

Surprise Chef's music is based on evoking mood; their vivid arrangements utilize time and space to build soundscapes that invite the listener into their world. The quintet's distinct sound pulls from 70s film scores, the funkier side of jazz, and the samples that form the foundation of hip hop. They push the boundaries of instrumental soul and funk with their own approach honed by countless hours in the studio, studying the masters, and perhaps most importantly, the 'tyranny of distance' that dictates a unique perspective to their music.

Hailing from just outside of Melbourne, Australia their first two albums, *All News Is Good News* and *Daylight Savings* amassed a die-hard fanbase and brought their sound from their home studio to every corner of the globe. The band is now signed to Big Crown Records, joining a lineage of contemporary and classic sounds that have influenced Surprise Chef's music since their formation in 2017.

Surprise Chef is Lachlan Stuckey on guitar, Jethro Curtin on keys, Carl Lindeberg on bass, Andrew Congues on drums, and Hudson Whitlock—the latest member who does it all from percussion to composing to producing. Their self proclaimed "moody shades of instrumental jazz-funk" have a bit of everything: punchy drums, infectious keys, rhythm guitar you might hear on a Studio One record, and flute lines that could be from a Blue Note session. But when you step back and take in the entirety of their sound and approach, you'll hear and see a group greater than the sum of its parts.

In many ways Surprise Chef embodies the idiom "the benefits of limits." They were limited in that there weren't many people making or talking about instrumental jazz/soul/funk in Southeast Australia, let alone putting out records. This left them to develop their sound and approach in a kind of creative isolation where a small circle of friends and like-minded musicians fed off each other. "Being in Australia, being so far away, we only get glimpses and glances of this music's origins," Stuckey says. "But hearing a label like Big Crown was one of the first times we realized you could make fresh, new soul music that wasn't super retro or just nostalgic."

Since the release of Surprise Chef's 2022 album, *Education & Recreation* they have been touring across the US, Europe, and Australia selling out shows and cementing themselves as a force to be reckoned with. Releasing three albums and a string of successful 7" singles since 2019, their output is nothing short of prolific and they show no signs of slowing down with the announcement of their new *Friendship* EP. a six song 12" EP recorded during the Education & Recreation sessions that stands as "a humble monument to the most crucial principle of our band: that the love we share for one another is, at all times, the most important thing".