**STONE BIO**

**August 2022 – By Jenessa Williams**

When STONE began, the group weren’t sure of their new moniker. The maiden name of lead singer **Finley Power**’s mother, it nodded to both his leadership and autobiographical lyricism, while also making it clear that this was no self-centred solo project. Like them, it felt enigmatic and snappy, no-nonsense in its rough and ready connotation. But for guitarist **Elliott Gill**, there were some practicality considerations, a nervousness about hoisting their flag on such a bold mast.

*“My primary concern was Google; what’s going to come up when people try to search for us?”* he laughs. *“What about Spotify, The Rolling Stones? But Fin just turned round and goes no, we’re going to be so big that we'll just break through it. And I was like, you know what? At this point, four years in, I believe ya.”*

In this day and age, few bands are quite so honest about their insatiable ambition. But for STONE - lead singer Fin, guitarist Elliot, bassist **Sarah Surrage** and drummer **Alex Smith** – a career in music is less of a lucky happening and more of a calling, meticulously planned out since youth. All heavily invested in a range of different rock and hip-hop inspirations, Fin is their unapologetic driving force, the one who made them realise that it could all be within their grasp.

*“I’ve always wanted to be successful — I remember my first dream job was wanting to be Doctor Who,’ he says. “I wrote my first song at 15, and then by 16 knew I wanted to be in a successful band. So I treated it like that. From the beginning, I only wanted to work with people who were fully dedicated to being in this one band.”*

*“I realised very quickly that this wasn’t like being in a band just for something to do”,* nods Elliott. *“There was a real propulsion in Fin's mindset that was just like okay, we need each other. Even if there are bust-ups over practices or whatever, I knew there was a reason.”*

If Elliot’s voice of reason and Fin’s determined focus form the group’s foundations, getting the rest of the line-up right took a little more time. Initially performing in a psych-rock inspired group, Fin and Elliott experienced modest success in the Liverpool scene, but after a few false starts, decided it better to start again with a whole new name, line-up and sound. Fin knew Alex from college, and Alex knew Sarah from the year below at University, a southerner welcomed into their northern rabble. Four fierce performers with their own unique style and personality, STONE was finally complete.

Quickly finding their feet, a live version of 2020 single ‘**Leave It Out**’ marked their first moment of online buzz, displaying the kind of pent-up rambunctiousness that shapes their sound. *“That was our 'We're the Arctic Monkeys, don't believe the hype’ moment,'”* grins Fin. When the pandemic came, they kept the momentum; securing a live agent, they began planning out a meticulous string of festivals and support slots, giving both themselves and new fans alike something to look forward to.

*“We wanted to be first out the gate,”* says Elliott. *“We wanted to be that band that you had to see, to pour out all that angst that you had sitting inside. Throw beers at us, whatever; let it out!”*

This desire to create catharsis is fundamental to STONE. Self-identifying as ‘The underground voice for the lost youth’, they blend the thrill of frenetic rock’n’roll with more intimate exploration of the Gen-Z experience, coming of age during a politically fraught time. Grounded by Power’s post-punk spoken-vocals, songs like ‘Waste’ and ‘Stupid’ race with instrumentational energy, as rewarding to mosh to as they are to emotionally absorb.

Their formidable live presence has piqued the interest of some of music’s biggest stars, also striving to create places where kids can go to let their emotions free. **YungBlud** personally requested that they join him on his 2021 tour, while **Sam Fender** had them perform at his Finsbury Park show, streaming their set on his Instagram page. Never ones to waste an opportunity, a recent weekend saw them head to Malaga in between blistering sets at **Reading and Leeds 2022** to play Away From Home festival; with a huge audience in attendance, STONE’s music resonated just as thoroughly in Spain as it has in the UK, reflecting the universalities of their message.

*“Our music is just a conduit to all the emotion that we all feel,”* says Elliott. *“We're living in this scary sensational world of social media, where everything is overexposed and overwhelming. But we're all in it, and I think that's the weird thing; as a generation, we have this universal trauma. Me and Fin have got our own struggles with mental health, and I think that’s why we do what we do with such an intensity; we put up that part of ourselves onstage just to give kids an opportunity to connect with something.”*

As that message spreads, STONE have both the material and sincerity to prove that they can make a difference. With recent single ‘**Let’s Dance To The Real Thing**’ soundtracking the unveiling of the new **Liverpool FC** Kit, they’re firmly entrenching themselves in the sound and legacy of their city, giving back to the community as much as possible. From Sarah’s desire to encourage self-acceptance via minimal onstage make-up right through to Elliott’s youth club work with aspiring guitar players, the STONE ethos is about going beyond the “token gesture”, building something inclusive and welcoming for this generation and the next.

Now signed to **Polydor**, honing their debut EP and with an Inhaler support tour on the way, Elliot in particular is keen to take stock of how far they’ve come. With upcoming single ‘**Hope Ain’t Gone**’, he feels as if the group are hitting their alchemic stride, the first *“proper co-written Lennon and McCartney moment”* between himself and Fin.

*“I had these couple of lines — 'brain is on full speed, wheels in motion', just this general feeling of when your heads a bit rammed.*” he says. *“I gave it to Fin, and it just came together, us bouncing off each other. It has that classic STONE feeling of yeah, we know it's hard, but there is hope. I just want to make more songs like that, have those lightning-in-a-bottle moments. I want to enjoy all of it, while also getting the work done.”*

Fins finds it less easy to feel philosophical. *“No disrespect to the other three, but they can have a great gig, think back to it a week later and go, wow, amazing. That’s totally normal and healthy, but the minutes it's gone, it's gone for me. The next day I just wake up and feel hungry, wanting the next thing.”*

Recently though, he did have a rare moment of pride. Walking through London, he found himself thinking back to his younger self, the one who decided that he was going to stop at nothing to achieve his dreams. *“I went wow, you know, I told myself when I was 16 that I was going to be in a band, get signed to a major label, make this my full-time job, sell out shows. I always said I wanted to sell out the Arts Club theatre in Liverpool one day, and then we did, in record fashion. I spent so many years failing, and the odds of getting to this point are unbelievable.”*

*“Only so many bands will defy the odds, and we’ve defied them, every fucking time.”* he smiles. *“So we’ve just keep being that one. That's all I keep saying; we've got to be that one.”* Fin Power may not be the timelord just yet, but in togetherness, STONE are well on their way to making their name.

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