

The Decemberists explore a new sound in MASS MoCA performance on June 15

Acclaimed Portland band tours in support of new album, which embraces influences like Roxy Music & New Order to spark a new creative path, due March 16



NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS — **The Decemberists** explore a new sound in a MASS MoCA performance on **Friday, June 15** in support of their eighth studio album [*I'll Be Your Girl*](#), which will be released on March 16 on Capitol Records. The acclaimed Portland, Oregon-based band worked with producer **John Congleton** on the record (St. Vincent, Lana Del Rey) and embraced influences such as Roxy Music and New Order to spark a new creative path, as can be heard on the synth-driven lead single "[*Severed*](#)," which is available today to stream or download.

I'll Be Your Girl will be released on a multitude of formats, including 180gm LP, 180gm Limited Edition Orange LP, 180gm Limited Edition Blue LP (available at indie record stores), 180gm Limited Edition Purple LP (available at Barnes & Noble), softpak CD, cassette, digital download, and a mystery deluxe edition box dubbed *I'll Be Your Girl: The Exploded Version*, for which details will be revealed shortly. The band has also announced the first dates of their **Your Girl / Your Ghost 2018 World Tour**, which comes to MASS MoCA in North Adams on June 15.

"When you've been a band for 17 years, inevitably there are habits you fall into," says **Colin Meloy**. "So our ambition this time was really just to get out of our comfort zone. That's what prompted working with a different producer and using a different studio. We wanted to free ourselves from old patterns and give ourselves permission to try something different."

With *I'll Be Your Girl*, the Decemberists—lead vocalist and guitarist Meloy, guitarist **Chris Funk**, keyboardist **Jenny Conlee**, bassist **Nate Query**, and drummer **John Moen**—explore new approaches to making music and broaden their sonic range. It's the group's follow-up to 2015's *What a Terrible World, What a Beautiful World* (which charted in the Top Ten and included the #1 AAA single "Make You Better"), though in the time since, they have released the EP *Florasongs*; a 10th anniversary limited

edition vinyl box set of their 2006 Capitol Records debut *The Crane Wife*; their own crowd-funded board game *Illimat*; *The Queen of Hearts*, a Grammy-nominated collaboration with Olivia Chaney under the name Offa Rex; and “Ben Franklin’s Song,” the first of Lin-Manuel Miranda’s monthly “Hamildrops” of bonus material from *Hamilton*; as well as launching Travelers’ Rest, an annual two-day musical festival of their own curation in Missoula, Montana.

As busy as they have been, the band felt a need to shake things up. “On the last record,” says Meloy, “there were moments when I thought I was making familiar choices. I tried to be mindful in the songwriting process of challenging myself and being a little more critical. The idea was, how can we make unfamiliar choices, turn off the light a little and grope around in the dark a bit?”

Previous Decemberists’ records, such as *The Hazards of Love* and *The Crane Wife*, have been structured around thematic or musical concepts, though Meloy maintains that ultimately it’s always “our frame of mind that ties them together.” This time, he says, the songs share a mood that’s steeped in our current times and condition — “exuberant nihilism, an apocalyptic dance party was what we envisioned.”

“We were talking about music and our references,” says Meloy. “It kept coming back to Roxy Music and early glam, and we dove in with that in mind. The Decemberists are a record-collectors’ band, we’re all fans and scholars of music, so there [are] a lot of touch points that we all get, but they don’t always come through. So we were trying to embrace that Bryan Ferry aspect, that kind of set the tone.”

The approach the Decemberists pursued on *I’ll Be Your Girl* allowed for a new sense of contribution and involvement from the other band members. “Since we were going to mix it up, everybody felt like they had more of a voice,” says Meloy. Highlighting the input of Chris Funk and Jenny Conlee, Meloy mentions “Severed” as a significant team effort. “That was written as a punk song, but wasn’t really working,” he says. “Jenny set this arpeggio throughout it, and it became like an early New Order song. And I had forgotten that when we made the demo, I also started a file to turn it into more of a Depeche Mode song—I actually wanted it to be a synth song all along.”

Join us at the dawn of summer, **Friday, June 15, at 8pm**, when the Decemberists stop off in North Adams. Lickety Split, MASS MoCA’s in-house café, serves up fresh salads, homemade soup, and lip-smacking pub fare. The MASS MoCA bar is always well-stocked with local beer from Bright Ideas Brewing and Berkshire Mountain Distillery spirits. Tickets are \$45 in advance and \$55 day of. VIP ticket packages are also available. Tickets are on sale beginning Friday, January 19, at 10am. Spotify buyers can use pre-sale code to purchase tickets on January 18. MASS MoCA members can log into their account to purchase pre-sale tickets on January 18. Tickets for all events are available through the MASS MoCA box office located on Marshall Street in North Adams, open 11am to 5pm every day except Tuesdays. Tickets can also be charged by phone by calling 413.662.2111 x1 during box office hours or purchased online at massmoca.org. All events are held rain or shine.

Images

High-resolution images of MASS MoCA’s summer 2018 events are available through this link: bit.ly/mm2018summer.

About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making, displaying, and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. MASS MoCA's 250,000 sq. ft. of gallery space includes partnerships with Laurie Anderson, the Louise Bourgeois Trust, Jenny Holzer, Anselm Kiefer with the Hall Art Foundation, Sol LeWitt, and James Turrell.

Gallery admission is \$20 for adults, \$18 for veterans and seniors, \$12 for students, \$8 for children 6 to 16, and free for children 5 and under. Members are admitted free year-round. The Hall Art Foundation's Anselm Kiefer exhibition is seasonal and will reopen in May 2018. For additional information: [413.662.2111 x1](tel:413.662.2111) or visit massmoca.org.

Hours

MASS MoCA is open from 11am to 5pm, closed Tuesdays through June 22. From June 23 through September 3, MASS MoCA galleries are open seven days a week — from 10am to 6pm Sundays through Wednesdays and from 10am to 7pm Thursdays through Saturdays.