If fate hadn't intervened Lady Legs wouldn't exist right now. The four-piece from Birmingham, Alabama were on the verge of splitting up last year, until they were offered the chance to make a record that was too good to pass up.

"We were all going to be living in different places so it didn't really make much sense [to stay together]," says singer and guitarist John Sims of the band's near-end, which coincided with him and guitarist Grant Galtney graduating from college in nearby Auburn. After a set at local music festival Secret Stages, though, the universe delivered the perfect opportunity to keep going. "Jeffrey Cain [founder of indie label Communicating Vessels] approached us after the show and said he wanted to record our stuff to tape, like in the old school way," John explains. "That sounded amazing to us."

That all might sound fortuitous, but Lady Legs had put in the time beforehand. They formed in 2014 after John and Grant decided they wanted to start a band, with the now frontman behind the drumkit and Grant on guitar. Ellis Bernstein, who John had attended high school with, later took over on drums, with Seth Brown added shortly after on bass. "I'd been playing with other people, but they were definitely the ones," John says now of their foundations. "We just had a really good chemistry together. We can just get in a room together and start writing a song without even thinking about it."

With songs coming easily, the band began to earn their chops in Auburn's DIY scenes creating their own chances to play live by organising house shows in and around the local area. "The bars at Auburn just wanted blues cover bands and we wanted to play original music, so we started organising house shows," says John of their first forays into that world. It had been a necessary move to be able to play the shows they wanted, but it's also one he sees as having made them a better band in the long run. "Playing really loud without a PA and not being able to hear anything the whole time you're playing, you're just relying on your bandmates to keep it together."

Back in Birmingham after college, which John describes as "a place to be for music", the band headed to Communicating Vessels' own studio in Woodlawn, a district on the outskirts of the city's downtown area. There, they recorded Lady Legs' superlative debut album 'Holy Heatwave' - 11 bright, jagged and raw songs that embrace a similar spirit to the likes of Twin Peaks and Mac DeMarco, while taking inspiration from the band's shared love of The Strokes, Rolling Stones, Pixies and Real Estate.

Armed with 22 songs, the group set about recording live to tape and ended up with nearly three times the amount of material they could actually use. Recording the album, John says, was a huge learning experience, not least because of the live approach they opted for. "It's like looking at yourself through a microscope, especially doing vocals," he explains. "You realise how many mistakes and imperfections there are, and then you have to decide which ones are actually beautiful and you want to keep and protect."

Lyrically, 'Holy Heatwave' covers a gamut of subjects from romance to technology's grip on society's attention spans. 'Real Thing', the first song revealed from the record, is an excitable ode to "finding someone who you really connect with and who you're really excited to be with" that's driven by helter-skelter guitar riffs and bursts of drums that sound like they've been lifted from a '60s girl group record.

'Out Like A Light', meanwhile, begins as tropically tinged indie rock, slowly morphing into something more searing by its fiery end. "I don't need your confusion/Your religion or your institution/Keep it at home," sings John in the chorus. "It's the younger generation of America talking to the older generation about upholding tradition and religion, and asking, 'Why do you think that way? You never really told me,'" he says. "It's about the frustrations that come along with that and wanting to change things."

While recording live doesn't leave much room for experimentation, the band still found space to push their boundaries. The fittingly titled 'French Beach Music' saw Grant take over vocal duties with the help of an unconventional instrument. "He didn't even sing into a microphone," says John. "He just sang into a talkbox that we found in the studio." The track also includes a cameo from Michael Battito on pedal steel.

The band are already looking ahead to their next record, where they'll give themselves more chance to explore in the studio. "We're going to record to tape like we did with 'Holy Heatwave', but then we're going to put it in the computer and experiment with it after we get that nice tape sound," their frontman says. "'Holy Heatwave' is more the straightforward rock'n'roll live performance album. The next one is going to be a more experimental thing."

But first, there's the small matter of sharing their debut with the world, and Lady Legs aren't about to start shying away from the hard work that comes with being in a band in the 21st century now they've come this far. Despite initially starting as a way to "release energy and release things that can only be released through the power of music", they're ready to get stuck in, citing Modest Mouse's approach in their formative years as one to take notice of. "They dropped out of high school and got in a van, and just started driving across America and made themselves known," John says. "I love that dedication to music - driving around from town to town, and doing it the old school way. I like to go old fashioned."