

Every now and then, a band seems to emerge out of nowhere, and in no time begins to blow every person that hears them away. At least that's the illusion. For Those Who Know is one of those bands, except what you'd never know is that they've been playing together for over two years, and playing shows for almost as long. And yet, the gears only started rolling recently for them. In the past few months, they've signed to one of Austin's most promising labels, Christmas Mountains, have released the best local EP of the year so far, and are currently making a video with Super! Alright!, a local media collective. The band is comprised of Stephen on guitar and vocals, Alan on bass, and brothers Rick and James on guitar and drums, respectively. So how did For Those Who Know emerge right under everyone's noses? And more importantly, why should you see them as soon as you possible?

s_s: How long ago did the band get together, and how did it start?

Stephen: It started about two and a half years ago, somewhere around there. It was New Years, 2003-ish, 2-ish... I got freaked out and called Alan up and said we've gotta start a band. We had nothing, no instruments, Alan didn't really play a particular instrument, he had just started. And then... yeah.

Alan: We had this guy, J.J., playing drums, and it was me and Steve and him and then we met Rick.

How did you meet him?

Stephen & Rick: The Chronicle.

For Those Who Know



S: I think the oldest one is the last one on there, it's about two years [old]. That's the oldest song we definitely have.

James: It's the first song we all wrote together.

S: It's really the only thing we kept out of the really early garage crappy phase.

J: I think we scrapped about twenty songs.

S: And then everything else kind of happened; everything else came around two months before we actually recorded the thing. It all happened really fast, it was a big change, after about a year and a half, two years, and that's the album.

So there's definitely a certain point in time when you remember things drastically changing?

A: Once we got out of the nasty garage and stopped drinking Mad Dog was when it all came together.

R: It had a lot more to do with playing together for a few months and getting comfortable together.

S: Yeah, because the first several months we started playing shows early with half-assed material, that was mostly jamming

A: He came over and brought a CD and blew us away with his own stuff.

Rick: [It was] some stuff I recorded, it was a demo.

A: And then we figured out that J.J. wanted to go in and out of the military and do whatever his own thing was and we discovered James. Rick said, "Hey, I've got a brother that's going to move into town..."

How long have you been working on the songs on the album?

and improvised. And then Alan moved out to Bastrop, and he was our source for a practice space, so that moved out there and kind of tested how serious we were to drive forty-five minutes to practice every week, and we tried adding another member because we bought the Rhodes. There was a particular period where we didn't play a show, didn't really get anything done whatsoever, and then after that we came out of it somehow more serious, I guess because we lasted. It's apparent that no one really had anything really going on in their lives that they might as well drive out to Bastrop. And we started writing serious songs and it worked.

J: Nobody was doing nothing, except for I was doing construction.

A: It was a random thing because of the fact that everyone had to drive all the way out there, and by the time they got there it was like, OK, let's do this and I'm going home.

Are you guys still doing the same things that you were doing then?

A: I am, but they're all doing different stuff.

J: I'm doing different stuff in the way that I'm doing nothing but this now. It feels like it takes up a lot of my time though, like as much time as I spend just getting fucked up... My job is to experience. It's what I do.

A: James had not even graduated at that point, and Steve graduated and got his job, and Rick started recording hard-core, and me, I basically had the same job as [them two]... And that I think also evolved the band a lot. Steve was depressed about his job, so his lyrics became more intense, and Rick started recording more so our recording sessions became more intense, and every time we came together we became more serious. It would take a long time to set up everything, and by the time it came to the actual practice we'd be extremely serious.

J: After this album the band is everything I do, so it's what I'm thinking about all of the time, when I'm even not doing it. I'm always banging on something.

R: I go to my internship two days out of the week usually. I'm not in school in the summer but I have an internship at a recording studio. It pays me sometimes, not on a regular basis, but just enough to where I don't want to get a job.

S: Work really sucks.

[Unanimous agreement ensues]

Do you ever get mad that this is what you have to do in order to do what you love on the side?

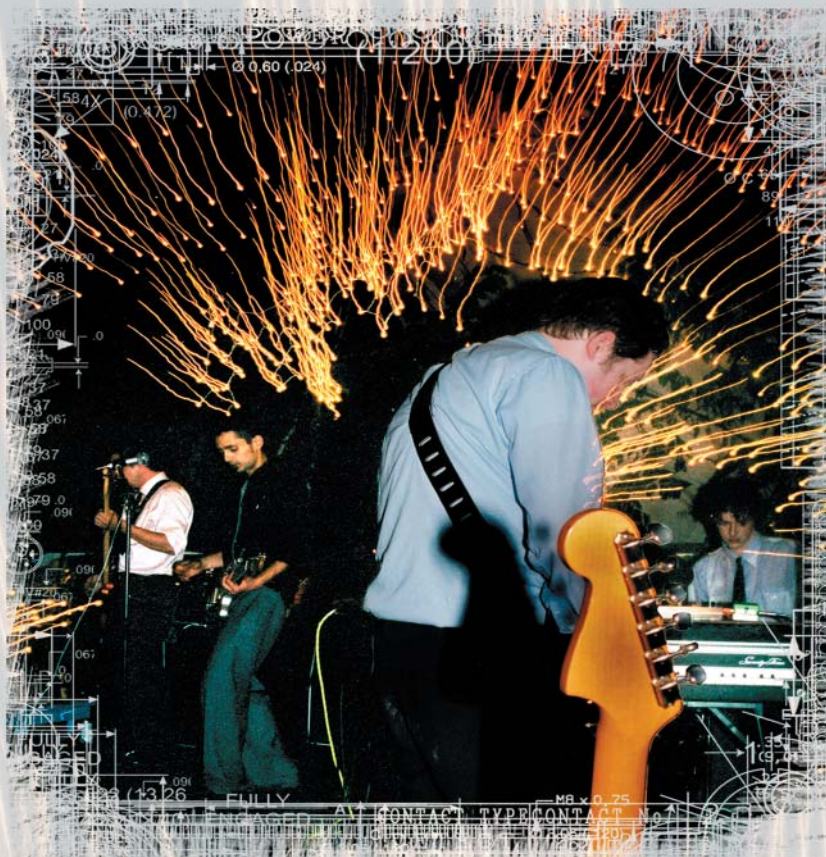
S: Yeah. Actually, it's kinda nice, feeling like you have to pay for it, because maybe if you accomplish something you have a right to be an asshole because you worked for it, it wasn't given to you. I think what really sucks is the timeline on it. You could write a book or shoot films or do something you do well until the latter part

of your life. But rock and roll, no matter what, no matter how important or good it is or how meaningful, it's something you do in your youth only.

And no matter what, that's your shot, whether successful or not, you're gonna fail way too soon. I think that pisses me off, because no matter what, it's a just vacation from that shitty job you have to go to every day.

A: You don't want the money to be the one thing stopping you from doing what you want to do. But that's another thing to mention, because Stephen has this beautiful education, he's an aerospace engineer for chrissakes, he got this job and because of that we were able to get to where we are now, he was able to foot the bill. We all want to be there, but he has helped us get where we are today, so we're very thankful.

Do you guys have a regular practice schedule?



J: Every once in a while we'll get a show we feel is more important than the last ones for some reason and we'll practice two times that week.

S: In my mind I think we work really hard but I think the reality is that everyone else who's in a band actually always practices. [Before the album] we didn't have shows, people didn't know about us, we didn't have anything to do but practice before the album came together. There was definitely a really passionate, you're doing it to express something, sort of feeling, like the only reason you're doing this is because you're trying to say something you couldn't say otherwise. There was really a drive there.

J: We wrote three songs really close together too, so we were working on those pretty hardcore.

S: It was a really beautiful time.

R: We worked on those three songs harder than we ever had before; I think that was one of the changes.

J: We didn't really work on them at all, they kind of came.

S: There was a point in time where it just came, song after song literally, it's like we're a two, three year band and all of a sudden in three months you do everything that you've done in [the last two years]. It's kinda weird.

What else was going on at the time?

S: That was about last October. I just graduated, just started my new job, got some money, decided that we have some good songs and it's worth paying for to get them recorded and Erik [Wofford of **Christmas Mountains Records**] was around to do that.

J: I had just quit my job that was totally pissing me the fuck off.

S: Yeah, it was just one of those things where you can get to the next step. And that's pretty much what was going on and there were no thoughts of anything coming of it at all. Erik was nervous about doing it.

J: He came to a practice and it was like the worst practice ever. He came to a show that was only slightly better than the practice. I don't know what happened.

S: I think we were probably the lowest profile band that he'd seen once a year and a half ago at Trophy's and we had like two songs that we played for forty-five minutes.

J: He'd recorded like ...**Trail of Dead** and shit.

S: It was an interesting time.

Why did you seek out Erik?

S: I kind of knew him from Jason, our first drummer, and we'd purchased some old recording stuff off him. And I heard his recording with **A Tiger Named Lovesick**, which is my favorite Austin band of a couple of years at that point, and I thought it was amazing. I wanted big drums and I wanted the sound and I thought Erik was the guy that was gonna give it and it was a good choice.

Where do you see the future of the band?

S: That's a tough one for me personally. The band was started because I always hated what I saw in the future. I still hate what I see in the future. And I never thought we'd get this far or do this much. So that's kind of the way it is; I'm always expecting everything to just kind of crumble and I'll run away and hide in a different part of the world.

J: You don't want to anticipate too much at this point. But I've asked Rick before if there was any reason that we'd break up and we both agreed that we couldn't think of any reason why we personally would ever leave it.

A: Just keep going 'til it's not going.

J: I don't want to think about having to start another band. You know, it doesn't just fucking click, you have to be together for about two years before you have time to make a record and come together.

S: I don't know how long it takes. There's certain bands out there that are really good really quick, like **Belaire** – they sound like they've been together for three years.

J: But they have, kind of.

Siblings...

S: Maybe so...

R: Hey, we've got a relation with them...

J: "Don't you know we have siblings... wanna get together?"

How long have you two [Rick and James] been playing together?

J: Since we started. I was nine and he was thirteen and we started basically a Nirvana cover band without a singer. My cousin played bass, so we just fucked around and played songs, we didn't write anything really.

R: It was a household item band.

J: Yeah, we used pots and pans and boxes and I had this rattle, it was like my symbol.

R: We were like seven, six. That's big.

J: Yeah, we were smoking cigarettes, doing lines, recording albums...

Are you guys planning a tour?

S: Yeah, um, we cancelled our first one.

A: It was kick ass!

S: We toured around Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco... in our heads. And decided we're gonna push it off to the fall. Hopefully taking more time to plan it will make it a bigger thing, it was kind of thrown together a little quickly. You can't put out a CD and go on your first tour at the same time, it's too much.

R: You can't tour the West Coast until you have distribution out there...

S: Yeah, and the video's coming out, we're gonna do that the first of next month. There's just a lot of stuff going on, in town even.

That said, how do you feel about the music scene in Austin and Texas in general?

J: We've always talked about how we don't think it's really cool that you think of it as doing it as a part of

the scene, doing something for the scene. If we go out and do well, [we] try to bring other bands like **The Black Angels**; we were planning on playing with them in California.

S: It's either really good or really bad, I don't know. I could have been involved a lot younger when I first moved to Austin but for some reason I wasn't. But ever since I started going out and seeing bands in Austin, which is the thing that got me off my ass to start my own after years and years of learning music, I think it's actually fucking really good, and it's actually amazing how diverse the ideas and styles and the different places that all the music comes from in this city. It's such a cultural oasis.

J: It doesn't feel like a competition, you know.

R: It's why I wanted to move here in the first place. I came here officially for college, but I really just wanted to be here.

S: I grew up in LA, and went to school in Maine and when I was a freshman I kinda flunked out and got kicked out, and my dad had relocated here and my mom was an alcoholic when I moved from LA, so I just decided to come here and stay. I didn't have a job or wasn't in school or anything. I just stayed.

A: I graduated from Midland high in '96 and moved here after a year. I went to ACC for a year and then to UT, and graduated from UT with a studio art degree. Basically the reason I came here was friends and the music scene, with my dream of someday playing on stage. That was my whole dream: get here, finish school, and be on stage with a band. And it happened and it was badass. James?

J: I came here for school... quit after a semester. I didn't last as long as them. I worked construction for a while, but nothing now. I'm just here for the music, really. That was the intention.

