

Multi-million record selling songwriter creates music album for dogs



Songwriter John McLaughlin, best known for writing hit songs for artists such as Rod Stewart, Westlife, Busted, Cliff Richard, and Sandi Thom, appearing as the music coach on BBC's Fame Academy and being the current manager of Edinburgh's own, Bay City Rollers, has teamed up with the Scottish SPCA to create a music album aimed at relaxing dogs.

All the tracks on the album, 'Paws, Play, Relax', are based on the results of collaborative scientific research between Scotland's animal welfare charity and researchers at the University of Glasgow.

The ground breaking research shows that music can help dogs to relax when they are stressed and anxious, leading to lower levels of stress hormones, better cardiovascular control and more chilled behaviour. Furthermore, the study revealed that, just like humans, dogs become easily bored if they listen to the same music continually and like variety within their

playlist. While all of the genres of music tested (classical, pop, motown, soft rock and reggae) help keep dogs calm, the dogs seemed to particularly benefit from reggae and soft rock.

Song writer and producer John McLaughlin said, "As soon as Ian Adie, MD of TheBiGroup approached me on behalf of the Scottish SPCA about the idea of a music album for dogs I wanted to be involved! I'm a huge animal lover so was happy to assist in any way I could to help dogs and the charity.

"It wasn't easy making music that will be enjoyed by dog owners just as much as it will by their beloved pets, but it was very worthwhile and I can't wait to see the reaction from dogs all over the world.

"Dogs enjoy the change of genre and also tempo which shows that they have both heart and soul – that's why I just had to write the songs, and why people should go out and buy the album!

"It was great to work with some extremely talented artists to create the album. Featuring on the album is Gamu Nhengu who shot to fame after starring on the X-factor in 2010 and is a huge animal lover."

Scottish SPCA Head of Research and Policy Gilly Mendes Ferreira said, "It can often be a bit overwhelming for dogs arriving into our care as they're in an unfamiliar environment. We've worked with the University of Glasgow to research ways to help relax our animals, both in the centre and in a home environment.

"The team at our centres across Scotland enjoy listening to the album and our dogs have had a very positive reaction to the music. They've been barking less, spending more time lying down and generally displaying more chilled behaviour."

Neil Evans Professor of Integrative Physiology at the University of Glasgow's Institute of Biodiversity, Animal

Health and Comparative Medicine said, "We've been working with the Scottish SPCA for a number of years on ways to enrich dogs' lives. Knowing that humans enjoy music, we wanted to see if animals do too and explore the health benefits that music might bring. We looked at the effect of different genres and found that dogs reacted best to reggae and soft rock.

"We're continuing our research with the Scottish SPCA as we're very interested in finding even more ways we can improve the lives of our beloved pets.

"The 'Paws, Play Relax' album is a fantastic way of benefiting dogs in their home environment using all the key positive research findings we discovered."

Anyone looking to buy the album should visit scottishspca.shop.org or pop into their local Scottish SPCA centre.