

Volume 2 Issue 1 January 16-February 28, 2009

UpstateLIVE

New York State Music Guide

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IN THIS ISSUE

- * Barrett All Tattoo Ink & Drink
- * Jason Netherton of Misery Index
- * Caustic 12 Step Suicide
- * Rubblebucket Orchestra
- * Bach Choy
- * David Byrne
- * Grace Potter & The Nocturnals
- * Odetta Holmes
- * John Cole Blues Band
- * Emartransformo



UpstateLIVE Music Guide Volume 2 - Issue 1

Welcome to UpstateLIVE Music Guide. For those of you who are picking it up for the first time, UpstateLIVE was created in 2008 as a LIVE MUSIC networking tool for all of Upstate NY. It is printed 8 times per year, and is distributed statewide throughout the Upstate NY region (from Jamestown to Plattsburgh to Peekskill).

UpstateLIVE features interviews, band profiles, CD reviews and show reviews for local, regional and national bands. UpstateLIVE also highlights the state's finest venues, festivals, concerts series and music sponsors (music stores, record labels, sound engineers, etc).

UpstateLIVE is also available on the internet. Downloadable and printable copies are available at our website : www.UpstateLIVE.net. The UpstateLIVE myspace page currently has 5,500 members on its friends list, and is linked to several network pages that highlight bands, venues and all genres of live music in Upstate NY. (see the ad on the following page).

UpstateLIVE is made possible by volunteers from around the state: some submit articles, some hand out issues as street team members, and bands, venues, and sponsors pay for the service by purchasing ad space. Please make sure you support the Upstate NY live music scene by supporting the advertisers and volunteers that make this network possible.

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UPSTATE METAL

To all the headbanging mosh-pit addicts out there, I'd like to take this time to share a special, touching moment with you. OK, not THAT special, and stop touching me!!

Anyways, we are always looking to improve ourselves over here, so I would like to know what YOU, the reader, want to read about. What bands do you want us to interview? What is going on in YOUR town that deserves special attention? How can we, together, organize the biggest fricken' hostile metal takeover that Upstate NY has ever seen??

Also, if you go to a lot of shows and think you're an all around brutal kind of dude (or a lovely lady of metal) send me pics of you at your favorite metal concerts! Whether you get a chance to meet the band, or it's just you and your friends chillen, I want to see Upstate NY fans raging at the most brutal shows north of New York City, from Jamestown to Plattsburgh to Peekskill.

And if you don't like reading things with actual pages, you can always check out the myspace blog for interviews, news, CD reviews, etc. Leave me a comment, tell me what you think. Soon, UpstateMetal will also have a fancy new webpage at www.upstatemetal.net. We hired a geek squad who are working on it right now. Of course, we'll always be on www.myspace.com/upstatemetal as well. Keep Your Fricken Horns Up!! And have a raging good 2009! ~Marisa

Barrett All Tattoo's 2nd Annual Ink & Drinks - January 3, 2009 by Marisa Connelly

It smelled weirdly of highlighter markers when I arrived at The Voodoo Lounge in Binghamton for a night of death metal and tattoos. Before I could even shake off the cold, I was accosted by Brian Barrett himself, owner and lead artist of Barrett All Tattoo. He chided me for not getting any new ink from him in what's been way too long. Then I was reprimanded by Jason Rossi, another great artist at Brian's shop, who is working on the back of my calf. This all happened before I could even order a drink at the bar. I need to get more ink done, seriously.

Anyways, as I was still weary from the recent holiday festivities, I was impatient for the first band to take the stage. I didn't have to wait too long before Pennsylvania's A Call For Backup began their set. The lead vocalist's range is rather impressive; easily changing from high screams to uber-low pig grunts. The crowd was pleased, and ACFB's mix of sludgy-hardcore breakdowns and faster, thrashier riffs was a good start to the night.

The next band to the stage was Tentacles, from Albany, NY. Now, I was really anticipating seeing these guys because I heard that they were positively sick. Some random bass-player from this obscure little band called Suffocation told me. His name, I believe, was Derek Boyer, but I'm not sure. No one's heard of Suffocation, right? Either way, Derek has amazing taste in music because Tentacles killed! They exemplified exactly what brutal death metal is supposed to be. The mosh pit erupted like sharks in a feeding frenzy, and didn't disperse until every last bit of flesh was devoured. Tentacles' drummer was like the butcher at the chopping block, throwing chunks of



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meaty blast beats into the melee. At one point, I could have sworn he was switching off gravity blasts from hand to hand. The euphonious guitar riffing rolled over the audience with the intensity of a tidal wave. Vocally, the low pitched growling of their singer reminded me of some deep sea belch, blasted forth from the darkest pits of the ocean depths.

The best song of the entire night, by far, was actually the cover song that Tentacles did. Believe it or not, it was an orchestral piece. Well, it was originally. "In the Hall of the Mountain King" was composed by Edvard Grieg and premiered in 1876. I can say with certainty that it has probably never been performed with so few instrumentalists. Although, I'm sure that even the composer would have been jealous had he been alive to hear the psychotic guitar riff added during the prestissimo finale of the piece.

The Kingston, NY band Okosu graced the stage next, beginning with their new song "Covered With Flies" off the soon to be released self-titled album. The first thing I noticed was the bass-player's 6-string bass. Now, anyone can go out and buy a crazy bass guitar, but I assure you, this guy can really shred! All the songs were firmly rooted in old school death metal, but seamlessly modernized and peppered with a myriad of influences. The juxtaposition of prog-parts, some black metal riffs, and straight up brutal grindcore really seemed effortless on their part. With such organized chaos erupting from the stage, you hardly notice that the song was over seven minutes long. The ending was my favorite; a hilariously cheesy sound clip proclaiming, "Hail Satan! Sorry, got caught up in the moment." The crowd response and mosh pit were just about equal to that of Tentacles, so much that I didn't even dare try to sneak up front to snap a few pictures. Okosu's last song was, in my mind, their best. "Paralyzed With Fear" had much more of a groove to it, and the already amped crowd went ballistic over it. You can catch them at their CD release party on January, 31 at The Basement in Kingston.

So far, the evening had turned out better than I expected, and I couldn't wait for Circle of Dead Children to take their turn on stage. By now, the scent of highlighters had been replaced with the unmistakable odor of armpits, mostly emanating from the mosh pit area. The things I endure going to metal concerts! Strangely though, I've never seen so many females at a death metal show before. They made up probably 20% of the crowd. You'd think having more chicks in the audience would make the venue smell better, but alas, the scent of ball sweat still hung densely in the air. At first, I was happy to not be the only girl there. Then I remembered something: girls at metal shows suck. All night I had to suffer through the constant high pitched screaming from a few of the ladies in attendance. This one chick in particular would not stop screaming as loudly as she could. It was like standing next to a banshee or a siren! I definitely wasn't the only one there imagining all the different ways of ripping her throat out of her neck. Yeah, most of the crowd was annoyed with her by this point. And this is why you should never bring your girlfriend or wife to a death metal show. She will somehow annoy everyone else in attendance or at least ruin a perfectly good evening for you. If your girl wants to go to a concert, take her to see The Jonas Brothers. Then she can scream her stupid head off with 5,000 other stupid chicks. Enough said.

Anyways, Circle of Dead Children brought a reckoning to The Voodoo Lounge. Everything about them is dark, doomy, and heavy as hell. They epitomize extreme death grind with a biting screw you attitude. The vocals of Joe Horvath interchange between scathing black metal hissing and lower than low bree-bree grunting. The songs are shorter, reminiscent of the early death metal days. Hell, "A Family Tree to Hang On" is barely a minute long! CODC is way less prog, but it reminded me a little bit of Brutal Truth. All the songs were masterfully riff-driven with a severe sense of foreboding radiating from the stage all night. It was exciting to see Binghamton native Matt Francis on drums, as I've never seen him play with Circle. It was impossible to tell from an audience stand point that he's actually their fourth drummer, as he was hammering away on the skins viciously from beginning to end. I caught up with him after the show and asked him a couple questions about his role in Circle, and what it meant to move from Binghamton, NY to Pittsburgh, PA. He jokingly quipped that he had to "dumb down his drumming" to play in Circle, to which his band mates immediately broke out in big smiles and laughter. Seriously though, Matt talked about the arduous task of learning five albums worth of material and getting a new day job in an office. He worked in a factory up here. He also divulged that he still gets amazed at the numbers of fans that turn out to shows. He acknowledged that he is "doing the same shit I've always done, but it's like wow, there's people that give a fuck." I could imagine that joining a more prominent band takes some getting used to. I also spoke with Jason Andrews, guitarist of Circle of Dead Children. He is not a fan of the press or giving interviews at all! So I, of course, badgered him until he talked to me, poor guy! Needless to say, once he finally got a little more comfortable having me hanging around, he turned out to be one funny dude. I solemnly swear that Jason's impression of Barney Greenway of Napalm Death is impeccable! The hair-do, the frantic dancing, the moves, everything! My eyes started watering I was laughing so hard. Likewise, hearing Drew Haritan, the bassist, making fun of Matt had me in stitches too. There was apparently a little, um, set list confusion on Matt's part that night. Drew thus concluded that because Matt is so freaking tall, he simply can't read the set list; it's too far away. According to all the guys in Circle, Matt's height is the source of every problem or mistake that he has. Either way, it was definitely good times hanging out with a hometown friend and his insanely brutal yet really, really funny band. Additionally, I would just like to mention that for all the avoidance and shyness I initially got from Jason, once he opens up, it's more like he's unleashed. That man still cracks me up!

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A Bright Shining Star on a Cold Winter's Night : Interview with Jason Netherton of Misery Index

by Marisa Connelly

I have never before had to pull out a dictionary to understand the meaning of song lyrics. Nor have I had to look up wars in a history book, or brush up on my understanding of materialist philosophy just to interview a death metal band. In preparing to talk with Jason Netherton of the Baltimore-spawned Misery Index, I had to do just that. His words read more like poetry than song lyrics. I was swept back to my days in college; of cramming all night before a test, researching ideas and paradigms set forth by the great thinkers in history, eating microwaved food at 3 in the morning while typing furiously at a computer. It was, well, refreshing. Through this meeting with Jason, I felt as if old cobwebs had been swept from my brain. I was inspired.

So inspired even, that I went ahead and copied these two definitions straight from Dictionary.com to save you the confusion. See how nice I am?

Ontology - noun

1. the branch of metaphysics the studies the nature of existence or being as such
2. (loosely) metaphysics

Materialism - noun

1. Philosophy The theory that physical matter is the only reality and that everything, including thought, feeling, mind, and will, can be explained in terms of matter and physical phenomena.
2. The theory or attitude that physical well-being and worldly possessions constitute the greatest good and highest value in life.
3. A great or excessive regard for worldly concerns.

In philosophy, the position that nothing exists except matter — things that can be measured or known through the senses. Materialists deny the existence of spirit, and they look for physical explanations for all phenomena. Thus, for example, they trace mental states to the brain or nervous system, rather than to the spirit or the soul. Marxism, because it sees human culture as the product of economic forces, is a materialist system of beliefs.

Got it? Good. So, the day of the show, I had to drive for four hours to get to Buffalo, NY just so my car could get stuck in the snow there. Getting it towed the following day was considerably less inspiring, but I still managed to make it to Club Diablo where Misery Index was headlining an all day metal fest. Club Diablo is cozy, rustic, and a little tarnished- just the way I like it.

After drinking a beer with Jason at the bar, we trudged out to the van to find a little bit of quiet and warmth. Scoping out the inside of the van, and not even trying to hide my nosiness, my eye was immediately drawn to the stuffed animals on the dashboard. I wondered how many miles these relics of youth had traveled. What cities and countries they had seen with their small, black, unblinking eyes? What stories could they tell you about life on the road? Misery Index tours almost constantly, and these cute, furry faces have seen it all.

Without even realizing it at the time, for some reason the stuffed animals just seemed to make sense to me. They were travel companions, like the roaming gnome on all those commercials. I was genuinely more surprised at the large sticker on the dash that read, "Jesus is the Answer." As you'll see in this interview, Misery Index is not exactly an overtly religious band. They're actually almost the exact opposite; questioning faith, politics, greed, economics, everything. Misery Index is a multi-faceted ear-raping force to be reckoned with. From Nietzsche to death metal to throwing poo, my time spent with Jason covers it all.

Marisa: Tell me why people should care about your new album 'Traitors'.

Jason: Well, it's not for me to tell them they should care about it, but I would think that anybody should listen to something before they make a judgment about it. So I think that people should give it a listen, and if they like it, cool. If they don't like it, fine. From our point of view, it's definitely the best thing we've ever done and we're really happy with it. And we haven't been as excited about an album as we have for this one. So I would say just give it a shot even if you've heard us before and didn't like us. We think this is sort of our Magnum Opus to date. We almost feel as if it's our first album, so, go ahead and give it listen.

Marisa: What is it about?

Jason: Well the music side of it is a culmination of a lot of different influences. Mark [Kloeppe], our guitarist for the last three years, wrote like 60% of it. Adam [Jarvis], our drummer, gets full writing credits as well, because we feel that the drums are an instrument of death metal and drummers should also have song writing credit. So, those guys working the songs out had a lot to do with that. Well, I have three songs and Sparky [Voyles] has two songs. And, as far as the song writing side of the music, it's sort of a mix of all of our different influences which come from all over the board. But at our very roots we're sort of a traditional death metal band. We don't get too crazy or acrobatic with a lot of stuff. We find that we still have our roots in the early 90's death metal and late 80's thrash stuff. And we like to think we sort of have a modern approach about it. And lyrically, it's very much about what has been going on in the United States and the world. A lot of social criticisms and stuff like that. And its across the board really. Every song has its own little critical bite on a different aspect of social reality.

Marisa: What type of social realities and criticisms?

Jason: Well, the first [song] "Theocracy" deals with the growing influence of the Christian right on American politics in the last eight years under the Bush administration. And not just that, but the influence of religion in general in politics and how they should always be separated. And how the secular nation, the secular state of our nation, should always remain sacred as the so-called founding fathers intended. And it goes on and on. "Partisans of Grief" is about so-called armchair liberal types who profess to save the world, but yet at the same time they're out driving their Mercedes and dining in five star restaurants. "Traitors," the title track, deals a lot with the war on terror and how, at least in the last four years under the Bush administration which is now thankfully coming to an end, we had to muffle our criticism in a sense that you couldn't speak out against the war in Iraq or the war on terror without being looked at as being unpatriotic or something. And it goes on and on in those sort of themes.

Marisa: OK, what was it like working with Kurt Ballou?

Jason: Kurt Ballou is an engineering master, we really wanted to go to him because a lot of death metal productions today we just feel are a little super over-produced and mechanical sounding. We just like really organic, natural tones for drums and guitars and we just didn't want to have that super over-produced clicky drums and kick drums. Ballou is really good with getting natural tones. So we went to him to do the recording and the engineering. He's got a really good ear and he really pushed us to get the best performances out of us. And when it was all said and done and it came time to mix, we kind of ran out of time up there in Boston. So, we took what we had brought it back to Baltimore. There we took it to a local studio and mixed and mastered it ourselves with the local engineers at WrightWay Studios in Baltimore. That eventually produced what we have with Traitors. But, yeah, Kurt's amazing, to put it succinctly.

Marisa: What was it like working with Sparky, Adam and Mark on this album as opposed to the last one?

Jason: The last one [Discordia] was very rushed. It's almost something that we're collectively not happy with. Mark and Adam had just joined the band right before we went and recorded it. And we kind of rushed it, we didn't spend enough time with the mixing. It was put out, and we're just not happy with it in general. But definitely, having done hundreds of shows together in the meantime, we're a lot more in tuned with each other and the songwriting, performance, everything. Those three guys are my brothers and we're having the time of our lives together. For sure.

Marisa: So why exactly weren't you happy with the previous album?

Jason: Because it was rushed, and not to mention we just sort of came together as a band at that point. The band got restructured in 1995, and Adam and Mark came in, in that time. We didn't really know what to expect from each other. They came in and played the old songs fine, but as far as writing and recording together, it was an adventure. And it took a little while to learn how we all related to each other.

Marisa: So was there something specifically with the production, or was it just the time limit?

Jason: Well, once we got in the studio, we had the songs we wanted to do, but the guy we went to, Eyal from Daath, he hadn't done a full production like that before, and I guess we were kind of cutting corners because we were trying to save money at that time which is always a bad idea when you're recording a record. And we rushed it and we had big tours lined up right when the record was supposed to come out and to delay that, to delay the album would have meant sacrificing some sort of like promotional push for it all. So basically it was just rushed and we fell victim to the whole pressure of the situation, which we didn't do this time around. We learned from that and we made the record we really wanted to make with this new one.

Marisa: What makes somebody mature as a musician?

Jason: I think its not just learning the roots of the kind of music you play or being proficient on your instrument, it's also respecting all the different ways to go about making the kind of sounds you want to do. Maturity I think is an appreciation of all kinds of metal, no matter if its something you don't like. It's not refuting this type of metal or that for whatever reason. I guess it's just an appreciation, for sure. An appreciation above and beyond the provision of your instrument. There are other ways of going about making music.

Marisa: Why did you include an insert of quotes in Traitors?

Jason: Well, I listen to a lot of punk, and punk is a big influence on Misery Index, even though we're a metal band.

Marisa: What kind of punk?

Jason: Primarily the hardcore crusty variety. It has this sort of raw passion and energy.

Marisa: Anarcho-punk?

Jason: Exactly. Like Tragedy, From Ashes Rise, His Hero Is Gone, naming a lot of stuff like that, but a lot of those band which really stick true to their ideals and keep it totally DIY underground. A lot of the music they play is just as raw and passionate as death metal, it's just a different approach to it. But us being one of the few so-called political bands in death metal, I just really wanted to compliment the lyrics in some way, and sum up the idea of the lyrics. One of my favorite writers is Karl Marx, and I thought it would just be an interesting way to compliment the whole presentation of the lyric booklet. Ya know, put some writers in there and stuff. And maybe people who are interested in the lyrics will take it a step further and check out who they are and what they've written and their ideas and stuff.

Marisa: You describe yourself as an ontological terrorist. What does that mean to you?

Jason: [Laughs] That's just sort of a play on words, it's almost kind of silly. It comes from a friend of mine in Finland who used to go by that same term, like a silly moniker. And it just means, just like dealing with theories of the nature of being, and reality and not just politely discussing them but radically [discussing them].

Marisa: Hence the terrorist part?

Jason: Yeah, it's just funny, it's just a silly name. [Laughs]

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Marisa: Yeah, those are two words that usually wouldn't be put together.

Jason: Yeah, I think it actually goes back to the theories of this guy named Hakim Bey, about a radical approach to everything in life and reality. Without getting too deep into it.

[Adam Jarvis drums on the door of the van, then pops in for a visit, and to change into his stage clothes]

Adam Jarvis: What's going on in here, huh?

Jason: Interview time.

Adam: Oh, so is this a separate party?

Jason: [Laughs] Yeah. It's a private party, bro. [Then introduces us]

Adam: How ya doing?

Marisa: I'm well, how are you?

Adam: Good, good. My toes are numb, setting up my drums.

Marisa: I just had to push my car out of a snowbank.

Adam: Oh, yeah?

Marisa: And the control arm broke on one of the rear wheels so I had to get a ride here from some guy named Sean.

Adam: Cool. How was Sean?

Marisa: I don't know, he gave me a ride.

Adam: OK, that's cool.

Marisa: Not like that. Wow. That sounded really bad! Great, my recorder is on, that's awesome. That's so going in the interview!

[Adam and Jason are both laughing at me]

Jason: Yeah, make sure you quote that word for word!

Adam: He gave me a riiide!

Marisa: [Still laughing] Oh, he gave me a ride, baby! OK, so, specifically, how has graduating from American University with your Master's Degree in international communications and politics affected your writing? Affected you?

Jason: Um, well...

Adam: Nah, nope, I can't answer anything.

Jason: [Laughs] Um, I love every minute of it. It's definitely a part of who I am, and made me who I am and everything I've learned there I carry with me everyday. And its something that I hope to keep going with and I think it helps out a lot with the band too.

Marisa: How?

Jason: It helps carve out the lyrical and ideological side of the band a little more efficiently. It's also kind of a separate thing, and it's more of like a personal path as I do an academic side to things, like some of my writing. But, as far as the band, yeah it helps give a more balanced approach to the lyrics and hopefully make them more interesting for people to read. But other than that, it's gotten me in debt, that's for sure! I've got tens of thousands of dollars in debt which I pay off.

Marisa: Yeah, my brother actually went there as well. Anyways, how does your interest in Materialist Philosophy impart itself in your lyrical writing? Particularly in lyrics that defy the religious zealots? (Like "Occupation" or "Theocracy")

Jason: Ooh, you have done your research!

Marisa: I told you to put your thinking cap on for this one.

Adam: Now he's like, 'Aww, man!'

Jason: [Laughing] For sure! That goes back to even my undergrad work. I had an introduction to Marx and other materialist philosophers.

Marisa: Dialectical materialism is Marxist? Right?

Jason: Exactly, yeah. Right. You can see it in everything I've ever written. You can probably start seeing the change in 1998. It probably made its debut in 2000, in Destroy the Opposition with Dying Fetus. That's when I really started channeling a lot of the ideas I got from my studies into the lyrics and stuff.

Marisa: Your studies in materialist philosophy?

Jason: Yeah. The first song, on Dying Fetus' Destroy the Opposition, "Praise the Lord" is totally grounded in materialist reputation of all the so-called spiritual or other mythical ideas that religion tries to cloud our minds with. And that's carried on through the past seven years of Misery Index, so, has it been seven years now? Or six years? Either way.

Marisa: 2001 to 2008, so it's seven years, right?

Jason: Yeah, I guess. We didn't really start being a real band until about 2003, I think. We surfaced this whole, like, stay at home demos. I was finishing up my Master's at that time, I didn't graduate until 2003.

Marisa: Does it correlate with the anarcho-punk or crust influences of the music? How?

Jason: Very much so, I think. A lot of those themes you see in the imagery and ideology of the crust stuff is very much rooted in anarchism itself. While not necessarily, um... A lot of socialist thought is always grounded in very radical approach to every day life and I think the union of those ideas, and crust and punk, and what we're doing in this metal scene is a very natural bridge.

Marisa: OK, so, based on all that, how does a song have a "soul" or "spirit" then? I read an interview where you said a song had a spirit, so I'm just curious, with all this materialist philosophy, how does a song have a spirit?

Jason: Well, I think that materialist philosophy champions humanism. It champions the human spirit, the spirit that's in us as human beings. And not something that's manifested in, or that we idolize or impart on something else, like things, or fetishes, or through idolatry. I think that when someone writes a song, it's sort of an embodiment or it directly correlates to what they have in their own spirit. When Beethoven wrote his 9th Symphony, you can't say that there's something there that's not, it just speaks to every human, everyone's spirit. And I think that anytime we use our imaginations to create things, whether its art or writing a song or painting a beautiful painting, it always has some kind of spirit for someone. But sometimes those works speak to many people. Of course a child could paint something, or someone who's not very talented in the eyes of many could create something that speaks to them. It's like this is what I created, this is like the embodiment of what I have inside of me. This is my imagination realized on something tangible. But, I think that sometimes, when someone creates something that transcends or it sort of taps into this channel of the broader human spirit. Like the over-soul, like the sort of thing the transcendentalists talked about.

Marisa: Even though it's [a spirit or a soul] contradictory to materialist philosophy?

Jason: Nah, I think that materialism has its root in humanism. It's something that's based within ourselves, and when we create, that's the material part of it. But, yeah, I'm glad you're asking these questions because I never get to talk about it. It's really cool because I get to talk about these ideas which I haven't thought about in so long. But, yeah, I think that every song has a spirit, and it's an extension of the human spirit which is in everyone. It doesn't always speak to everyone, but sometimes you hear a song and it's just like, I don't feel anything from this shit. Or you hear a song and it's just fucking amazing. Ya know, like your absolute song. Like Nirvana "Smells Like Teen Spirit" which, like, everybody likes. You can hear it in something like that, like that's fucking Kurt Cobain spilling his guts out and everybody knows it. But, it's just really complexing to talk about.

Marisa: That's why I asked.

Jason: Well, in a very vulgar way, I guess that's what I was trying to say about the spirit of a song.

Marisa: OK, alternatively, is Nietzsche's philosophy of "will to power" expressed in any of your songs and how?

Jason: I have not read a lot of Nietzsche, and I'm not that well grounded in a lot of his ideas. So, I can't really say. Yeah, unfortunately, there's a multitude of philosophers which I've read and I try to get into, but I haven't really gotten into Nietzsche's philosophy of "will to power." I'd have to look into it more myself.

Marisa: OK, we'll leave it at that.

We ventured back into Club Diablo where despite the dinky stage and very cozy atmosphere, Misery Index put on an amazing show. I stayed near the bar to avoid the small mosh pit that had formed in front of the stage, and consequently drank about three Captain & Cokes during their set. Although the crowd was somewhat small in numbers, they made up for it in energy and intensity. My fist wasn't the only one pounding the air during the battle-cry like chorus of the title track "Traitors." A couple other fans, noticing my journalist paraphernalia, chatted with me briefly between songs. They were all as enthusiastic about seeing Misery Index as I was. I truly believe that if the venue were larger, I wouldn't have enjoyed myself nearly as much. The intimacy and passion would have been lost in that great abyss between stage and audience.

Jason met me back at the bar after the show, where I, of course, thought it would be a fantastic idea to drink a shot of Jameson before heading back out to the van. My car was still stuck in the snow, therefore I obviously was driving nowhere that night. So, despite my now somewhat muddled mind, I did indeed attempt to finish the interview. Jason had a little more to drink after the show as well. It was rather interesting, to say the least.

Marisa: Moving forward, after the show, which was amazing by the way!

Jason: Thank you!

Marisa: I digged it!

Jason: Thanks! Thanks for digging it and watching, despite that the circumstances were a little unfavorable, we still had a good time.

Marisa: I had a good time!

Jason: I'm glad you came.

Marisa: I'm glad I came, too. It took a lot to get me here, but I made it.

Jason: Yeah, I appreciate the efforts, it definitely was a bright shining star on the night for me.

Marisa: [Laughs] I told you I ran the party! Alright, next question, ready?

Jason: OK

Marisa: You're writing the lyrics for the upcoming Dying Fetus album. How do you feel about that?

Jason: I just had a brief discussion with John a few times and we agreed to go forward. But I haven't talked to him about it in a while, so I assume it's still on. If he's into it, I'm definitely into it, because I like to write. I'm always about writing lyrics and writing, so I think it would be fun. And I like to write about stuff that isn't always about what my interests are, too. To take other people's perspectives and try to put words to it. I did that before with Dying Fetus, back in the 90's, so it's pretty easy for me to take an idea or song concept and give it some life. It doesn't have to be like, my whole world view at all, which I use Misery Index for. So, for Fetus, I'll talk to John and see whatever. Hopefully it works out, it'll be fun. Can we do like, the slam-dunk really quick ending to this? Because I can't really be sitting in here while they're loading up all the gear.

Marisa: OK, tell me about flinging poo at John Gallagher's neighbors house.

Jason: Yeah, Mr. Rod Tang. Yeah, he'd always call the cops on us when we practiced in his [John's] garage, so we had it one night where we got really drunk and we wandered around the neighborhood and came up with conceptual ideas for revenge, and that was one of them.

Marisa: Nice!

Jason: It's always a good time. So, you've gotten really in depth with getting Mr. Gallagher's past.

Marisa: No, yours. Well, I interviewed him a couple weeks ago, so I kind of learned a little bit about you during that whole thing.

Jason: Gotcha. [As Adam is changing out of his stage clothes, whistling innocently, Jason shines a blue LED light in my face]

Marisa: What's the blue light?

Jason: [Laughs] The blue light special.

Marisa: But I am not a K-mart item.

Sparky Voyles: Everyone's a K-mart item.

Marisa: [Laughing] But I am not subsequent to the blue light special!

Jason: Alright, then what's the next question?

Marisa: You told me to wrap it up! I don't have any more! OK, the RIAA, instead of suing people they're going after ISP's. So basically, you're going to get your Internet shut off, possibly, if you keep pirating illegal music. And I know that you have a different opinion than some of the other dudes in your band. So, I was going to ask you about that, but you said to wrap it up.

Sparky: We're on the same page, steal what you can, because the record labels have been stealing from bands for years.



Marisa: Pretty much. Well, I had a couple questions about McCain and Obama, because you're a really political band.

Jason: Really?

Marisa: Yeah, after the philosophy questions, which I owned you on!

Jason: Oh, yeah, that was cool.

Marisa: But that wasn't my point! Like, I don't try to do that! I'm not Barbara Walters and I don't try to ask hard questions, because that's lame. I try to ask good questions which illicit hard answers.

Jason: Yeah, it was good, I was really impressed with that. Honestly.

Marisa: Well, I looked at the lyrics and read them, then looked at the Myspace page and website. And then I just looked up the words I didn't know, and came up with questions.

Jason: That's awesome.

Marisa: That's all I did.

Jason: You just asked me that one question on a particular philosopher, and it's stuff I just haven't read. [The rest of the guys return to the van]

Sparky: Seriously?

Marisa: Hi!

Sparky: Fuck this fucking weather! Snowing when you're a kid is awesome. Snowing now, fucking sucks. We got to drive 500 miles through a fucking snowstorm!

Jason: Every day we do this, that's why we're all bummed out.

Marisa: Well, that's what happens when you tour in Canada in the winter!

Jason: It was The Black Dahlia [Murder's] idea. Alright, I've got to give these guys a hand, but lets definitely follow up with the messages or emails. Can we do that? Please? Write up the questions and send it to me? I mean your follow-ups?

Marisa: Yeah, I'm going to call for a ride.

Jason: OK. Yeah, we got to get out of here, I mean, look at this shit! We want to get as far east as we can tonight.

Marisa: Yeah, I hear you. Well, thank you so much for doing this interview. Seriously!

Jason: Thank you for asking good questions. It was definitely the best part of the evening.

**Info: www.miseryindex.com
www.myspace.com/miseryindex
www.wrightwaystudios.com**



CAUSTIC (12 Step Suicide) by KRiS

Definition

- 1 : capable of destroying or eating away by chemical action: corrosive
- 2 : marked by incisive sarcasm
- 3 : relating to or being the surface or curve of a caustic

.....Or simply vocalist, Matt Caustic's last name, but the definition lends to a more interesting story, much the same as their endurance over the past eight years, their drive to succeed, and the songs themselves.

If their first album, "From Zero to Hate" (2005) now sold out of print is any indication of the direction Caustic and their "12 Step Suicide" (released in NY only, July 2008) CD will take, then we can all expect big things from this band. 12 Step Suicide is scheduled for national release in March 2009, preceding their full US tour. 12 Step Suicide is a dark-themed concept record that tells the story of a delusional addict being led around by a hallucinatory girl that beckons him to take his addictions and feeds him his own demise.

What's in store for Caustic?...(Matt Caustic-Vocals; Donnie Death- Bass; Brandon Wheeler-Guitar; Nick Wisner-Drums). Their music is being featured in the WEC and UFC, exposing them nationally, as they continue to play with some major music industry acts, such as Biohazard at The Chance in Poughkeepsie, Disturbed at The Main Street Armory in Rochester, Flaw in FL, and Chimaira at the House of Blues in OH. Currently, Caustic is in the heavy negotiation stages with Mediaskare Records, a division of Century Media, who are looking to pair Caustic up with TKO Entertainment for handling their tour management. A few months ago, Caustic signed up with an LA-based management firm, working with Scot Gaines and Tom Casserino, now handling all of the band's business and creating some great soundtrack sounds.

Caustic is undeniably one of the hardest working bands on the circuit today. Their songs are catchy, heavy, and full of hooks, with a hint of commercial-friendly lyrics that hit home with a convincing story to back them up. While I hate to compare music, they can be likened to Pantera, Machine Head, Drowning Pool, and any sound that is 'capable or destroying or eating away by chemical action'.

Personal favs: Medicate, 12 Step Suicide.....the whole CD!

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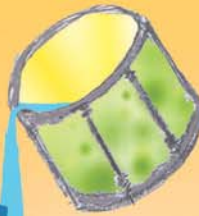
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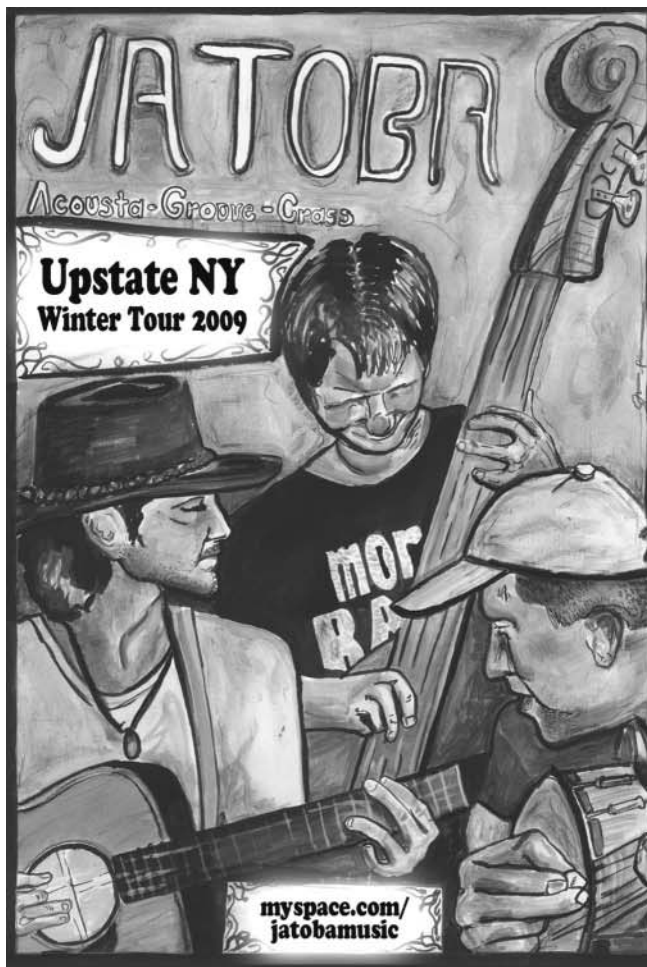
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**FRIDAY FEB 20
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**SATURDAY FEB 21
WATERHOLE - SARANAC LAKE**

Rubblebucket Orchestra - Rose's Dream by Herby One

I have received dozens of CD's the past few months, and almost all of them have received a spin or two in the office CD changer. But only one of these CD's has made its way into the car, both of my kid's rooms, and my wife's Ipod : Rubblebucket Orchestra's "Rose's Dream".

Now our family has very different musical taste, and we seldom get together and listen to the same music. The Kids are into The Jonas Bros. and Miley Cyrus (they are 8 and 5 respectively), while my wife tends to stick to her favs from years gone by: The Dead, Phish, and moe. Personally, I want new music on a daily basis, something that moves my ass, my feet, my head and my soul. Jam, indie, metal - it makes no difference. If it gets me out of my office chair it's a keeper. Well, I'm not sitting down right now, and neither are the kids!!

Many bands immediately come to mind as I listen to this CD. I've narrowed it down to two bands that graced the scene in the last ten years - viperHouse and Wise Monkey Orchestra. If you have heard either of these great bands, you know that they combine afro-induced jazz and funk, with soulful and sultry vocals from Heloise Williams and Alley Stewart respectively.

The first track "Rubblebucket" is an anthem of sorts, and features vocalist Kalmia Traver urging the listener to "...Keep It Spinning Around & Around." Her message - the importance and sustainability of our planet, our community, and our art and music.

"Red Line Beat" is next, and it has it all: jazz, funk, guitar solos, tribal percussion, and great haunting lyrics from Traver. Her voice is an instrument all her own.

World is Gonna Drown is a fast paced jazz number that features trumpeter and band leader Alex Toth, organist Darby Wolf, and the deep pocket of bassist Rusty Flynn and drummer Geza Carr.

Violet Rays slows it down a bit, and again features Traver's haunting, yet beautiful lyrical style. The imagery in this number is incredible, as Traver anguishes over the ups and downs of a relationship. "Violet is the color, of my love for you, a muddy mixture of red and blue.....red is passions kiss in the morning, blue is emptiness at night."

The CD's final cut, Scumbucket, is a chaotic sounding jazz number that really gives all the band members a chance to let their hair down.

Rubblebucket Orchestra will be touring through the upstate region the next few months. Make your way to one of their performances, and pick up a copy of Rose's Dream while you are there. Then take it home and spend some quality time with your family! For more info on Rubblebucket Orchestra, check out www.myspace.com/rubblebucket

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Bach Choy @ Cyber Cafe West by Ty Whitbeck

Having only played a handful of gigs, Bach Choy have developed a cult following of fans and continue to inspire new ears each and every performance. Tonight's was no exception. I look around and I see a lot of familiar faces, ones I haven't seen in years and new ones that are just waiting intently to have their minds blown. I am grateful for this moment. Since former lead guitarist and songwriter Corey Coleman moved to Buffalo after their gig at this summer's West Fest 6 at the Cyber Cafe West in Binghamton, the band didn't know whether to continue the project or to let it ride into the sunset on the memory of their stellar last performance. The fans demanded more. These guys have put their hearts and souls into their music and it definitely shows. Tonight, featuring members of Unity Group, Terry Walker Project, Second Class Citizens, Monkeys Typing and Sol Dog, Bach Choy (sans Corey) decided to give it another go. We are also granted the pleasure of Robert Weinberger on saxophone and his cornucopia of percussive instruments to help add a zesty flavor to the already dance-worthy tunes.

We all got together at the Cyber Cafe for an evening of eclectic improvisational jazz music with heavy funk rhythms and a full menu of homemades and delicious craft beer, but what we got was otherworldly. From the opening song, "Smokey Nights," the band was as precise as ever, with great props to Sean Kanazawich's dank drumming that only got funkier as the night got heavier. Tyson Alston threw down some tantalizing licks on the keyboard for their pseudo-tribute to Rick Astley, "Give It Up," while Bob Davies shredded some sweet blues guitar on the solo. Rob Weinberger's sax was screaming those long, high register notes that would be enough to make Lenny Pickett cry. My lord. This guy just tore it up all night long. When his saxophone wasn't around his neck, he had a drum in his hand or he was sitting on his cajun, playing intricate, polyrhythmic patterns while Joseph Perkins' ultrafunk bass grooves and Kanazawich's tight rhythm section brought the vibe to the forefront on songs like John Scofield's "Ideofunk" and Lettuce's "Squadlive." The night was filled with the most incredible energy but it wasn't until after the first set that we decided to move the tables to get that tiled dancefloor packed with pairs of happy feet. With a disco ball and a smooth psychedelic light show, there was a feeling in the room that everyone was locked in and those who were not dancing, gazed in awe. Although Bach Choy's set has its cover tunes that pay much homage to the bands that inspire them, their originals also blow the roof off like "Groove in 5," which is simply what it states, yet it takes many turns and many funk bombs are dropped. Each member is eloquently showcased and in the wake of the storm, Bob Davies took us on a synth-like guitar segue to carry us back into the groove in 5 that then rocked our worlds for another few measures and then it was out. They closed out the night with "Down With Disease" and when I looked around, I saw that everyone was on their feet, applauding the most excellent spectacle of musical history that has just taken place. After all the whistles and cheers and much thanks, the coats and scarves come on, goodbyes are said and tabs are paid. Do bundle up, it's awfully cold outside.

I think everyone's Bach Choy fix has been satiated and those that just heard them for the first time, I'm sure will tell people. The turnout was more than expected and greatly appreciated. It's small, packed shows like these that give musicians a reason to keep playing, and that gives us in attendance a chance to do something new and inventive on a Friday night. Not to mention over-thanks to the lovely barmaids that continue to provide excellent service to everyone that walks through their front door. While not playing shows with Bach Choy, you can catch Rob Weinberger and Joseph Perkins with the Unity Group and the Terry Walker Project, Tyson Alston with the Second Class Citizens, Sean Kanazawich with Monkeys Typing (who play every Thursday at the Cyber) and Bob Davies is currently working on a new project with some friends in Binghamton that will surely be a show to see.

Get more of Bach Choy at:
www.myspace.com/bachchoyband
www.youtube.com/fluffhead4134

David Byrne @ Landmark Theatre Nov. 29, 2008 by Jon McNamara

When I heard David Byrne was coming to the Landmark Theater in Syracuse I couldn't have been happier. I have seen so many great shows at the Landmark. I feel it is the best theater venue in Upstate New York. However, I may be bias. I did an internship for some college class back in 2000. During that period of time the venue was undergoing major renovation. When I finished my internship the construction to the theater still had not been completed, though they had made much progress. I remember thinking to myself, "This place is going to be amazing when it's finished."

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Now eight years later I find myself traveling to Syracuse to see one of my all time favorite performers, David Byrne. David Byrne is most recognizable as the front man for the now disbanded Talking Heads, who in my opinion are the most influential band to the modern jam scene. The Talking Heads built a career on an energetic live show, with David Byrne as the ring leader. I didn't quite know what to expect from this performance, because it was billed as "the music of David Byrne and Brian Eno." For those of you who don't know: Brian Eno has been the long time song writing partner of Byrne. He collaborated with Byrne on many of the Talking Heads most popular songs. Now Byrne is touring in support of their first album together in over twenty years "Everything that happens will happen today."

As I walked into the newly renovated landmark theater I was blown away by its majestic presence. With its good trim and intricate woodwork the inside of this venue is really a sight to see. I found my seat and wondered if this performance would be anything like Byrne's last tour where he had full string and horn sections accompanying his band. As I looked over the stage I realized that he was going with instrumentation consistent with the old Talking Heads live set up. This was my first clue that this show was going to be more "rock and roll" and less arranged than the shows from his last solo tour. As the lights went down my anticipation peaked. As Byrne and his band took the stage I immediately noticed the visual aspect of his live show. The entire band including Byrne were dressed in white clothing. The look was especially effective for Byrne with his hair now being completely white.

The show started slow. Byrne opened with four songs from his new album. The songs were great, but not familiar to most of the audience. It wasn't until Byrne and company broke into the Talking Heads classic "Slippery People" that the crowd raised to its feet. This is what everybody was here to see. Much to Byrne's credit, I have never seen such an about face from an audience. When they wrapped up the song Byrne received an extended standing ovation. Even Byrne seemed overwhelmed by the show of affection from the crowd. Not bad for his fifth song of the night. As the crowd settled back into their seats Byrne strummed the opening chords of "Heaven." This provoked a second standing ovation. With the crowd now on it's feet, Byrne launched into a powerhouse version of "Life During Wartime." From here on he could do no wrong, mixing new songs with Talking Heads favorites. This show was complete with great light and sound production. Byrne also enlisted the help of an interpretive dance troupe, which I felt gave the show a refreshing visual presentation. I couldn't help but to be reminded of Jonathan Demme's live Talking Heads concert masterpiece "Stop Making Sense." In my opinion the greatest rock and roll movie ever made (apologies to Last Waltz fans).

As Byrne concluded his set with "Cross-eyed and Painless" he received deafening applause from the audience. Byrne and his band left the stage leaving the crowd wondering what he could possibly do to conclude such an epic performance. Byrne did not disappoint. He returned to do "Burning down the House." This was the icing on the cake for die hard fans. This show was an absolute joy to be at. Byrne now 60 something, was as energetic ever. His live show was as powerful as anything I have ever seen.

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Grace Potter & The Nocturnals

by Joe Koch

In October 2007, Relix magazine deemed Grace Potter and the Nocturnals America's Best Kept Secret. Even though they're not quite a household name, through rigorous touring they have garnered the reputation as a must-see live act.

Supporting acts like Dave Matthews, The Black Crowes and Government Mule have been wise decisions based on opportunity. But, witnessing the band perform a full two-and-a-half hour set, while headlining their own tour is necessary to fully absorb the musical chemistry that has launched them into being one of music's most promising acts.

"Opening for the Black Crowes was tough. We'd only get to play for about 30 to 40 minutes. We would just be getting into it and we'd have to end. But, it was good exposure," said guitarist Scott Tournet.

These days Tournet has his hands full with his solo band, Blues and Lasers, which also features fellow Nocturnals Matt Burr on drums and Bryan Dondero on bass. To round out the line-up he recruited fellow Vermonters Benny Yurco on guitars and vocals and Steve Sharon on drums. Dual guitars and dual drums is a spectacle in itself, but they produce a sound that delves more into experimentation. They do not shy away from letting a song run for 12 minutes. You get so mesmerized watching Scott and Benny trade licks that time becomes irrelevant.



Blues and Lasers call Burlington home but in November they had an opportunity to open two shows for Grace Potter and the Nocturnals in San Francisco. So, they held a fundraiser to get the remaining members (Benny and Steve) out to the West Coast. It was a task that was an easy accomplishment. Those who don't follow the two bands religiously have no idea that three quarters of GPN are in the opening act. But when discovered, the on-lookers' attention becomes indubitable. This led to Blues and Lasers opening the last seven dates of the tour for Grace Potter and the Nocturnals.

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"It's been crazy," said Benny. "Not only have we been warming up the crowds for Grace, but Steve and I have been sitting in with GPN during their sets. We're all friends, so it's kinda like one big musical revue."

On the last night of the tour in Buffalo, N.Y., Blues and Lasers opened with a blistering set that would awaken any crowd on a Monday night. After Grace opened the night with "Here's to the Meantime," she followed it by informing the Buffalonians that this was the last night of the tour and there have been many stories from the road.

Grace introduced Benny back onto the stage to partake in "Stop the Bus." Oddly, Benny mumbled something about almost getting mugged. Afterwards, Benny explained: "I went out and just started wandering and I must of made a few wrong turns. When some guy asked me for money and without hesitating I turned and ran my ass off as the guy yelled for me to come back. I had no idea where I was. So with a quick call, I was told how to get back to the venue. So when Grace announced me, I literally had just run onto the stage."

Without fail they delivered with precise execution on crowd favorites "Joey," "Falling or Flying" and the politically charged "Ah, Mary." Grace led her cohorts in a slightly extended version of The Rolling Stones' "Paint it Black." Then she invited Steve Sharon to join Matt on providing the explosive beat behind the sexual toned "If I Were from Paris," which always gets great crowd participation, as they sang "Ooh La La, La La, La La."

Benny appeared back on stage as they paid reverence to Led Zeppelin's "Your Time is Gonna Come." They produced a chemistry that could not be rivaled. Even Plant and Jagger would be envious of a band that displayed such authenticity. Grace acknowledged this night as being their best show in Buffalo. They exited the stage, but there was no way this crowd was going to let the night end. They returned with the B-3 driven "Big White Gate," followed by Grace's sultry soulful voice leading the band into "Nothing but the Water." The evening would end with an all-out jam as they covered Neil Young's "Kortez the Killer."

With 90 percent of the bands pulling double duty for the last seven shows, it was still not enough. "I want to keep playing! I get on the bus and sleep overnight to the next city, when we arrive I'm ready to play. It's kinda like waking up and wanting to go to your job. But, first I have get off the bus and look at a license plate to confirm our arrival, then the realization that I have to wait another eight hours before show time. This is my life, I love it!" said Benny after the show.



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BIG RIVER WILSON - INDIE GARAGE FOLK. READING, PA
WILLIAM PETRANSKY - ACOUSTIC. JAMESTOWN, NY

JAN 24 2009 9:00PM
RAT RASTURD - POP PUNK. IRVING, NY
BERNICE MARIE - ACOUSTIC. BUFFALO, NY

JAN 30 2009 9:00PM
ANTHONY HEUBEL - ACOUSTIC. PITTSBURGH, PA
TOM THUMB! - CAPE COD, MA

JAN 31 2009 8:00PM
VOX HUMANA - VIC (FORMERLY OF KNIFE CRAZY)
PRESENTLY IN PARTRONS OF SWEET. BUFFALO, NY
THEE AUDIENCE - INDIE ROCK. JAMESTOWN, NY
JOSEPH MULLHOLLEN - FROM THE BAND NEEDLE UP! BUFFALO, NY
THE LOST SEA - FOLK ROCK AMERICANA. PITTSBURGH

FEB 3 2009 8:00PM
KENTUCKY NIGHTMARE!!! - INDIE ROCK. INDIANA

FEB 6 2009 9:00PM
JASCHA - FOLK ACOUSTIC. INDIANAPOLIS
EVERYTHING, NOW! - PSYCH FOLK. INDIANAPOLIS

FEB 7 2009 9:00PM
A RELATIVE TERM - ACOUSTIC. BUFFALO
JAX DELUCA - ACOUSTIC. BUFFALO
JASCHA - ACOUSTIC FOLD. INDIANAPOLIS

FEB 13 2009 8:00PM
TINY B - BLUES R&B. JAMESTOWN, NY
KATIE ELFMAN - BLUES ACOUSTIC. JAMESTOWN, NY

FEB 14 2009 8:00PM
CANDLE JACK - PROGRESSIVE EXPERIMENTAL ROCK. JAMESTOWN
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SHORES OF THE TUNDRA - AMBIENT HARDCORE. IOWA CITY, IOWA

FEB 16 2009 8:00PM
RYLAND BOUCHARD - EXPERIMENTAL FOLK. PORTLAND, OR
EMPEROR X - INDIE POP. WILMINGTON, NC

FEB 21 2009 9:00PM
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JOHN DAVEY! - ACOUSTIC FOLK. INDIANA

FEB 27 2009 9:00PM
JOSHUA JESTY!!! - ACOUSTIC FOLK. OHIO

FEB 28 2009 9:00PM
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A Tribute to Folk Legend Odetta Holmes by Tabitha Clancy

There we were, driving across the state of NY on our way to Oberlin College Folk Festival in Ohio, just south of Cleveland. A spur of the moment decision made the night before in some hotel bar. We, me and my best girl, wanted another night of our best band. After a couple rounds of shots, we were convinced, with not much arm twisting, to extend our road trip another night. Sure it meant another hotel room, more gas money, eating greasy fast food, and a drive with killer hangovers, but we were undeterred. Determined to get as much music as possible, we would not be disappointed.

I was an unsuspecting concert goer, and embarrassed to admit, my very first exposure to the most amazing woman I believe I have ever been introduced to. Odetta Holmes was her birth name, to most she is only known as Odetta. Not knowing what to expect, I stood in the crowd in awe at the backdrop of the stage. The festival was in a church. The stage had been placed atop the altar area in front of an enormous and rather intimidating organ with pipes so vast they reached the vaulted ceiling. Seating was in pews, of course. An elderly woman was soon wheeled to the front of the stage with a smile on her face that could only mean we were in for something special. My curiosity was piqued.

The crowd applauded and she raised her hand in greeting, but seemingly the gesture quieted the room as if we sought direction from the grandest of all matriarchs. She began to sing. An edgy, thick voice bellowed from the stage following the beams of the church, infiltrating every space in the room and capturing the chambers of my heart. The song, "This Little Light of Mine," an old-time gospel tune written for children, gave me goose bumps when Odetta commanded the audience to participate. I was moved, touched by her positive energy. My heart was filled with joy and hope by the end of her set.

Her resume extends beyond decades. Born in Birmingham Alabama on New Years Eve in 1930, she and her mother moved to Los Angeles shortly after the untimely death of her father. She was very young, but it also marked the beginning of her musical and theatrical career, as it was there, she discovered her voice. Her training was in operatic vocals, but she decided to pick up a guitar at nineteen and focus on folk singing. Moving away from classical music, she sang only what she felt was her; the songs that delivered a message. These blues, jazz, and folk songs as well as spirituals later earned her a spot next to Martin Luther King, quickly becoming the musical voice of the civil rights movement.

She is the reason Bob Dylan traded his electric for an acoustic guitar. She inspired others as well, including Janis Joplin and Joan Baez. She has three Grammy nominations and a discography as long as her career. She was awarded the National Medal of the Arts in 1999, the Visionary Award from Kennedy Center Honors in 2004 and the Library of Congress Living Legend Award in 2005. Since her passing in early December, she has now become a true legend of folk and a most inspirational artist of the 20th century.

As an eventual and long time resident of New York City, where she succumbed to heart failure at 77 years old, she was no stranger to the Capital Region. Although her health deteriorated over the course of several months, Odetta continued touring, sharing her voice, her message, her love. The second time I saw her in just a few short months, she was rolled out in that same wheelchair with the same electric smile at the Park Playhouse in Albany's Washington Park. A lovely evening, almost an enchanted summer's night where she carried her voice over the August crickets and pond critters to once again deliver her message. Yes, it was only four months ago I had last seen her perform, the first being only four months prior to that. She kept busy and stayed active until she was hospitalized three weeks before her death.

When I learned of her death in an email, my heart hurt as she was a force to be felt. A magnetism of positive energy, I can only thank my lucky stars I didn't let a hangover stop me from driving out to Ohio that day. At least I can listen to any one of her many CD's and carry her same message of believing and manifestation and have my heart filled with joy again and again. Though a ripple of sadness was felt December 2, 2008, I can look towards the heavens with a smile on my face as I know that little light of hers shines down like the matriarch of angels she has now become.

The John Cole Blues Band by Aimee Leigh

If you're a blues fan, this is defiantly the band for you. With their thick yet upbeat blues sound, it's defiantly got people up and dancing. John Cole, originally from Alabama, plays guitar and sings, giving the lyrics some real soul with his raspy voice. Ted Mosher on bass gives the music the funk it needs to get people up and on their feet. John Chaffer plays drums, getting people to nod their head to the beat. Gian Carlo Cervone on the piano gives the music that Alabama blues kick. The band continues to book show after show and even books a year in advance. The songs played always leaves the fans wanting more. The sound is unbelievable. This is defiantly a band you have to see live to appreciate. For more on the John Cole Blues Band or for booking information visit www.beaman-enterprises.com and click John Cole Blues Band at the top of the page.



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The Attack of Emartransformo by Jim Gonzalez

I recently came upon an interesting and very entertaining performer by the name of Emartransformo. This one of a kind DJ played at the Tramontane coffee house located in Utica, NY. With his array of Gameboys and Fisher price toys of my (and possibly yours) childhood, he dazzled the crowd with bleeps and blips in a uniform style that got the whole crowd jamming to bits and pieces of a sound only an old school gamer would love. He came upon the stage, with a Gameboy color, a Gameboy advance, and even the classic grey Gameboy pressing the buttons on each creating a very composed sound that made me feel like I was at a rave and a nostalgic place all in one sitting. In his performance, he also used 2 mixers and two classic Fisher Price toys of the mid 80's. Emartransformo took the stage jamming out and interacting in a sense to his very styled type of music while becoming very passionate of the sound. By the time the hour was done, the whole place wanted to hear more and more but as he explained to everyone he's definitely coming back for more. The night did end wanting me to bring back some classics and play them all over again just to reminisce his magical sound. After the show did end, I met up with the 8-bit performer and had many questions to be answered.

Jim G. - To start things off what is your name?

Emartransformo - My name is Elliot.

Jim G. - So where do you reside?

Emartransformo - I come from the backwoods of Forestport, NY.

Jim G. - So what made you want to do something like this and where did it stem from?

Emartransformo - Well (laughs), I have a love for the classic games of the past and wanted to synchronize them with the style of music I play. Its pretty much two things I love rolled into one.

Jim G. - As I see on the table here, you have a lot of devices that you used during the performance. Would you tell me a bit about them?

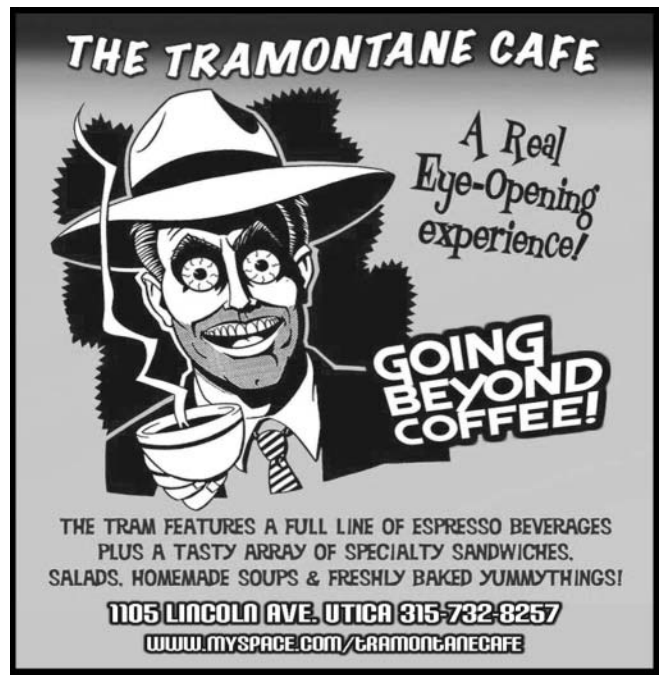
Emartransformo - Sure, I currently use a Gameboy Advance, an original Gameboy, a Gameboy color, 2 mixing boards, and two Fisher price toys that help bring more of a projected sound to the bleeps and blips and also synchronize the sound better.

Jim G. - Also what is the program that you use to make these sounds?

Emartransformo - The program I use is called Lil' DJay and comes conveniently in cartridge form to help me make the sounds. It was made by a guy in Sweden a few years ago. Look it up on Wikipedia, its pretty interesting.

Jim G. - So how long have you been doing this sort of thing?

Emartransformo- I've been doing this project for about a year and I have a band on top of this in which I've been doing for 4 years.



Jim G. - so what is your bands name?

Emartransformo- We are called Plastic Space Child Electronic House and I play guitar for the band.

Jim G. - So how does this and video games tie in together?

Emartransformo- Well I'll admit this really doesn't have anything to do with video games just the fact that I use consoles and handhelds as the devices to create the sound but the main point is the interactivity that follows and the different sound I can create.

Jim G. - Getting back on the devices, how does the sound emulate out of the systems?

Emartransformo- The sound comes from the same registry from the systems, that's how it sounds so 8-bit in a sense.

Jim G. - Why did you decide to do this sort of thing and will people be able to see a show in the near future?

Emartransformo- Well in essence, I felt that Central NY needed something different in the music scene due to this type of thing is very popular in NYC and I plan on doing this for a while, especially due to the big turnout tonight.

Jim G. - And lastly, how do you pay for all this equipment?

Emartransformo- Well just like every other local project, with a regular 9-5 job.

Jim G. - Well thanks for the great show and anything else you want to add?

Emartransformo- Well if people want to check out my project, my page is www.myspace.com/Emartransformo and don't forget to download some free songs to share.



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- Sunday, 8th - The Bloody Sunday Show:
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- Monday, 9th - Full Moon Monday: Bar Specials all night**
- Tuesday, 10th - Free show downstairs at 9:30 with Jeff Bujak**
- Wednesday, 11th - Twiddle: Cocktail hour at 8, Show at 9**
- Thursday, 12th - Lincoln's Birthday Bash: Bar Specials all night**
- Friday, 13th - Raisinhead: Cocktail hour at 9, Show at 10**
- Saturday, 14th - Post Parade Party at 2PM, feat. Los Blancos
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