vocals (2005 ? 2010)

= = Discography = =

= = = Studio albums = = =

Beautiful Hum (24 May 2008) AUS ? No. 54

= = = Extended plays = = =

Blaik Sampler (by Blaik) (December 2002)
Is This Life ? (by Blaik) (November 2003)
Off the Record (10 September 2004)

= = = Singles = = =

" Pellet Gun " (August 2004)
" Innocent " (28 May 2007) AUS ? No. 38 EoY ? No. 41
" Sorry " (November 2007) AUS ? No. 54
" Don 't You Know Who I Am ? " (April 2008)