

# STEPHEN PALMER - DEAD AND ALIVE SONGS

WORDS: ANNA RICHARDSON



FROM DEPECHE MODE'S NEW LIFE TO THE CLASH'S DEATH OR GLORY, music and mortality are inextricably linked, particularly for those of use who spent a tortured adolescence in darkened bedrooms where the only relief from teenage angst came in the form of a 7" slab of vinyl. Stephen Palmer has taken this as a starting point for his latest work, a musical offering of his own inspired by his own record collection, accompanied by a corresponding screenprint and exhibition at Vane Gallery in Newcastle.

The Dead And Alive Songs references the litany of songs in the artist's substantial stack of vinyl that explicitly mention life and death, highlighting pop's complex relationship with the extremes of life.

The release is accompanied by a series of paintings of 7" singles bought from charity shops, which have all been customized by their previous owners in some way. "I have a whole collection of singles in paper sleeves where people have added their names, girlfriend's name, crossing out and replacing with another, in one case attempting to create a reproduction of a picture sleeve in felt tip pens - something I once attempted myself. I like that they are mass produced objects and yet have been marked by their owners, personalised in some way."

*The Dead And Alive Songs is at Vane Gallery, Forth Banks, Newcastle from 4th to 13th of December.*

[www.stephenpalmer.org.uk](http://www.stephenpalmer.org.uk)