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FIREWORKS

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DREAM THEATER UNLEASH 'BLACK CLOUDS AND SILVER LININGS'



BIGGER, BETTER
Eric Martin talks about
Mr Big's comeback



ONLY YOUNG TWICE
Europe return with a
brand new album



PRIDE & GLORY
Stryper return with
'Murder By Pride' CD



SCAR TISSUE
Theory Of A Deadman
invade the UK



PAUL GILBERT ✦ HINDER ✦ ANVIL ✦ JOHN WAITE

not miss it'.
Check them out at www.myspace.com/trickortreatband

Italy's LUST UNDER VIRGO offer a blend of hard rock with a slight glam/punk edge with their new CD 'Both Sides of the Dime'. The band met in the toilets of a music club during a concert.

'We totally agreed that the concert sounded better from there! Therefore we decided to put a band together that sounded different from the others,' says Izzy Lust. 'Both Sides of the Dime' is an unusual project. Izzy wanted to sound like the bands of the 70s, merged with a shadow of 80s synth. 'Moreover, we liked the idea of an aesthetic impact on stage, inspired by the most recent glam and sleaze bands. Some say the album sounds like a bathroom recording and maybe it's true but we would like to point out that it has been recorded in the kitchen next to the bathroom! It's a personal, low budget production completed in very short time. Our priority during the recording was to spit out our ideas. There were so many that couldn't be 'closed in the toilet. We've got plenty of ideas to express on stage... and in the kitchen,' he laughs.

Check out Lust Under Virgo at www.myspace.com/lustundervirgo



If you like Kings Of Leon then you might be interested in a band called THE LAST CHALARON who are from Louisiana. They manage to mix in southern influences into the music as well and their new self-titled CD is very good.

'The band started about a year ago and has steadily been gaining steam,' says bassist Matt Dawson. 'We love good music and want to do our part to contribute to that. We love what we do and think it shows in our music.'

The new CD has a really nice raw feeling to it. 'The music came very naturally to us and we incorporated lyrics that reflected situations and times in our lives. We're very proud of it considering it's our first effort.'

The CD was recorded in Baton Rouge, LA. 'We tracked instruments in our house, lead vocals in an apartment above a bar, group vocals at our engineer's house in a coat closet. It goes on. Two really good friends helped us out with recording and engineering and we produced the album ourselves.'

'Live is where it is at for us,' he adds. 'We love it and so far the crowds do too. People have really taken to us and we're very grateful for that.'

The band at the moment is taking a break from shows this summer so that they can concentrate on new songs. 'We plan on recording an EP of all new material this fall. We can't wait for people to hear it.'

Amen to that. Check out this fabulous band at www.myspace.com/thelastchalaron



Moving down under to Australia we find excellent new comers OOH LA LA and their new album 'Free At Last' (Bad Reputation Records). If you like a mix of Black Crowes and Led Zeppelin, then these guys are for you. Ooh La La is a four piece band who loves classic Stax soul music just as much as they love the classic rock bands of yesteryear.

'We love drinking beer and bourbon and we are all great in bed,' smiles vocalist Simon. 'Our debut European release which was recorded in Sydney, at Sugarplum studios was self produced by the band and is a 10 track album that will rock your socks off. If you want to impress your girlfriend/boyfriend, you must buy this record for them,' he laughs.

The band's shows are always received well. 'No-one has thrown anything at us yet and there has been no need to invest in chicken wire so far. We hope to keep it this way and hope to hit Europe and the UK soon.'

The band is currently putting together a double album which we hope to release early 2010. Check them out at www.myspace.com/oohlalaband. It's a mighty fine release.

'Princess Of Rock is the new demo from Italy's BLAZING

CLASH whose influences include Maiden and Priest. 'This is the first Demo by Blazing Clash' explains Daniele, 'hopefully not the last one. The songs started to come like hell, especially thanks to the 2 founders: it was like their genius minds were kept for a long time under chains until someone or something came to set them free. Every time I met them to work on the songs, once or twice a week, I was definitely amazed by the ideas they used to come out with. Most of the time I felt like a fellow worker rather a member of the band!' he says. 'We took just 6 days to record it. I must mention that a special thanks goes to the drummer Salvatore Meloni, who accomplished an amazing job in just one and a half day. Yes, we didn't use any crappy drum-machine and no, he didn't make any deal with the Devil for that...as far as I know'. The band hopes to secure a label deal and is currently in talks with several labels. 'We're really pushing our Demo hard through every damned way can be used: We're selling it out through CD Baby, getting our CD reviewed by webzines, websites, web whatever, keeping in touch with recording companies, getting deals with promoting companies, etc etc. In the meanwhile we're working on a few songs, we aim to record a full Album, possibly under a recording company'. Check the band out at www.myspace.com/blazingclashmusic



From San Francisco we find VICE with their new CD 'Fences' which I thoroughly enjoyed. The band members have all been involved in the music scene for years, with some success before Vice was formed. Singer Brodie Jenkins was part of a major label country trio with her mother and sister called The Jenkins and charted 3 singles and toured with LeAnn Rimes. Grahame Lesh (guitar) and Jesse Engreitz (keyboards) were in a pop-rock band called Crystal City that had some success in 2006, opening a couple dates on that summer's Phil Lesh & Friends/Trey Anastasio North American Tour. Since forming Vice the band have always known that they wanted to take their music beyond playing frat parties and such, especially once they started writing music together.

'Fences' is the band's debut album, and it is basically the musical equivalent of the five band members. Vice tried to make it as diverse and fun as their tastes and musical backgrounds, while still keeping a unified sound. Every song on the album sounds like Vice but they are not in one particular genre, although they have succeeded in making a flowing album.

'We enjoy the hell out of playing for anyone who will come to see us. Despite the fact that we were all students until June 2009, we did get off campus enough to play plenty of shows and we've been overwhelmed with how people responded. Performing live is a facet of our music that can never stop growing and improving or it will die, so we're glad that a lot of our hard work in the area has paid off. Also, playing live is the best part about being in a band, so we're really happy that the feeling is reciprocated by the audience' says guitarist Grahame Lesh.

Besides world domination, more song-writing, more practicing and more concerts the band are far from being idle! 'We have probably 8 or 9 songs written or partially written that aren't on our debut album, so we're gonna be working on those this summer. Perhaps we'll play a show or two if we're lucky, and we're hoping to schedule a West Coast tour for this winter!'

Check Vice out at www.myspace.com/viceofficial

Over in Switzerland we find another cool artist this time playing softer pop/rock. ROB HOLUB is the fella and he has a new CD called 'Stranger On 2nd Avenue'. Rob moved to New York City from Europe. 'I didn't know anybody here at this point. I started playing out and singing solo on piano in edgy bars and clubs around the city in Brooklyn and Manhattan, then slowly began to collaborate with musicians. 'Fortunately there are plenty of them here! A year later I got lucky enough to meet Mike Visceglia (long time bass player and musical director of Suzanne Vega) who introduced me to some great musicians. He helped me find the right people to work with. Right now the band consists of Billy Masters (Duncan Sheik) on guitar, Rosa Avila (Andy Williams) on drums and Mike himself on bass. I will see in how far we will continue to play together, things may change. But we rock for sure,' he smiles.

'Stranger' is Rob's first record. 'My music is a piano driven, intoxicating blend of European chic and edgy American Pop. I wrote all the songs during my time being in New York, so they are deeply influenced by my experience in the city. I tried to keep a certain diversity of music on the record. You will find more up-beat tempo stuff like 'Counting Raindrops' but also very mellow songs, like the French ballad 'Les Choses et Toi'. Yes, I sing in English and French! The bonus track 'Travel Therapy' is a special collaboration with Emmy-award winning



author Karen Schaler. We co-created the very first theme song for her book 'Travel Therapy: Where do you need to go?' She wrote the lyrics, I composed the music.'

The album was recorded at 'Dreamland Studios' in Woodstock, NY and in 'The Spot' studio in Manhattan. It was engineered and produced by Zak Soulam, internationally recognized guitarist and producer, who has collaborated and performed with the world's leading musicians (such as. Fefe Dobson and Hayehudim). Mike Visceglia appears as the co-producer. Besides playing out with the band as much as possible, Rob wants to find people from the film and TV industry who are interested in collaborating with him. 'I have lots of songs written and lined up to be heard, recorded and finally to be played live and used for film and TV shows. I think especially the piano is an instrument that just fits movies perfectly. Other than that I want to record my first album in the near future and tour the world.'

Check Rob's music out at www.myspace.com/robholubmusic

My musical partner in crime Sonia Waterfield at SLW found herself with a couple of new releases that she wanted to talk about, so we decided to add them to my column. They are 1ST LIBERATION and MANGROVE. Over to Sonia...

Hailing from Northern Sweden are youthful quartet 1ST LIBERATION who are a dirty hard rock band. They currently have two EP's out: 'I Got The Right To Lose My Mind' and 'You Can Never Tear Apart a Rock And Roll Heart'. Okay, the titles are a ridiculous length but don't let that put you off, they just highlight the Rock n' Roll attitude that these guys have, on which is proudly projected through on both. Together the EPs deliver high energy from the frenetic power chords mixed with the gravelly vocals which have a definite similarity to one Lemmy of Motorhead. All this drifts into you and before you know it your foot is tapping along to the infectious beats. Both EP's have a great sound thanks to the excellent production and mix quality. These guys maybe unsigned however they can sure give the big men a run for their money. See for yourself at www.1stliberation.com

Roland Van Der Hoost (guitar/vocals) and Joost Hagemeijer (drums, vocals) got together in 1998 and formed Brainstorm. Their first demo 'Massive Hollowness' received critical acclaim. This prompted the band to undertake a name change, to be taken more seriously, and having changed to MANGROVE have just released their new platter 'Netherlands'. Throughout the years, the band has performed live as much as possible, gaining a solid and faithful fan base. Along with this, they have released four full length albums and a 2 disc live compilation CD 'Coming Back To Live'. It's this album that I have the joy to review, with its eclectic mix of tracks from their fruitful history. The bands influences are heavily taken from Pink Floyd, Genesis, Yes, King Crimson and Rush and elements of all are evident with funky beats, trance sounds emanating from well placed keys accompanied by Roland's silky vocals. The whole thing is a blissful journey, a pure concept Prog Rock album with tracks ranging from 5 minutes to a hearty 10 minute offering. The production is exceptional, each instrument has a crystal clear clarity and do not overpower one another. If you want a surprise check these guys out at www.mangrovemusic.nl

NICKY BALDRAN'S PLAYLIST

1. Chickenfoot
Chickenfoot
2. Eureka
Shackleton's Voyage
3. Fair Warning
Aura
4. The Poodles
Clash Of The Elements
5. Shenaniganz
Open Your Eyes Or
Cover Your Head