

UpstateLIVE

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CHARITY NUSE
FROM BIG LEG EMMAS



Official Press Photo

PLANET OF THE ABTS



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Red Jumpsuit
Apparatus



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INTERVIEW WITH BILLY MARTIN
FROM MEDESKI, MARTIN AND WOOD



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CONTENT

3 MUSIC IS LIFE

Rapture Fest by *Jed Metzger* - Festival Review

Lucid releases Live Album by *Garret K. Woodward* - CD Review

With the Release of a new Album, Driftwood Beats with "A Rock and Roll Heart" by *Kayla MacLachlan* - CD Preview/Profile

Skyworks Productions Presents: Planet of the Abts by *Tabitha Clancy* - Northeast Invasion Tour: Preview

The Doornails - "BackPorchDaze" by *Tabitha Clancy* - CD Review

Yonder Mountain String Band Infamous String Dusters by *Tabitha Clancy* - Concert Review

10 THE VIEW FROM HERE by Greg Jackson

CD Review of Jack "Penetrator" Lipton

12 COMING ATCHA LIVE by Joe Koch

Reviews - Hurtsmile, Carolyn Wonderland, Tedeschi Truck Band and Judas Priest

Jon McLaughlin - "Forever If Ever" - CD Review

14 THIS MUST BE THE COLUMN by PhanArt Pete Mason

Rock N Roll Resort - Concert Review

Umphey's McGee - Concert Review

18 NOTES FROM THE EDGE by Erik Jensen

Billy Martin - Inner View

Charity Nuse - Inner View

T.A.O. - Inner View

Geoff Dale of 3HB - Inner View

Mastadon - "The Hunter" - CD Review

Pixies - Concert Review

29 UPSTATE METAL

Red Jumpsuit Apparatus by *Christine Palmer* - Band Profile

Avoiding the Slow Death of Local Music by *Brian Lawrence*

Restless Streets by *Christine Palmer* - Album Review

Borderline Suicide by *Rob Born* - Album Review

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MUSIC FESTIVALS POLITICS IS ART SOCIAL AWARENESS LIFE

+ FESTIVAL REVIEW +

RAPTURE FEST

10/21/2011 - WATER STREET MUSIC HALL - ROCHESTER, NY

BY JED METZGER

So the world was to end, and so let us go out with a party-hence RAPTURE FEST. Since you are reading this you know that the world didn't end at midnight on the 21st, but for those in attendance they did get an excellent and eclectic mix of seven bands. I actually missed the first two – Driftwood & Last Note, but I heard good things.

When my crew arrived, Bottle Train was ripping along on the club side of the hall. The band is tight and jams easily with each other, it reminds me of Phish some. As they ended Thousands of One brought their crossover R&B/urban beat sound to the main stage. They were enthusiastically received and continue to develop as a band. To my ear, they have real strength in the vocal and horn sections and so the more R&B tunes move me, but half my crew likes the urban stuff better, so pick your poison I guess.

Back to the club side for the Greener Grass Band, this four piece acoustic outfit from Ithaca was huge fun to watch and dance to. My understanding is that they recently dropped their drummer and picked up this very high-energy young lady on the fiddle. Although the name might imply bluegrass, that would be just one genre that they would dip into, their up tempo take on Dylan's "Tombstone Blues" was a personal favorite.

Next up was the headliner, the Sim Redmond Band. No matter how many times I see them, the band always gets me to that place, hard to describe exactly but it is a dancing lightly-psychedelic blessed out yes. The band pulled evenly across their extensive catalog but special mention needs to be made of a couple tunes from the new disc. First, what is certainly a hit song "All I Ever Want" is classic Sim – positive, love vibration, his voice and Jen's pleading, Nate and Jordan weaving licks, just perfect. To me the surprise was "Save Me". While I enjoy on the disc, played live is just took the room to a whole other place, really psychedelic, big power lyrics – really cool live tune. Speaking of power, no set would be complete without some rumble from Big Dan and tasty drum explosion by Asa. Great long set!

It was well past midnight but a perfect time for Subsoil. Love this Rochester crew, they jam, their urban and they make me and the rest of the room dance. So let's hope this mini festival becomes a standard as it really works.

[Words by Jed Metzger]

+ CD REVIEW +

LUCID RELEASES LIVE ALBUM

BY GARRET K. WOODWARD

With patience comes prosperity and for Lucid it also means perseverance and perfection.

Entering their eighth year together, the sextet has made their mark throughout the northeast with a pure rock-n-roll sound soaked by tones of blues, reggae, jazz and funk.

"There is no substitute for experience and we've been racking it up," said keyboardist Andy Deller. "That experience translates into what you see onstage, which is a heavier, tighter and more confident band."

2011 has already proved bountiful for the rock bandits, who roam the nation in their psychedelic school bus. On top of kicking off the renowned snoe.down festival in Vermont this spring, the group also ventured into New York City for two memorable nights at B.B. King's in Times Square (post-Furthur after shows) and performed at innumerable gatherings like Strawberry Jam, A Bear's Picnic, Liberate, Wormtown, Evolve, Bella Terra and McCauley Mountain, amongst others.

In September, they once again hosted Backwoods Pondfest, an ever-evolving celebration combining national sensations and local favorites in an intimate setting amid the foothills of the Adirondacks. The lineup this year included Ivan Neville's Dumpstaphunk, Rubblebucket, and Break Science with Chali 2na (Jurassic 5). The iconic wordsmith later joined Lucid onstage, merging the essence of hip-hop and rock into a frenzied collaboration.

This fall, *Relix* magazine selected Lucid as one of their picks for the music sampler by adding flagship song "Styles of the Smooth" to the collage of high caliber melodies carefully chosen.

And with the leaves changing, it was finally time to release a live album and provide their loyal fans with something to defeat cabin fever. The record showcases the band at their core, which is the precise and nonstop force found before a live audience.

"I enjoy listening to live material from my favorite groups," said percussionist Lowell Wurster. "There is something truly special about hearing how the crowd reacts to a band and vice versa. Our live shows are filled with a great energy and that's why our fans have been looking forward to a live record."

"Living in a ski town, one constantly hears the adage, 'if you like it now, you should have been here 10 years ago, before all these people showed up,'" – Roving Festival Writer (TheRFW.com). "The funny thing is, in 10 years, we'll probably be saying the same thing about Lucid and the unforgettable presence they create onstage and out of your speakers."

www.rulucid.com

[Words by Garret K. Woodward]

+CD PREVIEW/PROFILE+
**WITH THE RELEASE OF A NEW ALBUM,
 DRIFTWOOD BEATS WITH
 "A ROCK AND ROLL HEART"**

BY KAYLA MACLACHLAN

It's simple, plain, and true – in a society driven by expanding technologies, drum machines, recycled beats and reality television ready-made musical fame – folk music is on the rise. We could contribute this growing trend to the Coen Brothers and the release of "O Brother Where Art Thou," Grammy-award winning, European folk powerhouse Mumford and Sons, or the sweetheart sounds of Southern-bred hopeless romantics, The Avett Brothers, or we can simply look at the facts – that beneath the surface of this growing genre are an intertwine of century-old roots – something that, no matter who we are, where we're from, or what we do (or listen to), we're always digging to find. Today these old-time sounds are being fused with the more modern influences of rock n roll; and bands like Binghamton-based Driftwood are moving right along pace with today's most popular Electronica acts, breaking ground, strings, and expectations by drawing on our roots to create a sound that speaks to us all.

Since their formation in 2008, Driftwood is a band well on their way to becoming a household name. What started out as simply a duo between lead vocalist and guitarist Dan Forsyth and banjoist Joe Kollar has quickly lead way to a touring quartet of musicians whose varied influences come together to create a unique, energy-driven, relatable sound. "It [our music] pulls on a variety of genres," said Forsyth. "Anything from Rock n Roll to Roots and Folk music. We each have our own influences as well as shared ones and we bring them to the table." From the worldly influences of Jon Doll's upright bass to Claire Byrne's (violin) genetic tuning to roots music and fiddling, from Kollar's early exposure to Hendrix to everyone's

love of the Beatles, the band has created what Byrne refers to as a "melting pot of a sound." And while 19th century fiddle music crossed with 1960's American Rock n Roll may signal a rare breed for some, for Driftwood it is a sound that sets them apart from the rest. It is the rapid that keeps them moving and the tide that continually washes them up as they drift their way from shore to shore.

Two time winners of the Grassroots Music and Arts Festival new band competition, Driftwood has proved themselves forces to be reckoned with in the folk scene and beyond. Stepping away from the familiarity of local Binghamton-based gigs, the band has begun to branch out, expanding their touring routes and spending most of their days on the road. "Last year at this time we were playing a lot but we had a lot more local shows," said Byrne. "These days we play locally about once every month or so and are on the road most weeks." And while the band may be expanding their repertoire beyond state lines, they still recognize their Upstate roots and its solid and strong group of dedicated fans. Byrne notes, "Everyone we meet around the state is friendly and welcoming and really appreciates the music."

Playing at larger venues and landing more high-profile gigs (including performing as an opening act this month for nationally touring act, Donna the Buffalo) has allowed Driftwood to broaden their fan base – expanding their demographic to all types of people interested in all types of sound – even metal heads, who, as Byrne put it, come up to the band saying they usually hate their type of music but, after hearing Driftwood's eclectic sound, don't anymore. "With Dan's galloping guitar style, Joe's lightning fast banjo, and Claire's transcendental fiddling – they will become a favorite to anyone who hears them," said fan Brandon Cooper outside a recent gig at Al's Wine and Whiskey Lounge in Syracuse. "I first saw them at this past year's Grassroots and have been a catching them live as often as possible ever since."

There is an unstoppable energy that is channeled from the band when their presence graces the stage, and it is no wonder why their fans keep coming back for more. Forsyth will lay down a soothing melody, Doll lays down the rhythm with his upright bass, Kollar will overlap with his 5 string twang, Byrne fires up the fiddle, and as soon as her right leg starts a shakin' the romp is in full swing. The band's energy is instantly transferred to the crowd, and you'll find even the most timid of listeners with their feet tappin' and hands a clappin'; and once the songs over, everyone is hootin' and hollering for more.

"That New Times is taking a beating down there," notes Byrne at a recent Wednesday night performance in Syracuse. The pages of the arts-inspired news outfit scattered the ground of Al's Wine and Whiskey Lounge, being torn and stomped on during the second lag of Driftwood's set. Ironically enough, the band was on the front cover – and while the history of this Binghamton-based four piece can be easily read, their story truly comes to life when it is live on stage and ready to be heard. The band will open up with century-old folk tunes, like "Turkey in the Straw," showcase a selection of originals



with tunes both old and new, and segue into a Cream-inspired rendition of "Sitting on top of the World," crossing genre, style, and traditional technique to create a sound that'll leave a Mohawk-sporting, studded-belt-wearing rocker kid dancing right alongside a micro-brew-sipping-corduroy-outfitted Dead-head and the coexistence is simply beautiful.

While the Driftwood name may be unmistakably tied to the high-intensity of their live performances, recently they have taken their heightened energy into the studio for the anticipated release of their second album, *A Rock n Roll Heart*. Recorded at 3 Egg studios in Brooklyn, the album reflects Driftwood's emergence as one of Upstate New York's top folk-roots inspired acts. Produced by Bryan Kane and engineer Brian Penny and mastered by Grammy Award winner Scott Hull, the album differs significantly from 2009's *Rally Day*. "Rally Day was tracked out over a long period of time," said Kollar. "The new album was finished in two days and was recorded live. We recorded it all together, there are almost no overdubs."

From love and longing, to the struggles of life on the road, *A Rock n Roll Heart* is an introspective album. It explores the curiosities of life and the world, using the band's eclectic musical virtuosity to tell the story. Joe Kollar and Dan Forsyth are the primary lyricist on the album, while John Doll and Claire Byrne contribute their own meaning with the combination of a powerful low end and the transcendental sound crying from the strings of a fore-fronting violin.

"What you hear on the album is what you'll hear at a live show as well," said Byrne, speaking to the release of *A Rock and Roll Heart*. And while in the studio it is entirely difficult to capture the energy, innovation, and excitement that comes with any live show, *A Rock and Roll Heart* feeds listeners with a true taste of Driftwood's unique sound.

The tracks on the album are well balanced – neither fast nor slow, but a combination of tempos and sounds reflecting the lyrical content driving the song. "I've Got a Secret," the album's first track, begins with a simple melody that quickly builds with the addition Kollar's banjo and Byrne's violin; when Forsyth chimes in with lyrics, "Keep it simple, plain, and straight," the tempo drops creating a sound that is well... simple – a gentle plucking of the bass and violin is paired with basic strumming and the secret no longer is deemed untold.

"To Kill Ya," is a track with an old-timey feel. Forsyth tells the story while musically it is dominated by the dark twang of Kollar's banjo and driving rhythm of Doll on upright bass. Classical violin and traditional fiddle music are meddled together as Byrne interjects, creating a sound reminiscent of pain and longing.

On "Confidence Is," instruments like the organ, drum kit, and flugelhorn help draw on a more rock-influenced sound. Juxtaposed with this, "Steppin' Out," is a love-inspired soothing acoustic lullaby that highlights the calming nature of Forsyth's alluring vocals.

"Annie" is a track from 2009's *Rally Day* that earned its way on to the track list of *A Rock and Roll Heart* and rightfully so. It is a track that exemplifies the more experimental side of Driftwood, honing in on the true nature of their unique sound. Beginning with a simple acoustic melody, its sound quickly builds with the addition of Kollar on drums and Byrne's violin. From there, the track gives way to an edgier experimental jam and everyone takes part. Jon Doll dominates, however, bringing together the complexity of the track with a heavy, almost haunting bass line.

Title track, "A Rock and Roll Heart" draws at the album's core. While the track reflects Driftwood's capacity to perform together, more importantly, it reflects the life endured by the working musician. With lyrics like, "Well the Beatles and the Band and the heroes I know/The lure of the stage with the lights a glow/But I got a pocket full of nothin' and a hobo's clothes," it addresses themes of hardship and struggle, yet these words are backed by a comforting, reassuring sound and it goes without saying that, for Driftwood, playing and performing together keeps their hearts beating and that alone is more than enough.

The release of the album will be paired with several CD release shows throughout New York and Pennsylvania, including a performance on **December 7th** at the **Westcott Theater** in Syracuse. Joined by Syracuse natives, Los Blancos and Ann Arbor/Binghamton-based, The Slaves, a high intensity and energetic evening is in store for those who make their way through the theater's doors. "We are really excited about the CD release at the Westcott Theater," said Byrne. "We will be performing a lot, if not all, of the songs off of the new album, some brand new tunes yet to be recorded and of course, some of our old favorites as well!"

Whether your interests lie in folk, world, bluegrass, or good old American rock n roll, hidden inside Driftwood's sound is a little something for everyone. And while they may be beating with a rock n roll heart, their sound still brings us back to our roots, to a time of coexistence, to a time when life was, as the album implies... simple, plain, and true.

For more information, including tour dates and samples from the new album, visit: www.driftwoodtheband.com

[Words by Kayla MacLachlan]

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+NORTHEAST INVASION TOUR: PREVIEW+
 SKYWORKS PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS
PLANET OF THE ABTS

BY TABITHA CLANCY

The aliens are coming, the aliens are coming! This is no ordinary invasion that you might read about in Colin McNaughton's children's tale. This is an extraordinary experience not to be missed. Planet of the Abts is set to tour the Northeast beginning November 30 in Foxborough, MA and continues through December. Last stop of the tour is the Mexicali Live in Teaneck, NJ.

Matt Abts (drums) and Jorgen Carlsson (bass) – both of Grammy-nominated Gov't Mule – ventured out upon the terrestrial and formed Planet of the Abts. Together, with T-Bone Anderson (keys/guitar) they created a multi-layered soundscape of rock and roll. Heavy driven beats and articulated notes travel through the space time continuum. Moving at the speed of sound, their ship will arrive at venue near you. New Yorkers can catch POA at Bearsville Theater in Woodstock, NY on December 2 and then again at Brooklyn Bowl on December 6.

Special guests include: The Peacheaters: An Allman Brothers tribute band, Brendan Kelley Band, Corky Laing & the Memory Thieves, and Nick Moss.



Planet Of The Abts - Official Press Photo

[Words by Tabitha Clancy - Photo: Official Press Photo]

+CD REVIEW+

THE DOORNAILS - "BACKPORCHDAZE"

BY TABITHA CLANCY

Three empty rocking chairs rest silently on the cover of The Doornails first release. The rockers, stoic and quiet, seem to be inviting us to the back porch session that is about to begin. Open the cover and insert the disc.

Imagine being in that back yard, unaware of what is about to take place, eating barbeque and chatting. Suddenly, you notice the first few notes being strummed, coming from somewhere. Melody captivates and engages the listener in an instant. Folks gather around. *Mountain Boy* is the kind of

instrumental song that draws the listener to more. Sharing the fast tempo note playing, the song is passed between each musician including guest dobro player, Kevin Maul (The Lustre Kings, The Burns Sisters, and The Nellies).

We become familiar with the musicians themselves, as if they were extending the invite personally. The core threesome are Ted Hennessy (harmonica/vocals), Mike McMann (guitar/vocals) and Gene Lemme (upright bass). *Woke Up On The Floor* touts being a drunken mess, incapable of maintaining relationships. The undertone of humor is a direct indication that the personality of the musicians can make light of the uglier side of life.

What is more accomplished is that this disc is a blend of originals and carefully chosen covers maintaining an element of entertainment in a paradox of lyrics and musical intensity. Mostly a roots American sound, Hennessy's blues influence peer out from the shadows. Bugsby Meyers' *What's the Use of Getting Sober* begins with a harp full of personality; signifying the woes of life then breaking to a loose conversation among the vocalists.

Hennessy speckles the disc with lighter playful songs too. Maintaining every one is welcome at this party, the girls are invited to share in the fun. Peggy Lecuyer and Karen Ann Gilpen (both of The Nellies) sing harmony on a Hennessy original, *Stan the Hot Dog Man*. The girls fill the chorus of this alt-country tune as if it were a sing-a-long. Another Hennessy original, *Bring Back Roosevelt Franklin*, is bookended with a very familiar tune that will have you revisiting childhood.

The Doornails do not just create music they present it so that there is an element of entertainment that is familiar, humorous and fresh. Together (and with friends) they add a splash of Celtic here, a pat of country there, and a dash of blues woven throughout. The welcoming feel of the disc is presented by folks full of personality openly sharing themselves with others. These relatable tales perhaps, would be the kind we would tell at some back yard barbeque, over a camp fire with some brews in hand.

[Words by Tabitha Clancy]

+CONCERT REVIEW+

**YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND
 INFAMOUS STRING DUSTERS**

10/28/2011 - NORTHERN LIGHTS -
 CLIFTON PARK, NY

BY TABITHA CLANCY

Albany, NY tends to fall short on its supply of variety in terms of getting music into the Capital District. There are many reasons and I could write an article on that topic alone, but that is for another day. However, it is suffice to say that when Yonder Mountain String Band (YMSB) was coming to Northern Lights with the Infamous String Dusters (ISD), I was more than surprised. Indeed, their chosen band names give us a clue as to their sound. But there is more to the story.

The Friday before Halloween, these bands were set to take stage. Given the specialty crowd they generally draw, I was not surprised when I saw butterfly wings, boas, jump suits and other eccentric choice of dress. Given that it was Halloween weekend, there was much more that met the eye. Complete costume and garb always make for an added enjoyment to the concert experience.

The majority were there to see both bands. Each has a strong following with much crossover. Admittedly, YMSB has been around much longer as they were the headliners. Having been to many festivals, (and many of them bluegrass) I have seen Yonder a number of times now. It's been the ever-elusive Infamous String Dusters that I have not been able to catch... until now.

A five member acoustic string band can lay down the chops; filled with sweet fiddle harmonies, rounded out with bass and proper placement of banjo and dobro in truly unique arrangements. There is nothing lacking with ISD. Virtuoso capabilities allow for improvisations that create a fingerprint of each show. These fellows took the stage in a forty-five minute set promoting their new disc, "We Do it Live." The quintet engaged the audience in their fast paced tunes traditional of the bluegrass genre, but fresh with added personality to their songs. Their

stage presence was well received as the young faced, well-dressed band dazzled the crowd.


Yonder Mountain String Band is perhaps one of the most unique bluegrass/jamgrass bands in the circuit. Heavily driven by mandolin, the overall sound is remarkably played at a high pitch. Even the vocals tend to be more falsettos. This particular night the song choice lent to a heavier bluegrass sound (as opposed to other nights where they head in the jam direction). A tradition of bluegrass music is story telling in between songs and Jeff Austin (mando/vocals) makes no exception. He delivers tales some of which were introductory and others were to give thanks. For much of the first set, members of ISD rotated through for a sit-in. The Yonder boys held the house themselves for the second set which began at midnight! One of the most admirable facets of YMSB is that they share the spotlight equally. They each get a chance at a vocal or instrumental solo.

Yonder played until one in the morning, with an almost three hour set; no one left feeling upset. The crowd was refreshed, revived and alive. Albany needs more of the same.

[Words by Tabitha Clancy]

Happy Holidays from the **UpstateLIVE** *Team!*

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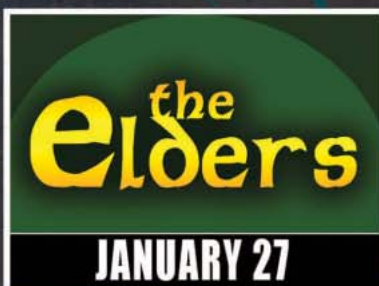
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ENJOY LIVE MUSIC.

THE VIEW FROM HERE

BY GREG JACKSON

It's going to be an especially fun column for me this month, I have a cd from a band mate! I'll highlight this plus extend to you a press release from one of the bands that I provide consultant work for.

On that note I'll be changing my "working job title" to consultant in the music world as I'm on 100% disability from work and am having back surgery this month. Sandra is going to be running the show, besides her known talents as a graphic designer, photographer, web designer and video editor, she will be the voice and sole owner/operator of SbN Studios. Her remarkable skills and personality will provide a fresh breath of creativity to anyone who commissions her work.

Mark Doyle and The Maniacs Auditions

SbN Management and Media announces procedures for application/audition at both *bass/vocals* and *second guitar/vocals* positions. There will be no "open" auditions, auditions will be held individually after initial screening.

Vocals are a must! A multi-instrumental second guitarist with skills on keyboards and/or harp is highly desirable. Applicants MUST have the chops, gear, positive, pro attitude and look to fit the band. Please provide current bio with info on who you've played with and are playing with, as well as how flexible your "day job" is. A current picture and a youtube or similar link to video of you performing live is mandatory. MP3s or a CD featuring examples of your playing and singing in the British Blues style is also strongly suggested.

Applications can be sent to The Maniacs management, at sbnmanagementandmedia@gmail.com

Applicants will be contacted for a phone interview prior to auditions.



Since releasing their first recording *Gotta Have Her* in 1976 *The Penetrators* have been underground garage rock legends. Now Jack "Penetrator" unleashes an anthology record that covers then 'til now, including brand new tunes written for this disc, giving listeners a peek at each evolution of his career.

The Penetrators, *Mark Doyle* and *The Maniacs* and even his new live band, *The Jack Penetrator Band* are highlighted as guitarist *Norman Phillips* co-penned one song and performs on it along with bassist *Todd Shuffler*. The real heavy lifting is performed by *Mark Doyle*, producer, guitarist, keyboardist, bassist, vocalist, arranger, writer and all around resident genius with another of Jack's ex-band mates from *The Maniacs*, *Terry Quill*, who co-wrote three of the songs here and contributed his guitar virtuosity and vocals. Then there's Jack, bigger than life, more teenager than 50 something, but this is not a story of mid-life crisis gone wild. This is the story of a life devoted to ROCK! as he would say. With his musical partner *Eliot "Spike Penetrator" Kagan* they formed a band whose material has been released and re-released in the U.S. and abroad for three decades, continuing to this day with re-releases from *Windian Records*. www.windianrecords.wordpress.com

On the opening cut Jack pays homage to his most recent band, two-time SAMMY award winning *Mark Doyle* and *The Maniacs*, *Maniac* was co-written with Doyle for their second album, *Comin' Home*, which also features Quill, drummer extraordinaire *Frank DeFonda* and another SAMMY award winner *Michael P. Ryan* providing the gritty underbody on bass. Though seldom heard live, the depth of Lipton's ability to characterize a song is deftly shown on this cut, illuminated by Doyle's biting guitar riffs responding to Jack's barking darkness. It's like a grown-up *Excitable Boy* with real teeth, venom and weapons, stalker status with real time-served and no future.

She's Gonna Remind You is the first Lipton/Quill piece and Terry's pop sensibilities come through right away. While the topic matter may swell with bad decisions and poor career choices the practically power pop background insists that somewhere there's a positive outcome. Lipton doesn't fail when it's time to set the plot and squash that, practically spitting at himself as the tale is re-told.

Willie Dixon's *Back Door Man*, covered here as a nod to Jim Morrison is next and with the help of Quill on harmonica and Doyle on everything else, he gives it a great read! Each track is a "no guts, no glory" situation where Lipton grabs on, poses and makes it his own, extremely difficult, but well played. Quill's harp holds onto the original song while I dare you to keep track of Doyle's multi-layered guitar tracks.

What She Said, another Lipton/Quill track echoes a little *Police*, maybe it's the rimshots in the breakdown, maybe the soft echo in the guitar riffs. It has that feel of proto-pop with an

[Words by Greg Jackson]

+CD REVIEW+

JACK "PENETRATOR" LIPTON - "FORGOTTEN BOY"

Another cd where I must concede my bias. Jack is my friend, brother and band-mate in *The Jack Penetrator Band*. Although I've known him less than 2 years it seems like we grew up together, we attended the same high school, he a bit before me. (wink)

edge, the groove is infectious, you want to go through the struggle with Lipton and he wants you to.

Real life experience always writes the best songs and *Take Me Back* embodies this in heart on the sleeve realism. Penned with JPB mate Norm Phillips, this Stones feeling tear-jerker rides along on Todd Shuffler's steady bass line and is embellished with the trumpet of Jeff Stockham and tenor sax of Mike Debaniewicz. Doyle applies the "Tumblin' Dice" riff to seal the deal.

Lipton/Quill return with another solid rave-up, *Somebody* really gives Lipton space to operate in his vocal range, it pays off with Quill's fast paced rhythms and solos cutting the path ahead. The one-man rhythm section in Doyle drives the whole pack as they race toward the bittersweet end.

It's My Life is Lipton tipping his cap to Eric Burdon in a big rock theater Mott The Hoople meets The Raspberries kinda way. It's deconstructed, re-designed and seamed back together almost as a new piece of music. Quill and Doyle ring in with harmonies and it just soars, Mark's uncanny ability to produce a song is near perfection and Lipton ascends to it with vigor. The bridge is bombastic and Doyle's stratospheric solo bends the arrangement into a Brian May space and back again. A fitting end to this section of the cd.

For the finish we go all the way back to The Penetrators plus another classic Lipton cover, first The Penetrators.

Gotta Have Her and *#1 Band in Town* are among the best of The Penetrators and remain in their original forms produced, recorded and mixed by Eliot "Spike" Kagan who also plays all of the instruments and sings back-up behind Jack. This is garage/basement punk majesty, sweaty, in your face confrontation with no intention of backing down. Lipton can switch from punk to tongue in cheek in a heartbeat so try to stay with him. It's punk, get over it.

The closer is another nod, this time to Iggy Pop with *Search and Destroy* performed with Syracuse legends Paul Armstrong on guitars, Ducky Carlisle on drums and Tony Kaczynski on bass. This is what Jack sounds like fronting a kick ass rock and roll band, Armstrong and Carlisle absolutely kill it and Tony's thunderous rumble will remove window panes if played loud enough. Perhaps my favorite track on the disc. Carlisle's mix comes in like a runaway train and barely stays on the tracks, brilliant!

This is an album Jack can hang his hat on and be damn proud of himself. He's always been unabashed about what he is and there are damned few people who have that conviction. Treat yourself, get this disc, the multitude of talent will astound and the personality will put it in listening rotation regularly.

Check out the man at www.jackpenetrator.com or on facebook as The Jack Penetrator Band.

[Words by Greg Jackson]

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COMIN' ATCHA LIVE

BY JOE KOCH

Thanks to a last minute recommendation from a friend, I decided to head down to the Montage Music Hall on Oct. 14 to checkout Gary Cherone's (Extreme) new band **Hurtsmile**. After waiting through four opening acts, the boys from Boston took the stage around midnight. They exploded into their first single "Just War Theory" from their 2011 self-titled album *Hurtsmile*. Even though it's not Extreme, there are multiple connections between each member: guitarist Mark Cherone is Gary's brother, bassist Joe Pessia has played with Nuno Bettencourt (Extreme's guitarist) on side projects and drummer Dana Spellman was original Extreme drummer Mike Mangini's student on the skins. It's as close to the original line-up as you're gonna get. At first your eyes were glued to Gary as his stage moves were agile and intense... sometimes looking like a yoga instructor. Within a few songs it was obvious that the talent was evenly spread between the four members. This was not a one-man show. Dana and Joe pounded out the rhythm section with a thunderous vigor. While Mark outshined them all with his guitar chops and stage moves – echoing his influences of Pete Townsend and Jimi Hendrix. They never slowed down, even though the crowd was sparse. The highlight of the night was one of my favorite Extreme songs – "Hole Hearted."

Austin's **Carolyn Wonderland** brought her bluesy-gospel crooning sound to the Club at Water Street on Oct. 15. The trio quietly walked through the crowd and jumped on stage... quickly hoots and whistles began – her fans were ready for some Texas style blues. She ripped right into "Victory of Flying" and "No Exception" from her new album *Peace Meal*. With a quick curtsy and a thank you Carolyn, overwhelmed by the crowd's enthusiastic cheers for more, kept the tunes rolling with "I'm Innocent," an upbeat ditty from *Alcohol and Salvation*. In the middle of the set, drenched in sweat, she introduced the next song as the first love song that she had written – a song about her recent marriage to writer/comedian Whitney Brown, who was in attendance. After a few rounds of tequila shots Carolyn delved deeper into her guitar prowess – often becoming possessed by the music. Her eyes would be closed for the whole song and then open them surprised to see a room full of on-lookers. Maybe it was just the tequila talking? Whatever it was, it felt special. We were witnessing it in its rawest form. If it wasn't for the club's curfew; they would've played until the last person walked out the door. When she finished with her popular cover of Rick Derringer's "Still Alive and Well," she simply thanked the crowd and said on the verge of tears, "this why we do this... for nights like this." Thanks.

The **Tedeschi Trucks Band** rolled into Rochester on Oct. 22 for their sold-out show at the Auditorium. This time the husband and wife duo had surrounded themselves with a ten-piece band. If you were new to the sounds or talent of

Tedeschi on vocals and guitars, and Derek's mind-blowing slide work, you walked away with an amazing experience. This was the feedback after the show... I was surprised to hear that it was the first time for many. I found delight in watching the talent that surrounded the duo. The trumpeter (Maurice Brown) captured my ear the most. He moved and grooved blowing that horn like it was his show. I would've bet that it was Trombone Shorty on stage. They covered classics from Harry Nilsson, Stevie Wonder and Sly and the Family Stone, but my favorite was an original "Midnight in Harlem." My only gripe is... with two extremely talented musicians on the same stage, you lose a little punch. I prefer Susan as a solo artist; her playing is reserved when she's on stage with Derek. Derek's front-man, Mike Mattison is only a back-up singer in this band; he deserves to be heard full-time. It was a night of spectacular songs; I just wished I heard more from certain performers.

If I could pick two days in the history of music to be a fly on the wall, they would be: Aug. 27, 1965 when Elvis invited the Beatles over to his home in California. Where they talked and jammed all night. The second would be Dec. 4, 1956 when four legends of rock n' roll (Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash and Jerry Lee Lewis) ended up together at Sam Phillips' Sun Studio for an all night jam. On Oct. 29 I paid homage to the legends by attending the Rochester Broadway Theatre League's performance of the Million Dollar Quartet at the Rochester Auditorium. It was a reenactment of that special night; celebrating the music of each artist. I feared



Hurtsmile/Gary Cherone - Photo by Joe Koch



Tedeschi Trucks Band - Photo by Joe Koch

the portrayal would be too Broadway-esque and would lose some of its authenticity from the period. On the contrary. Each actor was dead on with their performance. Lee Ferris (Carl Perkins) played his guitar, Martin Kaye (Jerry Lee Lewis) played his piano, Derek Keeling (Johnny Cash) dressed in black of course, strummed his acoustic and Cody Slaughter (Elvis) sang and gyrated as if the king had come back to life. After an hour and a half mélange of hits from the 50's, it ended with Mr. Phillips gathering the four around the piano for a photo to capture the moment. The stage was engrossed with flash bulbs going off everywhere as the famous original photo of the quartet was lowered from the ceiling. Within seconds the people were on their feet screaming for more! A big Broadway finale with sparkled jackets, Jerry jumping in the air from his piano, and Elvis grinding one more out completed the night. Perfect.

If you were looking for a costume party or just wanted to hear some great American rock n' roll, then Water Street Music Hall was the place to be on Halloween night. Stephen Kellogg and the Sixers followed a tradition by taking the stage first as "Prince and the Princess'." This year, they paid tribute to Prince and the Revolution by performing the Purple Rain album in its entirety. At times, it was comical watching them in costume blast

through the 80's classics. As great as they sounded alternating lead vocals; it was hard to take Boots (drummer) seriously as he sang "Darling Nikki." After all he was dressed as Pinocchio. When Sam Getz stepped front and center with his guitar and long purple head band, he stole the show with his riveting version (minus a few high pitched screams here and there) of "I Would Die 4 U." That alone was worth the ticket price. Who will they honor next year? We can only wait and see.

Heavy metal is like a religion and the sermon was held at the Rochester Main Street Armory on Nov. 16 to worship **Judas Priest**. The metal gods were celebrating their farewell epitaph tour, one last hurrah before they ascend the mountain and claim their throne as metal gods. It was everything a metal show should be: lasers bouncing off the walls, flames shooting up from the stage, dueling guitars and ear shattering vocals. Yes, at 60 years of age, Halford can still belt'em out. The band was amazingly tight as they sampled from their 35+ years discography: "Heading out to the Highway," "Victim of Changes" and "Diamonds and Rust" just to name a few. Their legion of head-banging fans kept the fists pumping for over two hours. Kudos to a band that helped define heavy metal.

[Words and Photos by Joe Koch]

+CD REVIEW+

JON MCLAUGHLIN - "FOREVER IF EVER"



Good looks, nice guy, piano... ugh, do we need another pop songwriter? Don't fall into the trap — Jon's a force to be reckoned with. After spending five years on Island Records and producing two albums, the two parted ways. An amicable split... let's call it artistic differences. "I didn't want to go through the motions, all

of the red tape and too many decisions being made in the board room. I just wanted to make a record that I would love a year later," Jon explained.

Forever if Ever is that record. Without the support of the label, the fear of the unknown gave him the confidence and energy necessary to create this album. "I knew what I wanted more than ever before," said Jon. Songwriters spend endless hours writing songs. They become personally and emotionally connected, and these are the songs that Jon filled the record with. His approach was similar to Ben Folds with his album *Songs for Silverman*. "Record the songs as many times as needed until you feel moved by it," said Jon.

"I'll Follow You" is a perfect example. The added cello, which was played by a girl that they went to school with, compliments his beautiful piano playing. At first listen you miss some of these

special nuances that really define this record. By the third time through, the unheard become the obvious. "Maybe it's Over" features a duet with female singer Xenia. She was a finalist on the TV show *The Voice*. "Her voice is so unique. She put something on her Twitter feed about me and next thing I know I was getting a bunch of new followers. That's how we hooked up," said Jon. Unlike his previous album where the piano took a back seat; it shines on this album. "Promising Promises" breaks down at 2:45 with a delicate display of his ivory tickling prowess.

One of the biggest elements in making the record was being able to record with his longtime band-mates for the first time. "It just felt right," said Jon. He also took on the role of producer. Without the backing of a label it was a necessary choice. "I would've loved to hire a reputable producer," said Jon. He was up until 4 am every night on-line reading forums on how to use a preamp etc. Jon was able to apply everything he learned from working with previous producers. "I'm still good friends with all of those guys, so if I got in a jam I gave them a call when needed," said Jon.

My favorite song is "These Crazy Times," the gang vocals in the chorus were done by people in his neighborhood. The song is very personal. It was written after the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, where his cousin Adam was killed in an explosion on the rig. "When it gets real bad, just raise your glass, might as well laugh before we cry."

The more I listen to this album, the more I love it. This album is a smorgasbord of pop delights with just enough punch to captivate any music fan.

[Words by Joe Koch]

THIS MUST BE THE COLUMN

BY PHANART PETE MASON

+CONCERT REVIEWS+

ROCK N ROLL RESORT V 1.5

11/25-27/2011 - HUDSON VALLEY RESORT AND SPA
- KERHONKSEN, NY

Having attended the first Rock n Roll Resort in April of this year, I knew what to expect: a large, 1950s era Catskill hotel, with great rooms, a spa, Shakedown Street vendors in the lobby, music going for nearly the entire weekend in four different rooms and a festival feel to the entire event. A festival in a hotel. I went knowing what to expect and walked out amazed at how this second installment of Rock n Roll Resort went smoother, had a buzz about the entire weekend that I didn't notice the first time around, and found more musicians sitting in with other bands and mingling with fans in a very casual manner. As Ryan Montbleau said during the *Nephrok All-Stars Superjam* featuring 15 musicians, around 2am on Sunday morning, "This is Jamcruise-esque."

Friday's music included *Zach Deputy* playing his brand of funky sitdown soul, although the crowd was far from sitting down. A theme of cowboys and aliens brought the creative crowd out of the woodwork and led to some interesting interactions around the hotel. *Ryan Montbleau Band* moved the crowd as always with his crooners voice and soulful funk of the band. *Deep Banana Blackout* headlined and packed the crowd in for a proud set; I saw them in the late 1990s at Hungry Charlie's in Syracuse and its great to see their sound return to the scene for festivals. Meandering back upstairs for a refresher, I heard someone yell out "Rock n Roll Resort is Jamcruise meets The Shining!" I haven't been on Jamcruise, but if the music is even 10% as amazing as it, then yes, this is definitely true. Sadly, Scatman Crothers was not on the festival lineup.

Late night went straight through till dawn and I spent a solid hour+ seeing *Wyllys and Jha*, featuring Original Wyllys and Jennifer Hartswick from the New York Hustler Ensemble. This was their first public performance as a duo, with Wyllys DJing and Jen on trumpet. It was a very unique and effective combo; together they breed unique dance beats with smooth airy funk that led to funky duets between them. *Kung Fu* rocked out till 330am while *Brothers Past* kept the Empire Lounge dancing till 5am.

Saturday started out slow, for me at least, so I hit the Jacuzzi, steam room and sauna, all key to refreshing me after a long Friday of work, traveling, dancing and partying. The spa at Rock n Roll Resort is the secret benefit to the festival, and likely to spoil you for the weekend, but it is oh so worth it. Walking up to get food I heard an unexpected rendition of Pink

Floyd's 'Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun' from the lobby stage, a pretty cool bonus to the nature of the festival.

Sister Sparrow and *the Dirty Birds* performed two strong sets, getting the early crowd moving. I caught up with *Jen Hartswick* to talk about her new album *Ocean Floor*, refueled before the nights music and caught a little more *Zach Deputy* while Montbleau sat in with *Deep Banana Blackout* on Stevie Wonder's 'Sir Duke'. The headliners for the weekend, Ivan Neville's *Dumpstaphunk* brought New Orleans to the Catskills, playing some of Papa Neville's hits from *The Meters*, inviting the ladies in the audience up on stage with him for a memorable "You can make it if you try" while Jen Hartswick and the *Deep Banana Blackout Horns* for 'Be Mine'.

When the music seemed it couldn't get any better, the *Nephrok Allstar Jam* led by *Nephtaliem* brought out a little bit of everything from the weekend to create the greatest dance party the Catskills has seen since April, if not the 1970s. Ivan and Tony Hall from *Dumpstaphunk*, *Dirty Bird Horns*, members of *Spiritual Rez*, *Deep Banana Blackout*, and many other musicians took the stage in rotating fashion, never stopping the music. After stepping off the stage after a lengthy "Thank You Falletinme Be Mice Elf Again", Ivan Neville remarked 'This is the sickest collection of musicians I've seen in a LONG while'.

The energy from *Nephrok Allstars* carried over to the late-late night with a collection of bands that were perfect to bring the sun up. *Seed* was amazing again and really needs to start hitting Upstate New York; *Brothers Past* played a 4am set after *Wyllys* and *Red Shift* finished solo and dueling DJ sets, and *Jeff Bujak* included his electronica with the always amazing effect of *Silent Disco* to create *Silent Bujak* and carried the festival past dawn.

Shannon Plaquet and Wicked Cool Productions are onto a gem in the Hudson Valley with a now twice a year festival. Another installment of Rock n Roll Resort comes in early spring.

Stay tuned to www.rocknrollresort.com for updates and lineup announcements in a few weeks.

[Words by Pete Mason]

UMPHREY'S MCGEE

11/02/2011 - NORTHERN LIGHTS - CLIFTON PARK, NY

On a return to the Northeast from playing Atlanta for Haunt-lana and Moogfest in Asheville, NC over Halloween weekend, *Umphey's* returned to the Capital District of New York for a face-melting good time of intense progressive rock with musical surprises and treats throughout the show. In support of their new album *Death By Stereo*, a fantastically produced album featuring songs such as *Miami Virtue* and *Wellwishers* as well as studio takes on *The Floor* and *Hajimashite*, *Umphey's* has been touring strong throughout the fall treating fans both new and old to one of the hardest working rock bands touring today.

Musical highlights aside, the venue itself was a surprise bright spot this chilly November evening. Lighting Director Jeff Waful put his lights to great use, highlighting the band from behind and casting shadows on the low ceiling of Northern Lights. I hadn't set foot in this venue in years simply because Revolution Hall and Red Square are so close, but with one gone and the other too small for Umphrey's, I made the trek north to see how things were at the music venue situated in a strip mall between Dollar General and Northway Church. The venue looked better than I recalled, very fresh and clean with a wider selection of drinks than I recalled. Gone were the agro bouncers wandering the crowd with a flashlight and attitude; this crowd didn't necessitate such security, something fans remember in the future. The parking lot was full of fans pre-gaming, the security kept folks in check in a more orderly way than in the past and altogether were inviting to the crowd. This is a welcome change from past trips 20 minutes north to see live music.

Set 1: Example 1, Got Your Milk (Right Here) -> Jimmy Stewart -> #5 -> Jimmy Stewart -> #5, Fool in the Rain*, Search 4, Last Man Swerving->Believe the Lie

Set 2: Der Blumen Kat*, I Am the Walrus -> The Bottom Half**, Slacker, Wizard Burial Ground

Encore: Bright Lights

#with Forks tease - * with Much Obligated teases - ** with Simple Gifts jam

Jake Cinniger ripped solos with strata of rock that helped to create thick, creamy jams out of #5. The last time I was able to catch *Fool in the Rain* was at moe.down 7 while standing off on the corner of the stage, in the rain, pining over a new flame. History repeated itself, but this time without half of moe. on stage and featuring a sick jam that led to a perfect rendition of this Zeppelin song. In *Last Man Swerving*, a deep beat from bassist Ryan Stasik and drummer Kris Myers created a ripple effect in the crowd and had the packed house moving in sync to house beats with a prog rock guitar treatment from Brendan Bayliss.

Der Blumen Kat clocked in at more than 30 minutes, never losing the crowd as it explored a song full of opportunities for improv. *I Am the Walrus* provided relief after *DBK* garnering a single along from the audience for the chorus. *Walrus* morphed into a fluffy jam before moving into *The Bottom Half*. A very slight *La Grange* tease was heard before *Slacker* accelerated the crowd and featured continued layering of chords, one on top of another, generating a dance frenzy on the floor before the song exploded with great intensity. A song for the ladies, *Wizard Burial Ground* took the crowd into deep metal territory, a familiar territory for Northern Lights. An encore of *Bright Lights* squeeze the last remaining energy from the crowd before greeting a few fans near the stage, handing out setlists to the railriders and heading off to Toronto on their swing back to the Midwest to end the tour.

With Phish likely not playing until June, Umphrey's is likely to fill a large gap in the jam scene. The closest announced shows are at the Best Buy Times Square Theater on January 20-21, 2012, where they will be celebrating their 14th anniversary

in style. And just announced at press time – Full Moon Resort located in the Catskills near Big Indian, NY will play host to the first ever Umphrey's McGee seminar, workshop and retreat from August 6th to August 10th, 2012. More info coming at www.fullmoonresort.com and www.umphreysmcgee.com

[Words by Pete Mason]

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- dec. 9 the garcia project [pre dark star] : jillians - albany
- dec. 9 dark star orchestra : palace theatre - albany
- dec. 9 stone revival band [post dark star] : jillians - albany
- dec. 10 guthrie/bell productions xmas party : red square - albany
w/ the mclovins [7:00] & formula 5 [11:00]
- dec. 17 the ominous seapods [farewell dana show]
w/ maaaze : valentines - albany
- dec. 29 brothers past w jeff bujak : jillians - albany
- dec. 31 timbre coup and consider the source : red square - albany
- jan. 21 formula 5 w/ turbine : red square - albany
- jan. 27 normal instruments : jillians - albany
- jan. 28 start making sense w/ the great white caps : jillians - albany

For updated show info visit www.facebook.com/guthriebell



- 12/2 La Casbah : Potsdam
 - 12/3 The Monopole : Plattsburgh
 - 12/9 The Black Oak Tavern : Oneonta
 - 12/10 The Waterhole : Saranac Lake
 - 12/22 Theodores BBQ : Springfield, MA
 - 12/31 Red Square : Albany (w/ consider the source)
 - 2/2 Jillian's - Albany (w/ sophistaphunk)
 - 2/9 Jillian's - Albany (w/ wobble sauce)
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