

MOTORPSYCHOS



Metal Trio From The Steel City

MOTORPSYCHOS are a band from Pittsburgh, PA (USA), who started out as a hardrock/punk type

of band. However, over the last few years and with each CD they have released, their sound has definitely become heavier and more metal. Pam Simmons on guitar/vocals, Amy Bianco on bass/vocals and Dennis Brown on drums have become a very strong and tight group of musicians, who have paid their dues on the club circuit and are ready to take the metal world by the throat. The band was kind enough to speak with us today here at Metal Maidens.....

Hey all, welcome to Metal Maidens!

The band started out as a four piece unit and now is a trio. Can you tell us what happened with your former bandmate Abby Kritzner and why she left the band?

Amy: "I guess she felt she couldn't make time for the band, when she landed her dream job."

Was there a conscious decision made to try and replace Abby or was that the time you decided to make the band a trio?

Pam: "We auditioned a few people, but as we went along, we liked how we felt and sounded as a trio, more and more."

Amy: "It's really hard to find someone, that can just fit into the family and hit the ground running.. Now, we really didn't want to wait. We put a lot of time into "Coming Of Rage" and were eager to continue after Abby quit. When we realized we could do it ourselves, we were like f*ck it and let's go!"

Tell us a little about MOTORPSYCHOS and what each member brings to the table?

Amy: "Pam brings the business sense, the fashion sense and the flask. Dennis brings excellent driving skills, Macgyverism and the ability to not get flustered by anything except idiot drivers in the left lane. I guess, I bring in a little grit, restless energy (good and bad) and the beer..."

Describe MOTORPSYCHOS music to someone, who may not have heard it before.

Amy: "It's fast, tight and heavy with a 'seek and destroy' feel."

Pam: "Heavy, sludgy and kinetic, constantly moving forward."

How did you all meet and decide to form a metal band?

Pam: "We all met through ads. The band's been together for over ten years and we started out a bit more punk and hard rock and then gravitated towards metal."

Who are some of the bands or musicians that inspired you to do what you do?

Amy: "When I was five, I loved the guitar solo in QUEEN's "We Will Rock You". I'd get goose bumps as soon as it started to swell into the song. That feeling may have been the beginning. As far as bassists, I would say Cliff Burton (R.I.P.) for sure. I liked how he stood out with his bell-bottoms, when everyone else was wearing tight black jeans! The way he played his solos with so much feeling... wow! I so wanted to play like that. When I actually started playing the bass in the late 80's, I was extremely disappointed by the lack of strong female role models in metal. A lot of my fire was fueled by my hate for candy-coated, fluffy-haired, sex kittens who practiced all their moves in the mirror."

Pam: "My biggest inspiration came from L7. I got chills seeing these raw women chunking their Gibsons through Marshalls, pounding on the toms like a caveman and not giving a fuck what anybody

thought. That was it for me.”

It's a little unusual to have two women fronting the band and a guy drummer, but you all seem to have great chemistry together. Did things just click right away or did it take some time?

Amy: “It was a comfortable feel right away”.

Pam: “I agree. We do have great chemistry on and off the field.”

Dennis: “Things clicked right away for me. From the time of my first audition in 2000, the girls and I knew what we wanted and have been rocking non-stop ever since. They are the sisters I never had.”

The band is currently out supporting your third CD, called "Coming Of Rage,". How has the CD been received by fans and media?

Pam: “Coming of Rage” is generally a little darker and heavier than our previous CD, “Piston Whipped” and our moving in that direction has been well received.”

Dennis: “This CD is a little bit heavier and more focused than the last. We get a lot of fans coming up to us at shows telling us how great the CD is and how they like the harder progression of the music. You all can expect heavier and more refined music on the next CD for sure. All in all I think, the fans like the new CD and they are ready for more.”

I love the tunes "Monster" and "Mudbucket" from the CD. Can you tell us some of your favorite tunes as well?

Amy: “Mudbucket” is my favorite on the CD. I love the feel of the song and I love playing that bass line. It's almost carnal. “Matriarch” is probably my next fave, simply for the relentless bass drum throughout the song. It's like a boxing match.”

Pam: “I’m pretty fond of “Mudbucket”, “Matriarch” and “Powerdrive”.”



Do all of you have a say in the writing process and who writes most of the lyrics?

Pam: "Everybody has a say in the writing process. Lyrics are pretty much 50/50 between me and Amy, but anybody is welcome to write anything, anytime."

Amy: "We all have a say in the writing process. Even if I bring in a whole song, the band still shuffles around the arrangement and adds their own flavour. Most of the time whoever wrote the lyrics is the one singing, because we've embraced the character of the song during the writing part and have an idea of how to express it. We don't go by any rules, it's an open table. If something lands on the table and no one is really motivated to work on it, we move on to something else."

Any plans on doing a video for the new CD?

Pam: "Yes, shortly!"

Dennis: "We're putting out a video but still deciding what song to use. We found a really good film maker named Laurie Smith, who's going to work with us. Her site is <http://www.laurieasmith.com>, if you want to check her out."

So what is the band up to this summer? Any cool outdoor shows hapening?

Pam: "We're always playing somewhere, but this summer we're hard at work on our new CD."

Where would a dream tour for the band take place and who would you want to share the stage with?

Pam: "Dream tour? Europe for sure."

Dennis: "We'd all like to tour Europe. Hard to say who we would like to share the stage with at this point."

You all hail from my hometown of Pittsburgh, PA (USA), which is a great town, but as far music goes, Pittsburgh has mostly been known for blues/rock bands, not metal. Within the last few years, that seems to have changed with more and more clubs booking metal bands and the metal fans, who have always been here now have some place to go see some really great music. Has the band noticed these changes as well?

Pam: "Nothing has changed that much for us. We've always drawn well and had a healthy audience. As far as the clubs changing, we have noticed over the past several years, that some clubs that primarily booked blues bands in the past, have opened their doors to metal, just because the draw is better."

Dennis: "We have noticed a slow switch from punk to more metal. I guess, metal has found its way into the hearts of even sports fans these days."

What are some of your favorite clubs to play in Pittsburgh?

Pam: "We always love playing at the 31st Street Pub. We played at Altar Bar recently and that was a pretty cool place - one of those converted churches."

Dennis: "We have always done really well with the Rex Theatre and 31st Street Pub. Other places would include The Smiling Moose, Hard Rock Cafe, and Altar Bar."

I guess, I will have to direct these next few questions to Pam or Amy (sorry Dennis)... What is your opinion of women in the scene today?

Pam: "It depends what scene you're talking about. If you're talking mainstream female musicians, I am regularly sickened by what passes for rock and roll, when it comes to women. Seems if you have an acoustic guitar and you sing a love song about flowers and boyfriends, then you're officially rockin' out. I heard SHERYL CROW call herself a rock star recently. I guess, it depends on your definition of a rock star, but Jesus Christ, c'mon..."

Dennis: "I believe women have made their mark in metal. I can only expect to see more and more women out there belting out some serious metal in the future." Actually, I did mean the metal scene, but your point is well taken and I agree completely about so-called popular music today."

Do you think maybe some bands are just jumping on the female bandwagon in an attempt to hide a lack of talent?

Pam: "We've definitely seen girl bands, that absolutely sucked, but are often handed special dispensation, because they're not bad for girls. That ironically has often been our angle; that we come out and totally blow you away, just like a really good guy band would. Then again, if the alternative is that girls just don't play at all, well that sucks, too."

Dennis: "Not at all, if anything, I think people are recognizing the women can rock out just like the boys

and are not afraid to explore a new path.”

Are we ever going to see the day when women are judged as just musicians and not for being female?

Pam: “I doubt it.”

Amy: “I don't necessarily think it's a bad thing to be recognized as a female musician. We stand out in metal, because we're the minority. We stand even brighter, when we're badass. It's all good.”

Being from the Burg, are any of you sports fans?

Amy: “Go Steelers! Hell, yeah! Our CD release party for “Coming Of Rage” was in PGH - the day before Superbowl XLIII (Steelers vs. Cardinals). We showed our colors and performed a song in support of our team. We've also boldly worn Steelers gear to other cities to purposefully fuck with people. Nothing bad has ever happened, just some playful ball-bustin'!”

What about down time, what kind of things do you all like to do?

Amy: “I have an insatiable curiosity for bugs and spiders. There are jars and books all over my computer desk right now. I'm waiting to see what emerges from a small brown pupa... I also volunteer with beautification efforts in the city, planting trees along business districts, litter cleanups, transforming vacant city lots into gardens, and tackling illegal dumpsites. I don't know which is better... The results of the effort or the process of getting totally filthy.”

Pam: “I'm a volunteer literacy tutor. For over a year now, I've been working twice a week with a 40-year old, who reads at an elementary reading level. Reading is a skill that most of us take for granted, but not knowing how can negatively impact your life in ways you wouldn't even realize. I really enjoy it, we laugh non-stop and he's making considerable progress, but it's a long, long road. I spend most of my time apologizing for inconsistencies in the English language - stupid English!”

That is great, guys! I'm glad to see you are giving back to the community you live in.

Where can fans get merchandise from the band?

Amy: “You can go to our website: <http://www.motorpsychosrock.com>, follow us on <http://twitter.com/psychosrock> (Twitter) or at <http://myspace/themotorpsychos> (My Space). Come to a show! That's our gas money!”

Pam: “Our website has a comprehensive merch page for all your shopping needs.”

Is there anything at all, that you guys would like to add to this interview?

Pam: “Yes. (to reiterate) website: www.motorpsychosrock.com/

Facebook fan page: www.facebook.com/pages/Motorpsychos/286797122365?v=wall&ref=nf

My Space: www.myspace.com/themotorpsychos

Twitter: www.twitter.com/psychosrock

Amy: “We've been busy putting together new material for a 4th release. I think it's going to be a bit more abrasive than “Coming Of Rage”.”

Pam: “The material we're writing now is dark and heavy and we're really psyched about it...”

On behalf of myself and Metal Maidens, I want to thank you all for taking time with us today. I think the new CD is great and we wish you all the best of luck in the new year and beyond.

Amy "Thank you, Metal Maidens. We really appreciate your support."

Pam: "Thank you!"

Dennis: "Thanks Nick!"

Horns up, brothers and sisters!

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