

What do you get when the coolness of Lemmy Kilmister, the charisma of Iggy Pop, and the fervor of Angus Young all meet and get along famously? Or, wait, what do you call the offspring of an orgy between rock n roll, blues, punk, and metal?

I'll give you a hint...there's only one answer to both questions. Still thinking? Man, I can't believe you don't know this...

OK, Rockers, take my hand and hold on tight. I'm about to introduce you to, not just a band, but an experience...Hailing from Wilmington, North Carolina, I give you, THUNDERLIP!

Taking into consideration different tastes, I'm convinced anyone can find elements of something they like in Thunderlip's music. Listening to it may feel like a time-warp: you're thrust backward to 70s classic rock (Think Schenker-era UFO and Thin Lizzy), then thrown an era forward into 80s heavy metal (think Iron Maiden and AC/DC), then catapulted forward into a sound that is uniquely Thunderlip.

Their self-titled debut, released May 10, 2005 (Lucid Records) is raw rock n roll at its finest. Every song is a proclamation. And then a promise. When Thunderlip tell you (via track #8 "Gonna Die for my Rock n Roll") they're "wired with electric soul" and that they "did it all for the rock n roll" you damn well better believe it. And you will.

Thunderlip's sophomore album, The Prophecy (released August 21, 2007, Lucid Records) is much more polished, making it softer around the edges, yet equally as good. There's a blistering rendition of Deep Purple's "Highway Star" that I actually prefer to the original because the delivery is more honest.



With a crushing bass-line, dueling guitars (ahhhh, yes!!!! Guitar Wars!!!!), wild-man drumming and a front man who doubles as vox master extraordinaire and rock n roll personified, Thunderlip must not only be heard, but seen.

I wasn't kidding when I said Thunderlip is an entire experience. Seeing them live is like riding a roller coaster that you haven't seen from the ground: You don't know what's coming, but you know it's going to be good. Lead singer Chuck Krueger is just as likely to don a cape as he is an evening gown. Or both. Or neither. He may take your beer and take a giant swig, but, don't worry, he'll give it back. He may, as he once did when my girlfriends came with me to a show, spit and then catch the saliva ball in his mouth. (My friends were so grossed out they won't come to another show. Wussies, I say!) He'll likely convulse by the speaker and end up on his knees in front of the audience.

While Chuck is being possessed by the spirit of rock n roll, guitarists James Yopp and Michael McDowell continue to duel, Kenny Ells pounds out the bassline never missing a beat, and drummer Johnny Collins

beats the drums so hard it gives me tendonitis just watching.

Recently, Johnny took time to answer a few questions.

Why did you pick up an instrument in the first place?

I personally started playing drums as a creative outlet. Everyone around me was getting into art, and I couldn't draw or paint for shit, so I started beating on the drums. I actually wanted to play guitar, but drums just naturally came to me, so that's what stuck with.

Tell me about touring: favorite places to play, crowded vs. empty clubs, being on the road.

Touring is great! It's like partying 24/7. You get to see so many great places, and meet so many folks. However, lately it's getting a lot harder. With the price of gas rising, it's next to impossible to break even anymore. So help out touring bands!!!! Visit the merch table, and go check out a show or two some time. Crowded shows are obviously way **better.** It's hard to get into it if no one is there to cheer you on. We totally thrive off of crowd participation.....

How essential are live shows to your music?

I think we are a live band. I mean, the cds aren't a true representation of our sound. We still to this date haven't had a recording that we're all super stoked on. We're very loud, and our sound is pretty brutal.... it's hard to get it right in the studio.

What's Thunderlip's ultimate goal?

WORLD DOMINATION!

Anything else you'd like to add?

Come to our shows! We want to party with ya'll!

And they will party with you! Thunderlip is doing an extensive tour of the east coast this summer (www.myspace.com/thunderlip for full tour details). Well, at least until that World Domination thing happens. Go check them out and get LIP SMACKED! You'll thank me later.

- Maria McKinney

