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EXCLUSIVE

## THE WATERBOYS' NEW LP IS A CONCEPT ALBUM ABOUT DENNIS HOPPER'S LIFE

Bruce Springsteen, Fiona Apple and Steve Earle among the guests helping out Mike Scott and company on *Life, Death and Dennis Hopper*, due out April 4

By DANIEL KREPS  
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Mike Scott

PAUL MAC MANUS

The **Waterboys** will return in 2025 with a new album revolving around the life of legendary actor **Dennis Hopper**, with an impressive guest list — including **Bruce Springsteen** and **Fiona Apple** — helping the long-running U.K. rockers along the musical journey.

*Life, Death and Dennis Hopper*, due out April 4th via the band's new label Sun Records, is an ambitious 25-track "song cycle" that charts not only the late actor's life story but also the past 75 years of Western pop culture.

"The arc of his life was the story of our times," Waterboys leader Mike Scott said of the LP in a statement.

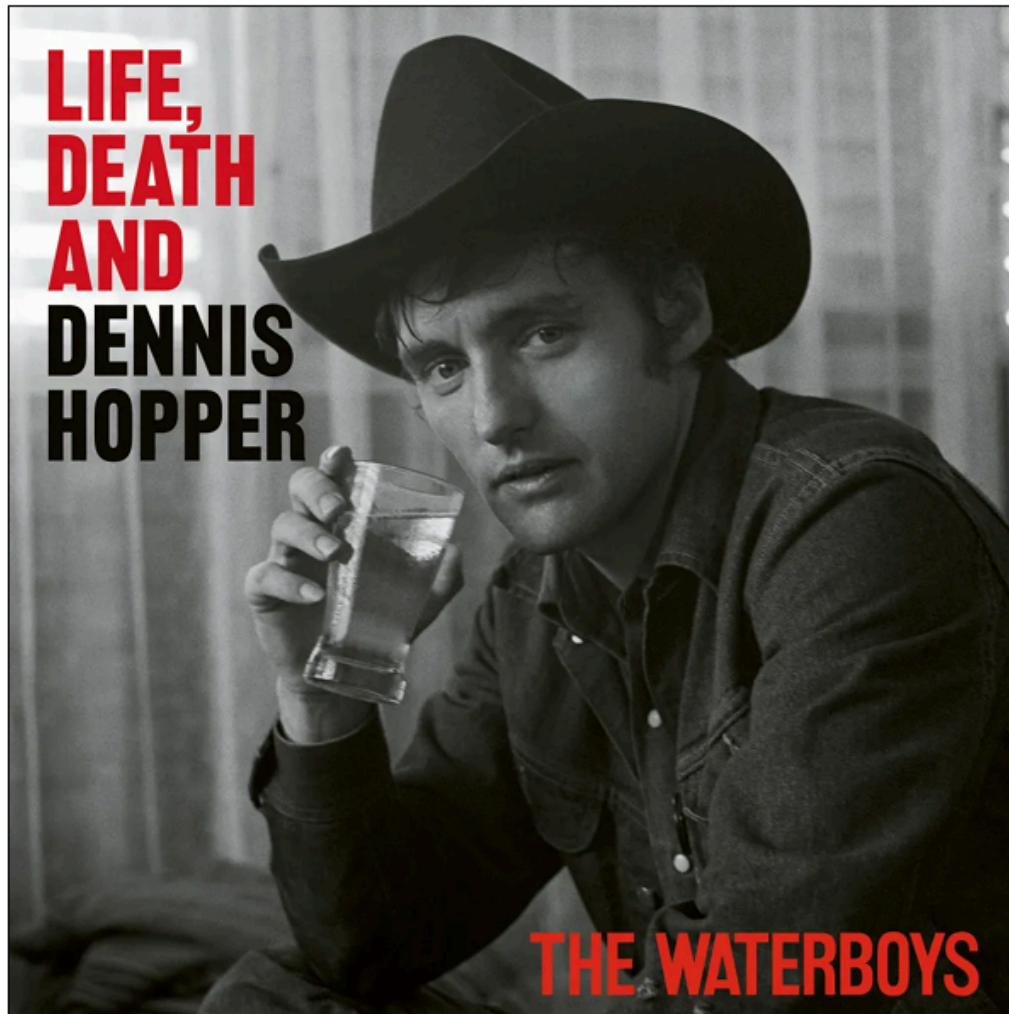
"[Hopper] was at the big bang of youth culture in *Rebel Without A Cause* with James Dean; and the beginnings of Pop Art with the young Andy Warhol. He was part of the counter-culture, hippie, civil rights, and psychedelic scenes of the '60s. In the '70s and '80s he went on a wild 10-year rip, almost died, came back, got straight and became a five-movies-a-year character actor without losing the sparkle in his eye or the sense of danger or unpredictability that always gathered around him."

The album's first single, "Hopper's On Top (Genius)," arriving Jan. 10, captures Hopper at a pivotal moment in his career, when the actor — after a string of bit parts in classics like *Cool Hand Luke* and *True Grit* — found himself behind the camera to direct the landmark 1969 counterculture hit *Easy Rider*.

"It begins in his childhood, ends the morning after his death, and I get to say a whole lot along the way, not just about Dennis, but about the whole strange adventure of being a human soul on planet Earth," Scott added of the unique concept album.

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On the “strange adventure,” the Waterboys are joined by guests like Springsteen (“Ten Years Gone”), Apple (“Letter From An Unknown Girlfriend”), Steve Earle (the album opener “Kansas”), Dawes’ Taylor Goldsmith (“I Don’t Know How I Made It”), British artist Barny Fletcher (“The Tourist”), and Nashville singer Anana Kaye (“Katherine”), plus Sugarfoot, Patti Palladin, and the Go-Go’s Kathy Valentine.

*Life, Death and Dennis Hopper*, produced by Scott and the band’s Famous James and Brother Paul, marks the Waterboys’ first album since 2022’s *All Souls Hill* and 16th studio LP overall, a run that began over 40 years ago with their self-titled 1983 debut.