



In 2021, Will Marsh pressed pause on his music career, packed his bags and headed to New Orleans to pursue an MFA. Pandemic brain had firmly set in, so while Marsh dove headfirst into his work with Habitat for Humanity, he also found himself dazed and confused amidst a turbulent time in a new home. Music wasn't at the forefront of his mind... but it was chasing him down.

Let's rewind a bit. Will Marsh started Gold Connections at the College of William and Mary, where longtime friend Will Toledo (Car Seat Headrest) produced and recorded the band's debut self-titled EP, released via Fat Possum in 2017. Two releases followed on EggHunt, 2018's full-length *Popular Fiction* and 2019's *Like A Shadow* EP. This leads us to *Fortune*, the band's brand new LP, out worldwide on October 25 via New Orleans indie Well Kept Secret.

"We recorded five tracks from this record— "Fortune," "Stick Figures," "Ammunition," "Bleed," and "Slow Diving"—back in Charlottesville, VA, in early January 2020. We self-released the batch on cassette as a limited run EP," Marsh says. "Over the span of this DIY release, COVID shut things down and traumatized the world. We couldn't tour our new songs or sell many tapes. The whole fiasco informed my impulse to move to New Orleans and quit music for a while."

The result is a record that sounds like "a conversation between old Virginia and the buzzy psychedelic world of post-COVID New Orleans", according to Marsh. The previously recorded five tracks blossomed into eleven, fully fleshed out by a new band that included the rhythm section from fellow New Orleans band Motel Radio (Eric Lloyd and Andrew Pancamo), and notably, Marsh's younger cousin, guitarist Fraser Wright—himself based in New Orleans and wielding a degree in music industry at Loyola University.

Marsh remembers meeting up with Wright for some Thai food: "You play guitar, right?" Marsh said. Wright nodded over his curry. "Are you any good?" Marsh asked. "Yeah," Wright replied, with such subtle conviction that Marsh suspected he might be right.

"Turns out, he's fucking *great*," Marsh says plainly.

In Wright's words, "there always seemed to be a mutual understanding between us as cousins that we were on the same page in terms of creating art. I'd always been into the music too – convenient how everything worked out."

The group convened at Dockside Studios, right outside of Lafayette, LA on the banks of the Vermillion Bayou, to record. The environment cast a shadow and set the mood quickly.

"I can feel 'mojo' when it knocks me on the head," Marsh says. "Dockside has it."

Wright recalls the feeling of listening back to *Fortune* as it unfolded, hunched over Dockside's studio monitors: "All these songs had the same tension and contrast as the environment they were written and recorded in. Heavy, overgrown, gothic. But also bright and colorful."

You can *hear* it, too. The eleven tracks on *Fortune* deftly navigate a geographical and spiritual journey: remorse, intoxication, anger, mystery, destruction, regeneration. All of this, delivered with the same approach that NPR hailed as "undeniably catchy" and Stereogum claimed was "an animal of it's own."

Suddenly, the mysterious spirit of rebirth that thrives in New Orleans is living and breathing in Gold Connections.

"I like to think we exist in the long legacy of wayward indie rockers who find some peace in New Orleans—guys like Alex Chilton," Marsh says. "His old house is right around the corner from mine in Tremé. It's a comforting sight, cobwebs and all."

On *Fortune*, you hear the sound of a band reborn— you hear the *sounds* of fortune, of fate, of the Holy Spirit and the Mississippi River, the James River, Bayou St. John, the Vermillion Bayou. It's all here.

"All these powerful forces played into the record, kept it moving around obstacles, finding new territory, expanding, retreating and sinking," Marsh explains, "eventually, reaching the Gulf of Mexico."

Whether Gold Connections has found its permanent home in New Orleans or not— it has certainly found *Fortune*.