



## RIDING HIGH WITH THE BUFFALO KILLERS

Ever so often, a beacon on a dimly lit night softly shines through. Last year at the Sunset Tavern, Portland's the Nice Boys played an exquisite set of aptly timed and tuned pop rock 'n roll. When they were finished a power trio of burly looking dudes with long hair and feathers from hanging from their guitars took the stage. They balanced the evening with a tuneful blend of blues rock 'n roll and '60s hard groove, equal parts Detroit heaviness and Californian psychedelic movements.

This band was the BUFFALO KILLERS. What was a whisper then is now a deafening affirmation of this band's talents. Like their previous band, the Shams, The Buffalo Killers are all what is good with today's underground scene.

Flashforward a year and they are now starting their second tour in arena-land opening for the Black Crowes and releasing their second album on Alive Records.

"We're going into a bigger situation and buying bigger amps," says Zach, their guitar player. "In the bar scene, we can get away with being drunk as long as the crowds into it. But in that scene, people are usually coming in not knowing who the fuck you are and not giving a shit who you are. Trying to win over the crowd is something you have to be on your game for every night."

When opening for the Black Crowes, they saw the difference between the years in the trenches slogging from town to town and now playing in front of a crowd accustomed to a more professional stage craft. But baby, these boys put a show and they were definitely up to bend their minds.

"Totally different experience, but a totally rewarding experience and turning people on to our music. But the club shows are definitely more personal," explains Zach. "It's a experience from playing with someone right in your face to having someone 20 feet away from you, having a moat between them."

Unlike bands who get on the big tours because of powerful cigar toting managers, the Buffalo Killers did it the right way. Chris Robinson, singer for the Crowes, was digging their tunes and when producing an album for Gary Lordis, happened to mention to a friend of the Buffalo Killers. Next thing they knew, they shelved their autumn club tour and took up playing theatres with the Black Crowes.

A well deserved step for these warriors, who have been playing together in various incarnations for many a trips around the sun. If there is one thing you take away from their shows or records, it is the sense they are in tune with one another...not just the notes but the cosmic feelings entwining the two.

"We sent the first record out to labels with just the Buffalo Killers and my number on it," he continues. "We were really going to ease back into it from the Shames breakup and start over. But every happened quickly, and now two years later, we have two records and two good tours under our belt."

Heavy yet melodic, they have the craft and sense of what they are doing. Drums which are loud, but not fill heavy. The perfect crash and fill here, with a little guitar or bass flash thrown over the top. Hypnotic vocals help to round out the sound...their records have an attitude that this is real deal. Nothing to cut the potency. A true high of the outer frequencies.

The Buffalo Killers are a righteous act and one that will be sure to be making waves among the static flotsam and jetsam damming up the shores. With plans for more touring, they are also eyeing a little trip overseas, once the time is right and they record has time to breathe and stretch intercontinentally.

So tune in now to the now before their jet plane goes roaring past.

## THE NOW SOUND OF NEW YORK'S FINEST FREAKBEAK CONSORTIUM

A lingering haze has long existed on the musical horizon. Through the villages of modern music, the great compression has long castrated the tunes, with a not so heavy, very bland mix of nothing and nothing new to moisten your palette.

But now brave bands are coming back strong, with bass and songs (actual songs!) in tow. The Black Hollies are on of those acts. New York's new answer to well established groove gurus like Detroit's the Go or Berlin via Toronto's King Khan. The Hollies are an act who exist at the edge of what is popular, underground enough, because they want to be, yet write songs that you could hear in a (grasp!) advertising of some greedy business looking to cash in on "the youth market".

"Basically, it meets me interpreting old soul records without having something modern to compare them to," said Justin Angelo, who is the main man for the Black Hollies, not to mention their bassist and songwriter.

Speaking of bass, that is what he saw was lacking, mostly, in modern music.

"That's the root and the soul behind the band," so says Angelo. "We kind of went overboard on the first record, so that's why its pretty bass heavy."

Nevermind that though. There's no overdose on bass heavy rock 'n roll here, just the freakbeat of the twenty-first century. Both of their records are glistening gems of psychedelia, sounds which curve and nestle in the inner sanctuaries of your memories. Morphined flashbacks to the days of yore combine with forward looking visions of long nights and bliss for all. Angelo's songs are masterworks with balanced flair and abandon.

"I write all the songs and have 19 different way of arranging them. So I present it to the band and get them all on board," he says of the process. "Everyone adds their own ideas, but I already see the bigger picture and have ideas to get out of my head."

Formed by trying to play old soul records, they ended at first seeing how they didn't quite fit in with the garage rawk mediocrity that inflicts the local bowels of the New York bar scene.

"We realized we are slightly different than most modern bands today," explained Angelo. "We didn't really factor in the whole Garage Rock revival thing, because we mimicking or picking or pulling what the originators as putting out. We have a set of our own, instead of doing the same old thing all over again."

Their songs are worthy of praise and the Black Hollies show you can exist on plain outside of the normal mediocrity which companies dole out on

their latest ad. This helps by writing their songs in pure isolation.

"We might as well pretend that nothing else is existing so that no outside influences would creep into what we are doing," said Angelo.

Their new full length "Casting Shadows" is both classy and subtly revolutionary. A mixing of sights and sounds, even able to slide in the sitar without the usual Sergeant Pepper wise-cracks. Yes, they are masters of the craft and that point is crystal.

While the albums are stellar, the recordings were not made with George Martin at the helm or Neumann U 47s picking up the brilliance.

"For bands like us who are putting two nickels together, its tough. It would be nice to record with tape, but the times are tough," explains Angelo. "We wanted to use as much old analog recording equipment as possible, but we didn't really have the money. We take what we have and employ to what

we want to sound like. Our resources are very limited. What can we do to make it sound different...but good...but not too modern."

Getting a dime out of a dime, the Black Hollies are enjoying their labors. Touring across the country a

few times and putting our a couple of records has helped them show the boys and girls that songs still exist in our days of digital releases and free MP3s. Not only have the Black Hollies caught on, but they see the audiences digging it right back.

"We've been really excited with the reception," explained Angelo. Especially in Seattle, everyone was genuine in reaction to us playing our songs and would love to come back there as soon as possible."

Yes, hope and freedom still reigns.

The future shines bright for them. With local shows in the near future, there are plans to head over the pond to England in the fall and Europe after that. Plus, the recording of new songs and, consequently a new album.

And hey, if they could do one show with anyone, anywhere, who would be it with?

"It would be to play that show at the Roundhouse in London with Pink Floyd and Soft Machine for the International Times. It would be nice, instead of having Soft Machine on the bill, have us open and then the Small Faces rip shit up and then watch Pink Floyd."

Now, that would be grand...

Sounds which curve and nestle in the inner sanctuaries of your memories.

