

Jesus and Mary Chain brothers' rows broke their mother's heart

Jesus and Mary Chain brothers Jim and William Reid have told how their rift broke their mother's heart – and how she helped bring them back together.



Jim Reid and William Reid : Jesus and Mary Chain

The siblings from East Kilbride formed the cult alternative rock band in 1983, inspired by punk, and were hailed as the next Sex Pistols.

After years of global success, a series of high profile fall-outs led the band to split up in 1999, for eight years.

The brothers, who have now published a memoir, Never

Understood, told The Edinburgh International Book Festival that their mother “engineered situations” to reunite them, which eventually worked.

Jim said: “My mum was really upset by us – she was probably more upset than we were when we weren’t talking. What’s your mum going to do? She’s going to try and manipulate situations where we’re going to be back at Christmas at the same time and stuff like that.

“She got us at home. She engineered situations where we had to be in the same room together and I suppose that was the beginning of us repairing our relationship.”

William said the pair knew what their mother was attempting to achieve. He said: “We were pretty aware of it. It broke her heart to see her two sons at each other’s throat.

“A lot of the time alcohol was the problem. Just don’t have an argument when you’re drunk, wait until the next day.”

The brothers told interviewer, broadcaster Nicola Meighan, how their rows came to a head at a gig in 1998, and how their younger sister Linda, better known as singer songwriter Sister Vanilla, tried to act as a peacekeeper.

Jim said: “You’ve got to feel sorry for my sister because any time we had these big blazing rows – obviously the shit hit the fan in 1998 but even up til then – I’d be on the phone saying ‘do you know what he said to me?’

“She’d go ‘hold on, there’s another call coming through’ and I knew who that was, so she was hearing both sides of the argument.

“She’s always tried to sort it all out.”

William said: “She was a peace envoy. Sometimes she would phone up crying, saying ‘why are you not friends?’ It upset her as well. She’s our wee sister.”

The Jesus and Mary Chain reunited in 2007 and this year released their eighth studio album Glasgow Eyes, which reached number seven on the UK Albums Chart.

William said: "It's hard not to write new songs. But if somebody said to me how do you write a song, I'd say I've no f***** clue. You just sit down with an instrument and somehow a song appears.

"It's kind of magic. We're not 16 anymore but finishing a song or finishing a record, it really is a special feeling."

Jim added: "When you listen to what's coming on the radio now it's so bad that you just think... well, let's make music that we like."



Photo Mihaela Bodlovic