**La Pegatina: prepared for now as never before**

From time to time, it's possible to successfully orchestrate one's own personal revolution, as La Pegatina have done on their new work **"Ahora o Nunca" (DRO, Warner)**. Spawned in the womb of the band, shaped and polished alongside the best possible ally, producer Rafa Arcaute, and featuring five stellar collaborators in Macaco, Rozalén, Los Caligaris, Eva Amaral and Will and the People, this eagerly awaited new album will be out in April.

The mix of modernity, freshness and improvisation, along with their fifteen years in the thick of the action, seven albums, and more than a thousand concerts in thirty countries, has resulted in a sixth studio album that is rich in nuances and tempos. It sees the group exploring new sonic horizons, without losing anyone along the way.

But let's start at the beginning, the day when everything changed. After the outspoken boisterousness of “Revulsiu” and the incorporation of new members for the musical project “La Gran Pegatina”, the band initiated an internal process of exploration and reflection. "Siddhartha", a book by Hermann Hesse about a young Hindu prince in search of his true path, was close at hand.

That existential curiosity is apparent in the new lyrics: desires for inner change, for contemplating life calmly and playfully, for a return to the source that is buried beneath the hustle and bustle of today's society. Vital needs reflected in tracks like *Ahora o Nunca* (featuring **Macaco**), a hurricane of a song with a Balkan feel about the lost essence of cities, *'la furia contra la farsa' (fury in the face of farce)*. Or on *Eh, Madame*, an anthem in Catalan: *'el suelo me está quemando, el ritmo ya me está elevando' (the ground is burning me,* *the rhythm is lifting me)*.

The second leap involves the sound and production of **Rafa Arcaute** (Calle 13, Andrés Calamaro and Diego Torres). Far removed from the “Pegatina" universe, he was able read between the lines, drawing out all their voices and enhancing the charms of their distinctive raw material. For the first time in their career, rumba and ska are nowhere to be seen, or rather blur into other genres, such as on *Son que son*, which fuses country, folk, rock, Latin and African rhythms.

The musical tracks stand out for the textures, trumpets, choruses and programming. A modem synthesis: seen from a distance, you like it, but you can't identify all the elements in their entirety. As you get closer in with each listen, you can. You come to recognise a familiar essence bolstered by new guitar riffs, the mandolin, the trumpet, the accordion, a wide range of percussion instruments such as the xylophone, and powerful wind arrangements. That's how it is with the song *Stand and Fight* (featuring the British band Will and the People), a rousing plea in English with a Celtic feel and a gralla disguised as a band of bagpipes.

The songs are often epic, like the chorus-free *Solo yo* about selfishness in relationships; magical, like the moving *La Tempestad* with **Eva Amaral** even rapping; or danceable and warm, like the salsa-sounding *Mama*.

Loneliness is the starting point for *Algo está pasando*, a song full of sincerity featuring **María Rozalén**. Freedom, we are told on the merengue-reggae number *Y Volar* (with **Los Caligaris**), is knowing how to live. They even encourage us to push on despite any nerves, because music, like life, is about playing without pressure.

The last great revolution does not depend on them. It is based on what each one finds beneath the extraordinary album cover designed by illustrator **LaPrisaMata**. They were already the kings of the alternative scene – and they'll never stop being so – but the musical fiesta is now more diverse, comprehensive, expansive, and global.

This album is a stage with room for us all. During the week of its presentation, the band will charter a bus to fill the streets and university campuses of Madrid with music. What's more, they'll have their own bar in the capital, with entry reserved for fans.

La Pegatina is expanding its reach. “Siddhartha" means "one who has accomplished a goal". On “Ahora o Nunca”, the group materialises dreams, as the inner revolution moves outward. La Pegatina is prepared for now as never before.

***Laura Piñero***