

JESTER

Some would say that Jester can be compared to Nirvana, maybe the Smashing Pumpkins or even Silverchair. They have a power and emotion in their songs not seen or heard since the early days of the grunge era. They were spawned in late 2001 in Beaver County, Pennsylvania amidst the minimal punk scene in that area. They have pounded out a full length nearly every year following their inception and have managed to find time to play many shows throughout the Ohio Valley and Pittsburgh Areas.

First off how would you describe Jesters sound?

We like to call our sound grunge/metal. It is the hard, riff-oriented kind of songs that is associated with metal, but I also like to just throw some chords together to highlight the melody of the lyrics which softens it down a bit. This sound can be traced directly from my (the chief songwriter) influences. We also have a very large range in heaviness between songs, which is more associated with grunge bands. I feel I have really achieved something with the songs that include the very heavy and very light riffs together.

Where does the name Jester come from? What does it mean to you.

Naming the band took us a while. I have always been a fan of subtly insulting myself in the band title (for example my last band's name was called inane, meaning worthless). So we went with Cro-magnon, but I thought it was too kiddie, and not easy enough to

remember. Jester is easy to remember and one of the things I really pride myself on is the lyrics. I like to point out things I don't like about society or situations with sarcasm. I associate this with the image of a Jester, a character that is supposed to be happy and cheerful, but can also be associated with fear and depression.

If you could write your own review of the band, how would it go?

Jester is a hard rock band who tries to blend the creativity of underground rock with mainstream sensibility all tied together with a purposeful message in each song's lyrics. The band is a model for moderation. Not too heavy that there is no melody and not too light that there is no kick, and not too straight forward lyrically that there is no room for interpretation, but not too trippy and moody either. Essentially, the band tries to let people have a good time while remembering to stay in touch with their feelings and morals.

Who have been your biggest influences?

For me, Nirvana, Helmet, Black Sabbath, Tool, and Silverchair. I think the first four are typical for many musicians, but I will clarify the last one. Silverchair is a band that continually was put down for copying the grunge era, but they strived forward and their third and fourth CD's have been better than anything else out today, and quite different. I also think Daniel Johns is an excellent lyricist.



The drummer, Josh, is about in the same boat as me.

Adam (Bass) is into 311, Dream Theater, and most Neu Metal.



Who or what inspires you to play or write.

The love of rock music and the feeling it can give me is probably first. The second is definitely the ability to connect with people through the words. I know how much certain songs have helped me through things in life, and I like the idea that I could help somebody else in that way. As far as subjects that inspire me to write...relationships (bad or good), certain discrepancies with social groups or norms, and my own beliefs (I'll tell stories to illustrate things).

What is your view on the musical scene in the Pittsburgh and surrounding area?

Ha, bewilderment. I think there are a lot of good bands in the area, but most of them aren't the popular ones. Truth be told, I think bands like the Buzz Poets are terrible and I am also not a big Clarks fan (but at least they are doing their own thing). In my own estimation, here is the problem with the scene...Pittsburgh is not exactly a young town, so there are not many 20-something people hanging around that can afford to put the time in that is necessary to have a good, successful band. There are a lot of bands in the area, but many are under 21, but most venues in the area (the big ones anyway) usually have 21 and over shows and don't want to book under 21 bands because they won't bring any over 21 following (Nick's Fat City is a good example). These bands need to be encouraged by being allowed to play shows (rather than the once in a blue moon battle of the bands Laga will throw out) so that when the time comes

for college, the kids may at least make an attempt to stick with music rather than being completely discouraged. Also, the competition among bands is awful and makes for terrible shows and a terrible time for everybody...but that happens in many places.

What has been your proudest moment musically.

As far as best show, there is a place in East Liverpool called Club Splat, the guy there has taken a big commercial garage, painted it black and thrown black light paint everywhere. It is like Chucky Cheese for teenagers. It is all ages and from what I understand, kids from the area line up like every week, no matter who is playing. We had never played there before and there was still a row of twenty people continuously head banging and rocking out. There had to have been almost 100 kids there, and for the size of the town, I think that is awesome. That is how every venue should be.

As far as, my instrument and playing is concerned, just anytime someone tells me they know exactly what I'm saying or feeling in a song, or that a certain song of ours is in their head a lot.

Tell us about your hopes and dreams for Jester.

I guess I hope what everyone in a band hopes...that I can make a career with my music and can focus full time on writing songs and getting out to as many people as I can. If I can make a career as a regional band, great, if I can go national, even better, and I find the whole selling out thing to be ridiculous. Everyone likes to make money, yes, but being true to yourself is more important, and they CAN go hand in hand.

Anything you want to add? Thank you's, websites, shows....

Our website is: www.jesterband.com

Some shows: Jan. 9 Starbucks, Wexford Plaza: Wexford, PA and Jan. 17th Wheeling Jesuit University, Wheeling.

Thank yous: JJ Ulizio for hooking us up with Empire and his other tireless efforts.

