

SOCIAL DISTORTION – BIO

"Ness is one of the most underrated pure songwriters in rock." – **Los Angeles Times**

Here's how you know you've made it in the music business: You've stayed strong for three decades on your own terms, on your own time, by your own rules, and over that time your influence has only grown. Each of your albums has been stronger than your last. You've been brought onstage by Bruce Springsteen, because he wanted to play one of your songs. You've seen high times and low ones, good days and tragic days, but every night you give 100%, and every morning you wake up still swinging.

This is the short version of the Social Distortion bio — the long version could be a 10-part mini-series. But over the past 30 years, the punk godfathers in the band have all but trademarked their sound, a brand of hard rockabilly/punk that's cut with the melodic, road-tested lyrics of frontman Mike Ness. Their searing guitars and a locomotive rhythm section sound as alive today as they did in '82, as do Ness' hard-luck tales of love, loss and lessons learned. "The most common thing I hear is, 'Man, your music got me through some hard times,'" Ness says. "And I just say, 'Me too.'"

Hard Times And Nursery Rhymes (produced, for the first time, by Ness himself) is the band's first record since 2004. For a band with a career spanning over 30 years, Social Distortion experienced a significant amount of firsts in 2011. For starters, *Hard Times and Nursery Rhymes* debuted at #4 on the Billboard Top 200 and was the highest debut that the band has yet seen. *Hard Times* was also the #1 Independent Album and the #2 Modern Rock/Alternative Album week of release. The band also made their late night television debut when they performed "Machine Gun Blues" on *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, and later played for *Conan* on *Hard Times*' release date. Taking their successes to the road, Social Distortion played European festivals including Reading and Leeds for the first time. They also booked their first tours of Australia and South America. And finally, Social Distortion played Lollapalooza, Austin City Limits Festival, and Coachella — all of these for the first time.

Hard Times and Nursery Rhymes has Social Distortion's key components — their patented mix of punk, bluesy rock n' roll and outlaw country — while also stretching the boundaries of their signature sound. Social Distortion is a blend of potent power that appeals to all ages. They are honored to have been able to reach as many people as they have so far. "I write songs for myself, and I hope that other people will like them too," Ness says. "I think every record you make is showing people what you've learned over the past few years. It's showing people, 'This is what I know.'"

Now in their fourth decade, Ness and Social Distortion have officially achieved one of the most non-punk things possible: They've failed to burn out.