

= Title TK =

Title TK is the third studio album by American alternative rock band the Breeders, released in May 2002. From the album ? whose name means " title to come " in journalistic shorthand ? the Breeders released three singles : " Off You ", " Huffer ", and " Son of Three ". Title TK reached the top 100 in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Australia, and number 130 in the United States.

Following many changes in personnel after the release the album Last Splash, by 1996 singer and songwriter Kim Deal was the only remaining original member of the Breeders. The next year, she returned to the studio in an attempt to record a follow @-@ up album, but her behavior ? including drug use and demanding expectations ? alienated the many musicians and engineers with whom she worked.

In 1999, joined by her sister Kelley, Deal began recording sessions with engineer Steve Albini in Chicago. Fear members Mando Lopez and Richard Presley, and musician Jose Medeles joined the line @-@ up. The group continued recording with Albini in 2001. Title TK was compiled from the output of these sessions and supplemented with two tracks recorded in Los Angeles with engineers Andrew Alekel and Mark Arnold. Of the twelve songs on the album, ten are credited solely to Kim Deal; the other two were written by all five band members.

Commentary on the album has included discussion of its minimal instrumentation and the interjection of unexpected sounds. Reviewers have described the lyrics on its songs as unconventional and dark, and noted the prominence of vocal harmonies between the Deal sisters. The reception of Title TK has been generally positive; commentators have praised Albini's contributions to the sound of the album and observed that the musical arrangements isolate the individual components, such as vocals, guitar, and drums.

= = Background and initial recording attempts = =

From the formation of the Breeders in 1989 until the mid @-@ 1990s, the composition of the group changed several times. By 1996, vocalist and songwriter Kim Deal was the only original member. The line @-@ up who recorded the group's debut album, Pod (1990), included Tanya Donelly and Britt Walford; they were replaced by Jim Macpherson and Deal's sister Kelley by the time of the band's 1993 album Last Splash. Kelley Deal and original member Josephine Wiggs left in 1995. Kim Deal formed the Amps that year, but reformed the Breeders in 1996 ? initially using the Amps' line @-@ up of Deal, Macpherson, Luis Lerma, and Nate Farley.

Throughout 1997, Deal attempted to record tracks for a forthcoming album. By this time, she had become difficult to work with, and had adopted overly demanding musical standards for her bandmates. Her behaviour, and the unpleasant atmosphere of the recording sessions, caused Macpherson and Farley to leave the group during this period. Several other musicians recruited throughout the year left for similar reasons. The 1997 sessions cost hundreds of thousands of dollars through the use of four New York studio locations, the expense of moving equipment between them, and hotel costs.

Three recording engineers also parted ways with Deal in 1997. The first engineer she hired ? Mark Freegard, who had helped to record Last Splash ? has remarked that Deal was " totally lost " and that after seven weeks in the studio, there were no usable recordings. Two subsequent engineers, John Agnello and Bryce Goggin, had each worked with Deal in 1995 on parts of the Amps' album Pacer. Agnello became increasingly frustrated with Deal's drug use and the difficulty of retaining musicians; when Deal disappeared for several days, he left the recording sessions. Goggin was put off by Deal's " futile ... standards "; when she was unsatisfied with a drumming performance (by the percussionist of the Flaming Lips) that Goggin thought was outstanding, he told her to master the drums herself. Deal followed his advice, and returned to her home in Ohio to practice the instrument.

= = Subsequent recording and coalescence of the group = =

Deal began recording again in 1999 , first in Austin , Texas , and then at Electrical Audio studio in Chicago with Steve Albini , with whom she had previously worked on Pod , Pacer , and the Pixies ' album Surfer Rosa . Although Deal performed most of the instrumental parts herself at these 1999 sessions , her sister had some involvement . They recorded " The She " , " Forced to Drive " , and " Too Alive " in Chicago ; Deal 's drum performance on the latter track was from the Texas session .

Deal was satisfied with the material recorded to this point , but realized she would not be able to tour without a band . She returned to New York to look for a backing group in March 2000 . After a chance meeting with members of the group Fear , she invited drummer Andrew Jaimez , bassist Mando Lopez , and guitarist Richard Presley to jam with her at the studio she was renting . Deal wanted to continue playing with these musicians ; within three months , she moved to Los Angeles , where Fear was based . Jaimez , Lopez , and Presley joined the Breeders ; soon after , Kelley Deal rejoined the group . For much of the rest of the year , the ensemble wrote and practiced songs . Jaimez was involved in other musical projects , and decided that he did not have enough time for the Breeders ; he was replaced by Jose Medeles .

The five Breeders returned to Chicago in mid @-@ 2001 to continue recording with Albini . " Little Fury " , " London Song " , " Off You " , " Put on a Side " , " Full on Idle " , " T and T " , and " Huffer " were recorded during the 2001 session . At some point in 2000 to 2002 , the group also spent time at the Grandmaster Recording Ltd. studio in Los Angeles , resulting in " Son of Three " and " Sinister Foxx " ; the engineers at this session were Mark Arnold and Andrew Alekel . Kelley Deal has stated that " Little Fury " and " Sinister Foxx " started as " just ideas " by the sisters that turned into full collaborations by the group ? all five musicians received songwriting credits on these tracks . Kim Deal is credited as sole songwriter on the remaining ten tracks , although other band members contributed musical ideas as well . Another song from the Title TK sessions , " Fire the Maid " , written and sung by Kelley Deal , was performed in concert in 2000 and 2001 , but was not included on the album .

Over the course of the Title TK sessions , Kim Deal adopted a philosophy she calls " All Wave " . This approach stipulates that only analog recording processes , and no computer manipulation , may be used . Deal has said that she likes " interesting mistakes " in song production , and that her beliefs about recording are " a reaction ... to everything sounding so straight and clean in most records today " . The album 's mastering was also done using analog processes , by Albini and Steve Rook , at Abbey Road Studios in London .

= = Music and lyrics = =

Multiple reviewers have noted the minimal instrumentation used on Title TK . Throughout the album , unpredictable musical ideas occur : one reviewer has commented that " keyboards buzz from out of nowhere , guitars hit bum notes intentionally , basslines amble up and down the scale , sometimes two at a time " ; another commentator has described the progression of the track " Put on a Side " as follows : " At 1 @.@ 28 there is a distorted chug . At 2 @.@ 29 a drum @-@ roll . Neither of these introduces anything , continues or reappears . They just pop up and then evaporate like accidental fireworks . " Opinion has varied on other aspects of the album ; some reviews observed differences in the speed and levity of the songs , while others commented on the unified feel of the album .

Reviewers have also commented on the unorthodox character of Title TK 's lyrics . Certain lyrics have been described as " poetry " ? such as the lines " If I find the door / I am the son of Go " in " Son of Three " and " Round up holler girl / Ah I will sing / Title TK / If I don 't black out / Dumb made for fucking / And missing from the party / That boy spun out " in " Little Fury " ? but also as " cryptic " and as " imagistic baffle " . While some critics have made reference to the dark tendencies of the lyrics , others have commented on the humor on the album . Themes reviewers have heard in the songs include road trips and absence .

The singing on Title TK has been noted for its prominent harmonies between the Deal sisters . Kim Deal 's vocals on the album have been described as rough but endearing .

= = = Songs = = =

Title TK begins with " Little Fury ", named after a kind of pocketknife ? sold at truck stops ? on which the word " fury " is written . On this call and response track , the Deal sisters sing over a heavy bassline and prominent drums . Drowned in Sound 's J.R. Moores writes that " Somebody considers unleashing a guitar solo , yet its notes are few and the vocals kick back in before it has the chance to go anywhere . Is it a solo or a riff ? Whatever it is , it flicks its middle finger at other solos and riffs , exposing them as absurd , flamboyant , shallow fripperies . I 'm not part of that club , it says . " For PopMatters 's Matt Cibula , the repeated line " Hold what you 've got " is the Deals ' reminder to themselves to keep the Breeders intact henceforth .

On " London Song " , the guitar performance has a particular syncopation that Jim Abbot (The Orlando Sentinel) equates with Title TK 's " world @-@ weary attitude " and the sisters ' " tough lost years ? that [are] obvious from Kim 's disconnected delivery on songs about hard times " . Contrastingly , NY Rock 's Jeanne Fury comments on the track 's upbeat , quirky energy .

In the album 's liner notes , critic Mia Clarke describes the slow ballad " Off You " as having a lackadaisical feel ; Pitchfork Media 's Will Bryant is struck by the song 's ominousness , and compares it to the Pink Floyd album The Wall . For Rolling Stone 's Arion Berger , " Off You " is " as direct and heartbreaking as an eighty @-@ five @-@ year @-@ old blues recording , and Kim , her voice clear and full of hope , can 't help sounding like a young woman who 's lived ten awful lifetimes " .

" The She " , named after a night club that the Deals ' brother used to frequent , has been described as having a funky feel , with a start @-@ and @-@ stop rhythm of bass and drums . Bryant hears the track 's keyboard part as reminiscent of the group Stereolab , while Phares likens the entire song to Jefferson Airplane 's " White Rabbit " . Cibula mentions that the " creepy / cool ? sound [fits] the characteristic Kim Deal familiar / strange lyrics : ' Sorrow blowin ? through the vents / I ? m over Houston / You ? re over the night we met . ' "

On " Too Alive " , Kim Deal played all instruments , with vocals by both sisters . Moores notes the track 's buoyant feel and the steady strumming style of Deal 's guitar ; for Phares , the song possesses an immediacy as though the listener were there watching the performance in person .

Bryant identifies " Son of Three " as an example of " when the Breeders set out to rock " , noting " the chugging guitars and stomping drums " . For Title TK 's third single , the Breeders re @-@ recorded the composition in July 2002 ; this version is faster than the album track , and reflects the speed they were playing the song in concert that year . The Guardian 's Betty Clarke asserts that the lyrics of both " Son of Three " and " The She " suggest extended road trips with unknown outcomes .

Regarding the album 's next song , " Put on a Side " , more than one critic has commented on its distinctive bassline , and others have described the track 's cramped , repressive feel . Berger writes that Kim Deal 's " voice grinds sweetly , weariedly , sloppily inside your brain " , as she repeats twelve words over the course of the song : " Better I better I stayed up / Better mono , put on a side " .

An earlier version of " Full on a Idle " , Title TK 's eighth track , was released on the Amps ' Pacer in 1995 . In a 1997 interview , Deal expressed an interest in redoing multiple Amps ' compositions , partially because she did not feel Pacer was well recorded . Bryant believes both versions of " Full on Idle " sound almost the same , but The Village Voice 's Jessica Grose maintains that the Breeders ' rendition is noticeably slower . In Cibula 's view , this version contains elements of country music , cumbia , and ska . Betty Clarke cites the line " Obey your colorist , bleach it all away " as an example of Title TK 's amusing , off @-@ center lyrics .

On " Sinister Foxx " , Deal repeatedly sings " Has anybody seen the iguana ? " She has explained this as being a reference to buying marijuana : " Have you ever bought a bag of weed ? You walk in , and the pot dealer 's got an empty terrarium ... Every time I go to a pot dealer 's house , there 's no iguana . " Another line , " I 'm in beer class every Thursday night " , refers to the alcohol awareness classes that Richard Presley attended , due to having been caught driving drunk . Phares describes

the song as having a " sexy menace " , and Berger compares the drum part to gunshots and door @-@ knocking .

Moore identifies in " Forced to Drive " the " quiet @-@ LOUD @-@ quiet " dynamic for which Deal 's former band , the Pixies , are famous ; Berger expresses this same duality by contrasting the song 's " pop verses " with " the gloom of a twisty , malignant chorus " . For Abbot , this four @-@ chord chorus " approaches exuberance " in its mixture of catchy melody and grunge .

The penultimate track , " T and T " , is described by Bryant as an instrumental introduction leading into " Huffer " ; indeed , Kelley Deal has stated that these two songs share a thematic union : the latter is about the negative side of inhaling paint or other substances , while the former stands for " Toil and Trouble " ? a further emphasizing of the hardships that inhaling chemicals can cause . " Huffer " is , according to Moore , a lively , poppy track ; critics have commented on its " da @-@ da @-@ da " and " ah @-@ ah " chorus .

= = Release and reception = =

Title TK was released on May 20 ? 21 , 2002 , on labels including 4AD (United Kingdom) , Elektra Records (United States) , V2 Records (Belgium) , Virgin Records (France) , and P @-@ Vine Records (Japan) . The phrase " Title TK " means " title to come " in journalistic shorthand . The album 's art design was done by Vaughan Oliver and Chris Bigg , with additional photography by Onie M. Montes ; Oliver , who had begun doing artwork for 4AD in 1980 , also designed Breeders ' releases including Pod and Last Splash . Three singles were released from Title TK : " Off You " , " Huffer " , and " Son of Three " ; " Off You " reached number 25 on the Canadian Digital Songs chart , and " Son of Three " number 72 on the UK Singles Chart . Title TK reached the top 100 in the United Kingdom , Australia , France , and Germany , and peaked at number 130 in the United States .

Critics have mostly responded positively to the album . The critical aggregator website Metacritic awards Title TK a score of 71 , indicating " generally favorable reviews " , based on the reviews of 19 critics . Betty Clarke singles out the " separation of sounds " on tracks such as " T and T " and " Off You " as the best aspect of the album , and writes that Title TK is " a welcome return to punky pop that knows how to flex some melodic muscle " . Berger , while emphasizing the pain and melancholy present in the songs , praises the record as " absolutely beautiful " . NME reviewer John Robinson hears the album as " tuneful ... and impressively empty sounding , the arrangements of the tunes showcasing skeletal guitar and drum patterns and Deal 's remarkable voice " . Cibula " really like [s] " Title TK , and opines that it sounds " buzzy and funny and swaggering in that special Albini uber @-@ geek sort of way " . Billboard critic Brian Garrity comments that Title TK " retains the offbeat charm that has always been at the center of the band 's appeal " .

More negatively , Melanie McFarland of The Seattle Times asserts that the Breeders " haven 't solidified [their magic] with Title TK " and that " all Breeders albums have mood swings , but this one has too many " . Spin magazine 's Steve Kandell characterizes the album as " a little unsure of itself " , and points to the Breeders ' re @-@ recording of Pacer 's " Full on Idle " as evidence that " the creative coffers weren 't exactly spilling over " for Deal .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Kim Deal , except where noted .

Japanese release

The Japanese release contains the following bonus tracks :

= = Personnel = =

The following personnel were involved in making Title TK :

= = = Musicians = = =

Kim Deal ? guitar , organ , drums , bass , vocals
Kelley Deal ? guitar , bass , vocals
Richard Presley ? guitar
Mando Lopez ? bass , guitar
Jose Medeles ? drums
John McEntire ? drum roll on " The She "

= = = Engineering and mastering = = =

Steve Albini ? engineering , mastering
Mark Arnold ? engineering
Andrew Alekel ? engineering
Steve Rook ? mastering

= = = Art design = = =

Vaughan Oliver ? art design
Chris Bigg ? art design
Onie M. Montes ? additional photography

= = Charts = =