

# UpstateLIVE

NEW YORK STATE MUSIC GUIDE

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 8

FREE

OCTOBER 14 - NOVEMBER 24, 2010



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SPRING****17 CAN NIGHT  
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WE'VE GOT SLY FOX,  
DALE'S PALE, SCHLITZ,  
PORKSLAP & MORE**18 Wing Night**PEOPLES CHOICE  
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DARTS  
2 POOL TABLES**19 JUDAHITES &  
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TEN YEAR VAMP****23 INDOBOX****24 MY  
DEAR  
DISCO****25 Wing Night**PEOPLES CHOICE  
ITHACA'S BEST WINGS  
DARTS  
2 POOL TABLES**26 BESNARD LAKES  
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### **SWEATIN' LIKE NIXON** "EXAMINING THE RUBICON"

On their fourth full length CD Sweatn' Like Nixon stretches out their lines of distinction, which probably couldn't be blurred much more already. Twisting time signatures and syncopations are the norm and

the spaces between them echo of Primus and King Crimson without the pretentiousness. Instead they bring a Zappa-like humor and sense of belonging that only few understand, it's prog, feel it stupid, don't think it!

Whether it starts funk based, jam based, jazz based, it doesn't seem to matter to SLN, they'll jam their own flavor on it and stuff it in your ears. Brilliant! One of the fallacies of prog is that the musicians take themselves too seriously, the beauty of prog is that most don't, some just don't get it. This group gets it and the acclaims they've received internationally are well deserved. Individually they're technicians with their tools, musically they're free form monsters and collectively they're bone-crushing. With over 800 shows under their belts the lock down tight feel they project is bound to get even more enthralling.

It's easy to see the path being long for Sweatn' Like Nixon, there's a large audience being starved for fresh progressive rock and these guys can satisfy the largest hunger, mine included. As a big fan of King Crimson, Brand X, Alan Holdsworth type prog, this is a literal fresh breath for me personally.

Sweatin' Like Nixon is Sam Marabella on guitar/vocals/harmonica, Jason Draybeck on bass, Daniel Reino on guitar and Jeremy Wells on percussion. You can check out their catalog and extensive set of reviews at [www.sweatinlikennixon.com](http://www.sweatinlikennixon.com).

Do what I'm planning on doing, see this band live as soon as you can. They sound fantastic on CD, but somehow I'm positive the SNL live experience is one not to be missed. There's a great chance coming up to do just that. The CD Release Party will be held at Nietzsche's on Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 pm with special guests Rooftops. SLN will have a 3 piece horn section sitting in with them just to make sure the roof comes off! Be there!

**Words by Greg Jackson**



### **THE MOHO COLLECTIVE** "LIVE SELECTIONS FROM CYBER CAFÉ WEST"

If you're going to bring it live as an instrumental group you'd best have some pretty smooth chops and sense of selves. There's no lack here as reflected on this live compilation

CD I was handed at The Utica Music Fest.

Tasty licks on guitar and pedal steel from Kurt Johnson, Justin Riser's smooth bass lines and Ryan Barclay's nimble percus-

sion blend sweetly, rising and falling to each accent or flourish. They blend a myriad of influences into a sound singular to The Collective which feels like it could morph into just about anything at any moment. Hence their self-genrefication "Art Band" is quite apt as it feels like they're making it up or more likely coloring it as they go along. The feel is natural, the grooves infectious, the rhythms driving and the overall sense is dynamic.

With a new album in the works I'll save the long ink and send you off to see these guys live. Check out their extensive schedule at [www.themohocollective.com](http://www.themohocollective.com).

I'll be looking for a copy of the new CD guys! Get at me.

**Words by Greg Jackson**



### **THE CHRIS TERRA BAND** "DIESEL"

I've been waiting quite a while to write something about Chris and the band and having had my first experience seeing him perform at the 2010 SAMMY Award Ceremo-

ny it seems like just the right time.

This eight song offering kicks off with a rollicking rave-up "Love In Overdrive" and knowing his muse it brings an immediate smile! Dan Robbino's barroom piano riffs really compliment Chris's signature riffs both rhythmically and in solo mode.

Recorded and Mastered at Sub-Cat Studios with engineering by Derek Yackel you expect a smooth production and this CD surely brings that. Each of Chris's compositions is steeped in the tradition of the genre and his engineer is nimble enough to not over-run the live feel, instead it sounds like a touched up board recording with the band on fire!

Besides the blazing guitar riffs, every good blues offering requires a great rock rhythm section and Pete Hagan on bass/backing vocals and Tom Fava on drums play their roles in spades. You can just feel the syncopation between the two in almost a "The Experience" way, they know where the man is headed and they're all too glad to drive him there. Mike Robarge and Dan Robbino are excellent in complimentary roles, filling the spaces tastefully while letting Chris hold the wheel.

Chris' penchant for a hook shows why his outfit is so popular live, there's just no way to stand still, unless he slows it down and tells you to. You can almost picture the audience sitting down to listen to "The Blues Is Drivin'" after dancing their asses off to "My Love Gunn", then right back on their feet when he kicks into "Hell Hound".

This is another in a string of excellent releases from one of Syracuse's own gems, here's hoping he just keeps on keepin' on, 'cause he's surely found his place. I highly encourage you

to take in a live show soon, this band is smokin'! Check 'em out on the web at [www.christerraband.com](http://www.christerraband.com).

**Words by Greg Jackson**



**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
**"MY HEART'S RIGHT THERE**  
**SONGS FOR TIPPERARY HILL"**

This compilation was produced by Eddie Zacholl, Joe Henson and Mike Lounsberry to benefit The Tipperary Hill Music Festival.

Combined with the engineering skills of Scott Ebner who also mixed and mastered along with Eddie Zacholl. From the opening track featuring Maureen Hennessey's lilting vocal on Eddie Zacholl's "I'll Make My Home On Tipperary Hill" it's clear the heart and soul of Tipp Hill runs deep here. The traditional Irish feel of each piece reflect the individuals take on life there. From weather to one-way streets the topics touch on the physical aspects and bridge to the spiritual, each quite fine in it's own right and heartfelt. "Box of Wine" is especially fun and smooth, nothing new from The Tipp Hillbillies, one of the longstanding gems of the neighborhood.

Joanne Perry's "Song for the Stonethrowers" bleeds the essence of the nation whose little corner of Syracuse is painted green forever. The Causal Dog's twist "Terror of the Neighborhood" follows "Bill Barry", both putting light on the earthy stories and history that run through the whole disc. I love the bouncing accordion line performed by Mike McClelland on "Peace In the City", it compliments the vocal line so nicely and Scott Ebner's strings fill sweetly with Louie Fortin's rhythm. The Z-Bones bring their familiar jammy jazzy latin feel on "Everybody's Neighborhood", always reading to be the highlight of a great time, nothing different here, "just" another cool groove! Mike McClelland's piece "Old Tipperary" feels very "Dead-like" with Lorne's bass and Eddie's guitar accenting with Mike Lounsberry filling in the background.

The finishing piece "St. Patrick's High School Alma Mater" will bring many back to their youth as the rest of the disc brings many back to the heart of Tipp Hill.

**Words by Greg Jackson**



**QUESTION OF HONOUR**  
**"APOTHECARY"**

Reading the "one" sheet and lyrics provided by Hugh Wygmans and by the look of the presentation my expectations were very high for this disc. So much so that on first listen I put it away for several weeks

before giving it another listen and setting out to write this review. Sometimes in approaching a project like this I just pass because the work put into it is obvious and the artist's belief in his art is off the charts. This is much the case here. The ultimate danger is to be too smart and pretentious for the crowd, much like Dennis Miller on Monday Night Football. While prog

rockers would rail at a statement like this we must remember that much like fashion, music should be a statement, not a question.

The first thing that strikes me is the likeness in Hugh's vocal inflection to Metallica's James Hetfield, at least on Addicted, then he reaches to his limit on I Don't Know, one of the reasons I put this away for a while.

The overall musicianship is skilled and steady, but it's cross genrefication keeps the listener from getting a real feel for the band. Usually a band finds it's firm ground then works from there, which may well have been the case on their earlier releases, but I don't have those reference points. Reading the lyrics alone they feel poetic, yet they have a hard time translating to music. The words that keep coming back to me are over-thought and pretentious, it grates on me with each song change. It would serve this band well to strip the production clean and work from their strengths because there are many. Hugh needs to find a comfort range vocally, his high range borders on a young Geddy Lee, which is way too individual for anyone else to try and his lyrical skills get lost due to it. Another point I must make is in the empty spaces, there aren't any, which leaves the final product cluttered with over-playing and over-producing. Until they find a way to avoid these obstacles I'm afraid they'll be pleasing themselves and their friends more than the general audience.

Honestly I feel there is a ton of potential with Question of Honour, they've been doing this for a long time and it's evident they could really go quite far with their unquestionable skills. If they could just get over themselves they'd really have a chance.

**Words by Greg Jackson**



### ✦ ANDREW HALLIDAY ✦

It's Wednesday night. Sounds of Grateful Dead's Wharf Rat greet me as I enter The Dewittshire Tavern, a quaint watering hole nestled snugly amongst the many buildings of the busy Erie Boulevard strip. In a dimly lit corner, the silhouette of a musician hidden behind the warmth of a winter beanie catches my eye, and it becomes clear that The Shire has more to offer than beer and wing specials on this chilly autumn night.

Wednesday nights at The Shire are known for their Open Mic Jam Sessions, hosted by house band, The Gravy's Dangerfield. On a typical night, the band will play a set, then open the stage for other musicians to jam and showcase what they've got. Some perform with the band, other's strictly solo; and it goes without saying that no two weeks at The Shire are ever exactly alike. And while the musical variety often changes from week to week, there is at least one name that always seems to appear on the hump day bill. The silhouetted figure may be singing that his name is August West, but those who frequent the Tavern on a weekly basis know that the voice projecting a passionate rendition of Wharf Rat belongs to that of Syracuse native, Andrew Halliday.

Passion, integrity, seamless fingering, with vocals and lyrics that undeniably stem from the heart account for Halliday's presence as both a musician and performer. Describing his music as, "an introspective of self discovery," Halliday creates a shared musical experience for listeners, allowing listener and performer come together in relation to a common theme. "It [my music] dynamically lends itself to listeners," said Halli-

day. "It begs them to find how the lyrics fit into their own mood, imagery, and personal notions. Positive and negative."

Growing up just outside of Syracuse, in Fairmount, NY, Halliday began his musical journey at the age of five. "I really liked the fiddle players on CMT, so I tried that out at age five," said Halliday. "Soon after, I took lessons in piano, voice, cello, and tuba before finding guitar at age 12." Learning the basics from his musical father, Halliday looked to the internet for his next big inspiration. The abundance of music mp3s, articles and tablature websites provided a wealth of studying material for Halliday, creating a foundation from which he has only continued to build and grow.

The first artists to effect Halliday as a writer and performer were the singing and song writing expertise of Buddy Holly and John Denver. From there, young Halliday began exploring the music of The Doors, Stevie Ray Vaughan, and Jimi Hendrix. That, combined with more modern influences from artists like Ben Folds and John Mayer, lead to a jump start in Halliday's song writing aspirations around the age of sixteen.

Studying music business at SUNY Fredonia, Andrew's musical aspirations were taken to a new level during his college years. What started out as simply jamming with other young musicians, lead to public exposure as Halliday began landing gigs at local bars and house parties. Gaining a repertoire amongst the college crowd, Andrew soon became a notable figure in the Fredonia music scene. Teaming up with the guys from On the Sly, Andrew was able to expand his fan base, breaking away from the bar crowd, and showcase his music at the popular-growing WNY music and arts festival, Slyfest.

"Since graduating in Fredonia, I've had a very warm welcome back to Syracuse," said Halliday. "In the last nine months, I have made a lot of friends, and have landed a few high profile gigs." Perhaps the most notable, however, would be Andrew's performance this year at the Taste of Syracuse, on the Emerging Artist Stage, sponsored by SubCat Studios. Ron Keck, primary owner and engineer of the expanding recording studio based out of Skaneateles, heard Andrew's music and it immediately caught his attention. "When Andrew submitted his stuff," said Keck, "the whole room went silent." According to Keck, there was more to Halliday's music than just the sound of the guitar, and the lyrics behind his voice. Keck described Halliday as a force to be reckoned with, and saw Halliday as an artist truly backed by passion. "[Through his music], you can tell he likes what he does," said Keck. "He is simply not trying to write music just for himself."

Noticing this trait in Halliday's music, Keck invited Andrew to play as part of a new music series put in place to promote SubCat's new multi-million dollar world class studio being built directly next to The Redhouse Theater at the corner of West St. and Fayette in downtown, Syracuse. As Keck stated, SubCat Records is a firm supporter of local musicianship. Part of their mission is to expose musicians that don't normally get large exposure and help these musicians develop more of a fan base. That said, the new music series was established

to support musicians that have been through the studio, as well as the many talented artists who have something to say outside of the studio.


Halliday will make his debut performance on the Redhouse Theater stage on Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 P.M. The show will not only give Halliday a chance to expose himself as a live performer, but on a studio level as well. Falling Sounds, an LP comprised primarily of Halliday's saved-up material from his college years, is set to release, in accompaniment with his live performance.

In addition to his solo work, Halliday is also forming a band of talented Syracuse veterans, and has already begun playing live with them at the DewittShire Tavern on Wednesday nights. Coined as, "a force to be reckoned with," Andrew Halliday's voice is beginning to resonate loudly throughout the Syracuse area music scene. With his passionate song writing, musical integrity, and firmly planted roots, the silhouetted figure is stepping out of the shadows, with a drive to be both seen and heard. So watch for Andrew Halliday, and give a bit of your time...to listen to his story.

For more information on Andrew's performance as part of the SubCat Series, visit: [www.subcatstudio.com](http://www.subcatstudio.com) or [www.theredhouse.org](http://www.theredhouse.org)

Words by Kayla MacLachlan

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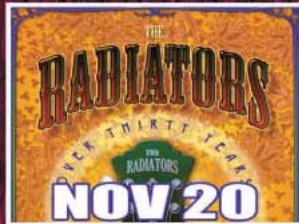
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ERIK JENSEN

++THE INNER VIEW++

—LAZ GREEN AND MOONEY FAUGH OF SUBSOIL

Laz Green and Mooney Faugh are two of the illest motherfuckers in the Rochester music community! The band Subsoil is making huge waves in Upstate and beyond, and these two guys are a big part of it. Armed with one of the greatest bands on the east coast, their live show is one of the most energetic and fun times anyone in the United States is going to experience. This interviewer believes that Subsoil just may be one of the top three unsigned musical acts on the eastern seaboard. I recently had a chance to shoot the shit about all things Subsoil with Laz and Mooney.

**Erik Jensen:** *How the hell are you guys doing?*

**Laz Green:** First off, big thanks to Erik and Upstate Live, and Herby-One for the interview!! Laz Green, and Moon.Roc (illest bars on lot!) in the building!!!

**EJ:** *Being a talented MC is something you are not born with? What got you interested in taking that path, what did you do to acquire these skills?*

**LG:** Hey bud. I really try not to take myself or what I do all that seriously, but I will try for the moment to keep it together and answer your questions. I think to some extent the innate creativity and nimble-mindedness necessary for emceeing is something you can be born with, and further honed and developed through practice. I was working at a college radio station when I got into DJing, but I was terrible at it. Super terrible. I used to always mimic the cadences and deliveries of other emcees, Last Emperor style, kind of as a joke...from there I wrote my first verse at about 17. I always liked other music too, in fact my first band was a metal band. It wasn't until Mugshots (my first hip-hop crew) that I began actively grindin' the emcee scene...that was about 2004.

**Mooney Faugh:** I always loved lyrics. As a youngster I liked coming up with silly songs (first project entitled "Fluorescent Fetus" age 12). As I grew my scribbling's became increasingly poetic. Around 14 I started to appreciate hip-hop, I recognized it as a medium to write a variety of lyrics and I fell in love. Then I began writing and freestyling as much as possible...and I got better. Now I'm good at it.

**EJ:** *Who would you say are your biggest influences in hip hop, and other forms of music?*

**LG:** To be quite honest, I am more influenced now by the music that I am steadily immersed in, which would be the local Upstate scene, but we will talk a little more about later...as far as who I "came up" listening to, and my favorites? Shit...Nowadays I listen to MF Doom, Sage Francis, Atmosphere, Chali 2na, Gift of Gab, the Roots, Thousands of One. When I was a wee hungry pup hustlin' around the city I would bump Jedi Mind Tricks, Non-Phixion, Cage...I was heavy in the underground scene, and you can definitely see that come through in my early stuff. I really love reggae, so I listen to a lot of Giant Panda, 10ft Ganja Plant, Barrington Levy, Gregory Isaacs... Mooney turned me on to the Isley Brothers and bands like Rubblebucket and Natural Breakdown. My biggest guilty pleasure is Billy Joel. I fucking LOVE me some BJ.



**MF:** I agree with Laz, Hip-hop wise: The Roots, Sage Francis, MF Doom, Gift of Gab, etc... BUT I like lots and lots of music, so it all must influence me. I listen to lots of local and regional stuff...but mainly I am influenced by Tenacious D, Weird Al, Leonard Cohen, Jason Mraz & Sage Francis.

**EJ:** *How did Subsoil come together as a band?*

**MF:** Subsoil was a name I used to reference the idea that grassroots movements, underground music, and the counter-culture tend to provide the foundation for mainstream music & art. Subsoil was the name I used 10-years ago when I made tunes over digital beats with a different MC & producer. Eventually I found some musicians brought in Laz and made it a band. I single-handedly brought them together, and they love me for it. Laz can explain how he entered the soil...

**LG:** Mooney created the concept, and then genetically grew the band members in fertile sonic crystals, like pink fleshy sea monkeys. He nursed them all into adulthood (using nutrients from breast milk) and created a delicious hip hop monster. He then summoned me from my slumbers in the Velvet Void with a complex arcane ritual, and I have been trapped on this plane of existence since, spitting enchantments in the form of hip hop verse. That's what I remember anyways. We are fortunate enough to have awesome musicians behind us...Teddy on Keys, Jared on Guitar, Craig-O-Matic on Bass, and Jay-4-Real on drums. Dan Keller from the Buddhahood joins us on sax along with Jon Lourette (also from the 'hood)...sometimes Chris English gets in on it. It's all love and music!

**EJ:** *Tell me about the other projects you and Laz are working on?*

**LG:** I'm always crafting gems on the low-low...ha ha...we got tracks in the works with a few artists from Upstate, Roots Collider, House On A Spring, the Buddhahood, AudiInflux, as well as the Lucky Labrats project, which Moon will elaborate on. I'm in the beginning stages of putting together a solo mixtape or EP as well, and re-issuing my old EP Trial By Stone so the Subsoil fans can get into it. Soil is always my first priority though. I'd love to do a track with Jhakeem from Thousands Of One...that dude is a beast. Holler at me!!!

**MF:** In addition to the tracks Laz & I are working on with the aforementioned Roots Collider, House On A Spring, Buddhahood, & AudiInflux, I am always looking to be a part of interesting projects. I work on hip-hop tunes with my favorite

local beat-maker Husky and have dabbled on some beats from Filthy Funk guitar man, John Viviani. You can find some of my material at [myspace.com/moonroc1](http://myspace.com/moonroc1). Laz and I are working on a project called "The Lucky Labrats" loosely based on Neal Cassady's concept of "rapping" and "Now Tripping". The Labrats name is a reference to the controlled experimentation of hallucinogenic substances on test subjects in the 1960's, as Ken Kesey described in Tom Wolfe's "The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test". We like to say we are taking "rapping" back to the acid culture (aka Prankster Rap).

**EJ: Are you guys currently working on a new album?**

**MF:** We are considering options and will begin seriously working on our second album at the beginning of next year. The Labrats project will come out sometime next year too. Our main focus is on new tunes.

**LG:** Yezzir. Gotta stay relevant and keep grinding. We got a bunch of new tunes that we are perfecting at shows that will go on the new album...people seem to like 'em. I do.

**EJ: Rochester has a very tight knit community of musicians? I actually think this is probably the best scene in Upstate right now. What are your thoughts on your peers in the Upstate community and Rochester? What makes this such a great scene?**

**LG:** Totally agree. The scene here is incredible and it's all because of the people involved. The bands here all have the progressive community mentality...we all are friends and hang out and exchange ideas, we all sit in with each other's bands...it's a huge family. Nowhere else do you see musicians coming together and setting ego aside and moving forward and growing. I know I sound like a Kirk Cameron sermon, but I love all these fuckers...it's a very open, welcoming community as opposed to a competition. It's way beyond 'hip-hop' or any genre....it's about music.

**MF:** I agree with Laz. I think this is a result of many good musicians communing, sharing stages, love and opportunities. Love and encouragement replace jealousy and competition and the result is a scene not focused on genre or status, but one fixated on creating music, together.

**LG:** I see it all the fucking time in Rochester Hip Hop, kids trying to be super flashy gangsters, trying to 'keep it real' and 'street' and it's laughably ridiculous. The more you try to 'keep it real', the more you are 'acting'. Stop trying to look so tough and angsty all the time, kids...smile, laugh, lighten up...we know you really don't shoot people. Just because you're scowling in your Facebook profile photo and shooting fake guns doesn't make your music better. I could probably beat you up, and that's kinda sad. I'm a lover, not a fighter...unless I'm fighting for love. Boom.

**EJ: Do you have current plans to tour on a national level? What is next for Subsoil as far as spreading the love?**

**MF:** We plan to tour as much as possible, but right now for the winter our plan is to write. Hooking up with Herby is an exciting development which will help us play more regional shows, but that won't kick in to high gear until Spring 2011.

**LG:** To quote a wise man, "The road is a bee-eye-itch my friend, but it's the only road I know"..ha ha. I love playing shows, I love

travelling, I love meeting new people and just experiencing life moment to moment. I want to do music for the rest of my able-bodied existence, so I would tour in a heartbeat...there's no better way to see the US than from a van with your buds, playing music and takin' er easy.

**EJ: Organic band based hip hop is something that is somewhat rare these days. The amount of acts performing with the live band is increasing more and more lately. When you first decided an MC, did you envision that this was the direction you would head in?**

**LG:** Personally I always thought you had to have either a band or a DJ. I did live shows over a beat cd and it is super boring. Call me jaded, but that is how it is...playing festivals and shows with awesome acts night after night, one gets tired of four guys yelling into mics and stomping around the stage. Very few emcees can 'captivate' you onstage with just themselves. I definitely notice a lot more hip hop bands now than when we first started.

**MF:** My first effort in hip-hop was in a high school funk-hop band called "Brazz Knutz", so yes. I have always wanted to make hip-hop with a live band, and had no shortage of bands that have inspired me, at first nationally with the Roots, and then locally with Filthy Funk. It is a growing trend but by no means rare (anymore). Live band for live music, it just makes sense.

**LG:** I think it's the festival aspect too...hip hop is being represented at these music festivals, but with the caliber of musicianship in attendance at one, you gotta step your game up and bring the people something...put on a show and entertain....don't be lazy.

**EJ: Tell me about the history of Gilbert Puppetbutt? When did Gilbert get his beak wet in this rap game??? I noticed that he made waves at the Sublime show. Who is this guy, and where did he come from? He is becoming a Rochester legend!**

**MF:** We can't speak for Gilbert...he would get very upset if we were to put words in his mouth...let's just say Gilbert is the band mascot and spiritual guru, he parties, he's a puppet with an insatiable lust for drugs and women, and he hits really hard. In fact, We think maybe you should interview Gilbert if you want a high dose of truth and obscenity...oh golly, the stories he could tell...

**EJ: The future of Subsoil is....."finish the phrase."**

**LG:** The future of Subsoil is...enshrouded in a veil of decadent debauchery, frantic festivities, and the spreading of joy, love, acceptance, and discord throughout our glorious planet, opening minds, winning hearts, and being really fucking awesome, all the time.

**MF:** The future of Subsoil is...to be immortalized in dance by an improvisational nude body painting / break dancing troupe, yet to be formed.

SHOUT OUTS to Herby-One and the rest of the Upstate crew! ELP family, Tongue Flick Clique, and big up Gilly!

[www.myspace.com/subsoil](http://www.myspace.com/subsoil)

Words by Erik Jensen

ERIK JENSEN

+THE INNER VIEW+

ALYSSA COCO AND MATT MERRITT OF  
TINTED IMAGE

Tinted Image is one of the best bands in the whole Rochester and Upstate New York music circuit. Alyssa Coco, who was already an accomplished musician and writer in her own right (former American Idol contestant), teamed up with Matt Merritt and the boys to form what many feel maybe the "most likely to succeed," act in upstate at this point. I caught up with Alyssa and Matt to discuss what is coming down the line for this wonderful group of musicians.

**Erik Jensen:** *What was your introduction to music, and singing? When did you know that you wanted to head down the path of writing music?*

**Alyssa Coco:** I always knew I wanted to be a performer when I was younger. It's such a common dream as a little kid, but my parents were always so supportive and got me piano lessons at the age of five. By the time I was twelve, that's when I started writing my own songs, singing and playing the piano.

**EJ:** *Who would you say, are your biggest musical influences?*

**AC:** My biggest musical influences vary for different reasons. For example, I love Colbie Caillat and Ingrid Michaelson for their catchy melodies and their music in general. Both of their styles have influenced me greatly. For songwriting, my influences are John Mayer, the Goo Goo Dolls, Sara Bareilles, and Jackson Browne.

**EJ:** *Obviously American Idol was a big move for you along the way. How did the decision to audition for the show come about?*

**AC:** I've wanted to audition for American Idol since I started watching it around season 2. I was young, and so excited to turn 16 for that reason exactly. So, that summer, my best friend and my parents drove down to Philadelphia to audition.

**EJ:** *What were your favorite and least favorite parts of being part of that amazing experience?*

**AC:** My favorite part of the American Idol experience was definitely the preliminary rounds in Philadelphia. What people don't realize (because they don't show this on TV) is that you have to go through 4 auditions before you make it to Hollywood, and they're anywhere from one week to a month apart. My auditions were about a week apart so I would come home, and be so excited and nervous, then get to go back and do another audition. It was stressful, yes, but excitement overtook the stress and nerves. My least favorite part of the experience was the Hollywood experience. There were late night rehearsals until 2 or 3am, then they expected us to be ready to perform and be on camera at 6am. It was rough... but hey, that's what it's all about, right?

**EJ:** *After the show, what were your goals as far as your musical ambitions? Did the exposure that you received, help you attain some of your goals?*

**AC:** The exposure I received from American Idol helped me a



lot. I had a lot of radio, newspaper and magazine interviews that got my name out there. Everyone in Rochester was so great and supportive. It made the experience that much better. As far as my goals for after the show, once I was eliminated, I used that disappointment I felt as fuel to just go harder at my dream. I've always thought that when someone tells you you're not good enough, it's just more of a reason to work harder and get to where you want to be quicker.

**EJ:** *How did Tinted Image come together?*

**AC:** Tinted Image started as a jazz/funk project when guitarist Matt Merritt and saxophonist Joel Vickers were in high school. The summer of 2008, they auditioned singers and Matt got in touch with me to audition. Since then, we really started writing and playing original pop/rock music but we kept the name Tinted Image.

**EJ:** *Are there any projects that the band has lined up down the line?*

**AC:** Currently, we're looking into management companies and tours we can be put on as support. Also, we are working in the studio with Tim Hull and Brian Moore recording a full band EP of some new songs and plan to distribute the CD once it's finished.

**EJ:** *How do you feel about the comment, "Tinted Image is the female answer to The Dave Matthews Band?" I certainly see the reason why that might be said. How much of an influence is DMB on the band's sound?*

**Matt Merritt:** We are honored with any comparison to DMB... The Dave Matthews Band was a big influence on Tinted Image before vocals were added with the jams and modal sounds. Now, with vocals, we still look to their music for guidance in chord progressions, arrangements, use of sax, and the incorporation of acoustic instruments like guitar and piano into a rock/pop setting. We also love how DMB can play both as a full band and an acoustic duo (Dave & Tim)

**EJ:** *Does the band have any plans to tour nationally?*

**AC:** Tinted Image does not currently have a tour in plan, but we're on the look out for tours in need of supporting acts, as well as college tours. We hope to be on tour in 2011.

**EJ: The Rochester music scene is really blowing up. I can not remember this much talent in this city for a very long time. What are your thoughts on the scene that is going on here?**

**AC:** I think the Rochester music scene is amazing. There are so many talented artists, songwriters and performers. As a band, we try to go out and see as many local artists as we can at some of the cool venues in Rochester. It's always nice to go experience different shows and the different styles. With local original music, the creativity is out of this world and even though a specific style may not be your cup of tea, there's appreciation in the passion and heart musicians put out in their performances.

[www.tinted-image.com](http://www.tinted-image.com)

Words by Erik Jensen



+PROFILE+  
**DAN SMALLS PRESENTS**

Upstate New York is loaded with an extreme wealth of great concert promoters and firms. Dan Smalls is easily one of the best we have the pleasure to know. Mr. Smalls is an absolute pro in talent development at every level of the touring performance game. From small club shows to major theatre size gigs, Dan has a diverse pool of artists to work with. That brings much joy to us concertgoers who are always waiting for a fresh and exciting show to catch every weekend.

Dan cut his teeth at Cornell while attending school there as a sophomore. His first show, Blues Traveler and Spin Doctors must have been an extremely good time back in the days of the HORDE tour. After many successful ventures at our favorite IVY-LEAGUE school, he worked as the manager of the Haunt, and then started assisting with the State Theater in Ithaca. Dan stayed on board with those ventures for a couple of years after his graduation. He then decided to expand on his success and push on to bigger things. Bigger things meaning a job as a booking agent at Great Northeast Productions. While there he worked musicians such as Bob Dylan, Lyle Lovett, and Joan Baez among others. He also played a great part in organizing Phish festivals such as The Clifford Ball, The Great Went, and Lemonwheel. Dan's work with the Gerry Foundation was also an integral lead in to the development of the Bethel Woods Center near Woodstock's original festival location. After running a family business for several years, Mr.

Smalls returned to Ithaca and currently is the man in control at the State Theater in Ithaca. Dan Smalls Presents also has spread out into many other Upstate markets. I was recently at the Vampire Weekend show presented by Dan at the Armory in Rochester. Check out his ad in this publication for a listing of all future events or check out [dansmallspresents.com](http://dansmallspresents.com) for more info.

**For Immediate Release 9/8/10**

For more information: Dan Smalls 607.280.2900

**GEORGE WINSTON at the Hangar on October 28<sup>th</sup>... On Sale Monday at 9AM...**

Dan Smalls Presents, Inc. is proud to welcome George Winston to Ithaca on Thursday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at the newly renovated Hangar Theatre. Tickets for the show will go on sale Monday, September 13 at 9am via the link at [dansmallspresents.com](http://dansmallspresents.com). These will be will call only tickets (no paper tickets will be available) and seated general admission - first come, first served. They will cost \$28.50 in advance.

MORE ON GEORGE WINSTON:

George Winston Biography

George Winston grew up mainly in Montana, and also spent his later formative years in Mississippi and Florida. During this time, his favorite music was instrumental rock and instrumental R&B, including Floyd Cramer, the Ventures, Booker T & The MG's, Jimmy Smith, and many more. Inspired by R&B, jazz, Blues and rock (especially the Doors), George began playing organ in 1967. In 1971 he switched to the acoustic piano after hearing recordings from the 1920s and the 1930s by the legendary stride pianists Thomas "Fats" Waller and the late Teddy Wilson. In addition to working on stride piano, he also at this time came up with this own style of melodic instrumental music on solo piano, called folk piano. In 1972, he recorded his first solo piano album, BALLADS AND BLUES 1972, for the late guitarist John Fahey's Takoma label.

His latest solo piano release is LOVE WILL COME – THE MUSIC OF VINCE GUARALDI, VOL. 2 (released 2/2/10), which features compositions by the late jazz pianist, including pieces from the Peanuts® TV specials.

Since 1980 George has released ten other solo piano albums: AUTUMN (1980), WINTER INTO SPRING (1982), DECEMBER (1982), SUMMER (1991), FOREST (1994), LINUS & LUCY-THE MUSIC OF VINCE GUARALDI (1996), which features compositions by the late jazz pianist, including Cast Your Fate to the Wind and pieces from the Peanuts® TV specials; PLAINS (1999), which was inspired by his Eastern Montana upbringing, NIGHT DIVIDES THE DAY - THE MUSIC OF THE DOORS (2002), and MONTANA - A LOVE STORY (2004) and GULF COAST BLUES & IMPRESSIONS – A HURRICANE RELIEF BENEFIT (2006).

Also, in 2001 George released REMEMBRANCE - A MEMORIAL BENEFIT, a six song CD of piano, guitar and harmonica solos, to benefit those affected by 9/11. He has also worked

## ERIK JENSEN



with the late George Levenson of Informed Democracy ([www.informeddemocracy.com](http://www.informeddemocracy.com)) on three projects: a solo guitar soundtrack for SADA KO AND THE THOUSAND PAPER CRANES, and soundtracks of piano, guitar and, harmonica solos for PUMPKIN CIRCLE, and BREAD COMES TO LIFE. In 1984 he also did the solo piano soundtrack for the children's story THE VELVETEEN RABBIT for Rabbit Ears Productions.

George is presently concentrating mainly on live performances, and most of the time he is touring playing solo piano concerts (the Summer Show or the Winter Show), solo guitar concerts, solo harmonica concerts, and solo piano dances (with R&B and slow dance songs).

He is also studying the playing of the great New Orleans pianists Henry Butler, James Booker, Professor Longhair, Dr. John, and Jon Cleary, and he is also working on interpreting pieces on solo piano by his favorite composers, including Vince Guaraldi, Professor Longhair, the Doors, Frank Zappa, Randy Newman, Sam Cooke, Curtis Mayfield, Laura Nyro, Al Kooper, Dr. John, Henry Butler, James Booker, Jon Cleary, Ralph Towner, Arthur Lee, Milt Jackson, John Hartford, Oliver Schroer, Taj Mahal, Philip Aaberg, and others, to play at concerts, and at his solo piano dances.

George is also working on solo guitar and is recording the masters of the Hawaiian Slack Key guitar for an extensive series of albums for Dancing Cat Records ([www.dancingcat.com](http://www.dancingcat.com)). Slack Key is the name for the beautiful solo fingerstyle guitar tradition, unique to Hawaii, which began in the early 1800s and predated the steel guitar by over half a century. He is also recording his main inspirations for his harmonica playing, Sam Hinton, Rick Epping, and Curt Bouterse.

George Winston plays Steinway Pianos  
[www.georgewinston.com](http://www.georgewinston.com)  
*Words by Erik Jensen*

## +NOTES FROM THE EDGE+

This may have been one of the best summers ever for live music in Upstate New York! I have been blessed like many of you, to have been part of such a diversely spectacular array of shows! Here is the proof!

### SUBLIME

8/24/2010 - ROCHESTER ARMORY, ROCHESTER, NY

The Dirty Heads opened the show, but sadly, I was late for that segment of the show. It is too bad because I heard they were ripping. I was psyched for this show after running into Bud Gaugh (drummer for Sublime) downtown. He told me, "Rome is the real deal, you need to check it out." Apparently, old Sublime fans have been highly skeptical and have been posting anonymous ramblings about how bad the whole idea was for them to tour. Did it work? Is Sublime good enough with Rome? I already knew the answers to these questions. This band absolutely tore it up! Rome did not miss a beat. He does sound an awful lot like Brad Nowell as well, and that did not hurt. They played all of the gems, and even added a new tune, "Panic," which is the first new song they wrote with Rome on board. Highlights of the evening were "Smoke 2 Joints," as well as a blistering "Badfish." Like I said, this was pretty much a greatest hits package show. I can tell you that the future is bright for these guys. I can not wait to hear the results of their time in the studio. On a personal note, it was nice to see Mr. Gilbert Puppelbutt, (Subsoil's fearless puppet friend) mouthing all of the words to these songs.

### AFROMAN W/ SUBSOIL

8/25/2010 - DUBLAND UNDERGROUND, ROCHESTER, NY

The headliner of this show was Afroman! By the response of all the fine folks in attendance, you would have had no idea and with good reason. I have not been to a club show in at least 5 years that had the kind of energy that Subsoil brought to the table that night. Dubland was rolling for the duration of their whole set! It was kind of like watching Widespread open for the Allmans last year. After three Allmans songs, I was asking myself, "Why am I here?" Widespread like Subsoil, was simply that good! Afroman took the stage to a packed house, and was a bit surprising to me. I was thinking that it was going to be torture watching this gentlemen perform. Other than his I-Pod cued backing tracks, he actually was somewhat entertaining, and knew how to work the crowd. He tried hard as well, breaking out the guitar on a couple of tracks, and adding some more depth to what was going on. Overall, Afroman as an entertainer, is highly efficient. I will leave it that. All hail Subsoil!

### MY MORNING JACKET

W/ THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS

8/28/2010 - CMAC, CANANDAIGUA, NY

My loyal readers, I had been waiting for this show all summer long! We will have to mark August 28<sup>th</sup> on the calendar every year after this show. I say this because I told Herby I was envious that he was going to be seeing Yolk. He then expressed how envious he was that I was attending MMJ! In the end, he saw what he thought was the best show of this year. And to my delight, (and I have no problem saying this) I saw the best show I have ever seen. I am being totally serious! The energy that MMJ brings is downright overwhelming! All night, peaking in and out of every song...on fire! I can not

get ahead myself though. Did I mention that the opener had Neko Case in the band. And get this, in a supporting role. The New Pornographers, one of the great Canadian bands of the moment, were a great choice to open the show. They presented many tracks from their new album, and thrived on a highly transcendent energy highly reminiscent of "Monster," era R.E.M. If you have never heard the band, pick up a disc. You won't regret it. I met a new friend from Pittsburgh, who had been to roughly 100 MMJ shows, and he was psyched as we were telling me about what they were busting out on this tour. He said, they will open every show with the oldie but goodie, "Rollin Back." Sure enough, they did! The next 3 hours would be marked with increased energy dispersal of astronomical proportions. The best of the bunch in the first 2 hours were a slamming and spacey, "Gideon," "It Beats 4 U," and an extended and soaring version of "Dancefloors." They did not stop there. "I'm Amazed," was so over the top, that I could hardly contain myself, and neither could my new friend who was repeatedly slamming into me in fits of glory. "Smokin from Shootin," segued into "Scream 2" as it usually does, and the band departed the stage for the pseudo encore stance. At this point, I had already thought that I saw the best show I was ever going to see. MMJ then came out and ripped through a four song encore that crested with "One Big Holiday." Coincidentally, my favorite song! I am not sure if I have recovered from how good this show was, and I hope that it does not jade my view of everything else I am going to review in the future.

#### BLUES TRAVELER

8/29/2010 - NYS FAIR, SYRACUSE, NY

I have always been a huge fan of Traveler. Even when others thought they had sold themselves out! I was pretty excited to see that they were part of the free entertainment at the NYS Fair. That has to be one of the biggest bargains I have ever been a part of. As usual, they did not disappoint. The band opened the show with a crazy and jammy, "Mulling It Over," that segued into an even better "But Anyway." The band did play some forgettable tracks like "Hook," and "Runaround." However, this was surely pleasing to the people that only know the band from radio airplay. Other highlights, were the old but fresh, "Brother John," and "NY Prophesie." Oh, and how could I forget the ever so fun, "Devil Went Down To Georgia," where Popper plays all of Charlie Daniel's parts with his harmonica. Fittingly, the band closed with "Carolina Blues," which is the best song they have recorded in the last 15 years. It is always a treat to catch Traveler. They are definitely in 1994 form, and hopefully it stays that way!

#### ROBERT RANDOLPH AND THE FAMILY BAND

9/4/2010 - NYS FAIR, SYRACUSE, NY

The Jimi Hendrix of lap steel! An even crazier bargain than seeing Traveler for free. Mr. Randolph and his band is always on fire. This was no exception! What would you expect from someone that is easily one of the top five musicians of this generation. I am not familiar with the song titles for most of his catalogue, but I did know "I Don't Know What You Come To DO," because quite simply, it is the best song the band has

ever released. The blues inspired Gospel heaven that these guys bring, is somewhat on par with their contemporaries, The Campbell Brothers. It was nice treat to see these guys. It took me back to one of my first interviews I ever did, some 10 plus years ago. Back then, Robert Randolph was a virtual unknown. Now, everybody from Clapton to Keith Richards wants to jam with this guy!

#### VAMPIRE WEEKEND W/BEACH HOUSE

9/10/2010 - ROCHESTER ARMORY, ROCHESTER, NY

I have never seen either of these bands. Once again I was tardy, and missed all but the last song by alternative "it" kids, Beach House. By all accounts, they were slamming, and pretty much played all of their debut album in its entirety. My fascination was with the hipster chic, Vampire Weekend, who has released two of the better albums of the last ten years, their self titled debut, and Contra. The boys led by Ezra Koenig did not disappoint playing hits like, "A-Punk," "Cousins," "Oxford Comma," and "Cape Cod Kwassa Kwassa." I was highly jazzed when the band ended the show with a 3 song encore that was closed with "Walcott." This band needs to come back more often. The Bug Jar crowd was represented in full effect, and you can tell they truly had missed the days since these guys graced the stage there.

#### THUNDER BODY

9/10/2010 - WATER STREET MUSIC HALL,  
ROCHESTER, NY

After literally running out of the Armory to get to this show, I was quite happy to make it without missing most of it. Rachel and Matt formerly of GPGDS, have created a band whose musical stylings and chops are even better than the band that they descended from. I am quite psyched to see where the band goes from here! Surely, they have the support of many in the Upstate market, and this is just the beginning. If you like Giant Panda, you need to see these guys because quite frankly, they are all that and then some!

*Words by Erik Jensen*

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"Drum and Bass colored with funky keys, rhythm that rolls, rocks and dares you to keep up with it. Sweeping solos fueled with distorted syncopation exulting the audience then space inflected jamming to marionette their heads. Music you feel through your frame without a distracting vocal line, allowing you to sense the next direction, but ultimately you'll be wrong. Only RootsCollider instinctively knows where they're going next."  
Greg Jackson - UpstateLive Music Guide