

Editor Boy's Big Eight

BY MICHAEL MOLEND

GP IS EMBRACING D-I-Y MUSICIANS BY spotlighting thrilling (or, at least, interesting) guitar talents in this column and at guitarplayer.com. If you think you've got something going that our readers should hear, go to myspace.com/michaelmolenda and invite me to your music space. I'll check out your tracks and determine whether you get coverage in these pages or on the Web. And if you really blow our minds, the editors may decide to do an article on you.

Extra-Special Bonus! If you end up in the print column, Ernie Ball will reward you with an EB t-shirt, customized EB picks with your name on them, and a box of the Slinky strings of your choice. In addition, your two best mp3s will be promoted on the company's fabulous EB Radio (ernieball.com).

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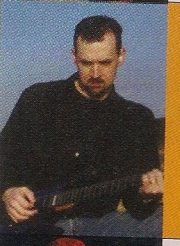
Danny Joe Carter Las Vegas, Nevada "Chuga Chuga"

Carter seems to be one of those "bedroom blasters" who doesn't get out of the house to gig, but that doesn't mean the sucker can't shred. Wielding an Ibanez RG550 (loaded with Seymour Duncan pickups and Ernie Ball .008-.038 strings) and a Peavey Triple XXX amp on "Chuga Chuga," Carter invites listeners on a rockin' journey through his influences (Billy Gibbons, Michael Schenker, George Lynch, Shawn Lane, Jeff Beck, and others). Great fun! myspace.com/dannyjocarter1



Dorian Vaz Fort Lauderdale, Florida "Photograph"

Vaz has more intense songs on his page, but I was seduced most by this languid and melodic track. It's tender and sweet, but Vaz's edgy tone, use of feedback, and occasionally messy but impassioned bends save the tune from evoking some '80s popcorn-flick soundtrack. A brief nylon-string section is a nice touch. myspace.com/dorianvaz7



Matt Eltringham West Grove, Pennsylvania "Aviator"

Revvng up with distorted volume swells, "Aviator" kicks in the burners with a propulsive and biting groove, and then lifts off with some stratospheric harmony lines. And this "jet" must be zooming with the Blue Angels, because there are plenty of shred-powered dives, loops, tailslides, barrel rolls, and hammerheads in this track. Eltringham's tone is saturated yet steely, and every note is crystal clear. In addition to being a delicious guitarfest, "Aviator" is also a well-written, well-produced song. myspace.com/matteltringham



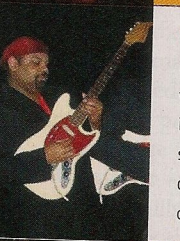
Sean Baker Orchestra Detroit, Michigan "Playin' Opposum"

This track made me laugh—in a good way—as the intro's spastic bends evoke the quirky melodicism of Garbage. In fact, whenever Baker spews a common shred riff, he typically follows it with either a stunning melody or some nutty lick—a brilliant strategy that rescues the song from being just another well-performed metal instrumental. myspace.com/theseanbakerorchestra



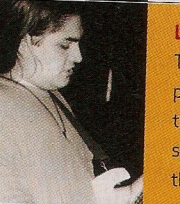
Adrian and the Sickness Austin, Texas "Garbage"

I've always been slightly envious of the relentlessly tight, yet rough and greasy grooves unleashed by most Texas rock bands. Guitarist Adrian Conner tears into "Garbage" as if the flesh would be ripped off her bones if she betrayed even a hint of serenity—which transforms what is a pretty average blues-rock tune into several minutes of "wow." Her tone and touch is all about attitude and firepower. It's exciting, rambunctious, and kinda scary. myspace.com/adrianandthesickness



Walt Powell Columbus, Ohio "Fire From the Fretboard"

Perhaps the only shredder to burn on a vintage Fender Mustang, Powell possesses a liquid tone, wicked technique, and a classical melodic sensibility. This adds up to the obvious Malmsteenisms—so few points for originality here—but Powell's jubilation as he works over the fretboard is striking, and it's hard to keep his euphoria from seeping into your synapses. His page has three other nifty pieces, although it was tough sitting through the keyboard intros and faux audience cheers. myspace.com/waltpowell



Lippi Band Brooklyn, New York "Guitar Dementia"

This is one of those "you'll love it or hate it" selections, but I couldn't ignore John Lippi's heavily processed flights of frenzied and arty insanity—especially because "Guitar Dementia" is a live track. What got me was the fact that if you delete the Beck-ish stuff and mutant Henry Kaiser-style ejaculations, his lines sound pretty much like '70s southern rock. Is this a brilliant hybrid, or the workings of a busted brain? I'll let you be the judge. myspace.com/lippiband



Diablo Canyon Orlando, Florida "Outlaws Never Die"

Speaking of southern rock, Diablo Canyon delivers it like it's still 1974. All the clichés are here, but the result is a tune that would sound incredible roaring from a pair of Altecs at a backyard beer bash on a hot summer day. The "almost there" songwriting and lack of originality would likely damn DC to opening-band status back in the classic-rock decade, but these cats still play with enough balls to rowdy you up just fine. myspace.com/diablocanyon