

HOT RATS

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JOE BONAMASSA

The Blues guitar hero seeks 'Redemption'

REVISIT 1979

Part seven of our look back at a divine decade, featuring Status Quo, Whitesnake, Rainbow and UFO

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well. "We had a great turn out and it was really rewarding to see so many friends and family who have been there from the beginning come along. We sold a bunch of albums which was really overwhelming. We played for around ninety minutes and had a blast. We played the album from start to finish then played a bunch of newer songs which will eventually appear on the next album. We also played an acoustic show a little while back. That was great fun. It's cool to strip things back sometimes and do something different. We're currently in the process of booking up more gigs now," he smiles. Now that the album is done and out there the lads are keen to get gigging. "We can't wait to get out there. We're chomping at the bit and ready to go! We've had enough of recording and want to get dirty and sweaty." The guitars, bass and vocals were recorded at Tristan's home studio. The cello on 'Hollow' was performed and recorded by a friend of Gideon's called Matt Lai. The drums were recorded by Josiah J. Manning at his studio in Plympton called Momentum studios. He also mixed and mastered it and the lads are delighted with what he has done. "He's extremely talented. We originally went in with what we thought would be the guitar tracks for the album, but he advised us that the guitar sound wasn't cutting it! I had to go away and tear it up, start again and take my time and get things right. No short cuts. But it was well worth it, and he was exactly what we were looking for and wouldn't hesitate in working with him again," he says with spirit. "It was a real eye opener and there were a lot of blood, sweat and tears. I had to learn fast. We were originally going to record an E.P as we only had a

weekend booked to record the drums. But then Gideon went and smashed out ten songs instead! He's a machine! I would say from the initial demos to the release took around two years. The next one won't take nearly as long." Skindeep want to start playing more live shows now and they are hoping the album will be a platform for them to do so. "We want to push this album as far as it can possibly be pushed. I know we've got something good going with it and we believe in it one hundred percent. We'll continue to write as well and when the time is right start making the follow up but for now we're going to ride this album out and see where it takes us. We're really proud of it and can't wait for people to hear it and hopefully we'll be able to play live to you all as well," concludes Tristan, bringing an end to our conversation. The album is out now on CD via Bandcamp. It's also available to download via all the major sites such as iTunes, Amazon, Google play etc. It's also available to stream on Spotify as well. Check Skindeep out at <https://skindeepband.bandcamp.com/releases/> <https://www.facebook.com/skideepdevon/> <https://www.reverbnation.com/skideep3/> <https://open.spotify.com/album/3Z8ZwdXpYpAsuUeT85ldSu>

From Brazil, we find the excellent **HOT RATS**, a classic hard rock trio who have a fabulous new ten track CD out now called 'Magnolia' which runs in at just under thirty-five minutes long and is the band's debut album. Hot Rats are: Siquera - vocals and guitar, Duda Cordeiro – bass and drummer Mário Jr. Drummer Mário Jr. believes that music

chose him and not the other way around. From childhood he had access to many records, and those artists that he listened to alongside his family were Led Zeppelin, Miles Davis, Wheater Report, Genesis, Jimi Hendrix.



He always wanted to play drums, but it was only when he was seventeen that he could have a kit of his own. "Since then I have been playing, forming bands, studying music, accompanying artists of other styles, recording, making shows until meeting the guys to form the Hot Rats," he tells me. Bassist Duda Cordeiro believes that the magic of vinyl inspired him in to get into the musical world, initially only as a listener and enthusiast. "I wanted to understand how the sound 'worked'. Like most of the bass players, I bought my first guitar! At the time in my town, the closest I got to six strings were classical guitar lessons and music theory. In the formation of the first bands I started to replace the old bass player and I got very involved with bass," he explains. "And I've been following to this day, working in the different areas of music, such as recordings, sideman, and music education." Singer and guitarist Siquera's first memory was when he was twelve years old and he bought Metallica's 'Master of Puppets' album on cassette tape. "That moved me, changed my life. Dude, I was crazy about that sound! At aged fourteen in 1990, I set up my first rock band where I

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played guitar and sang. The band lasted twelve years. After that I went to study other musical styles and I got totally involved with them, getting away from rock and roll for ten years. When I came back it gave the impression that a part of me was asleep understands; I feel full again," he expresses. Mario Jr's inspirations come from many different places, like Jazz, Fusion, Brazilian Music. "Rock has always been present in my line up being John Bonham, Billy Cobham, Tony Williams, Bill Ward, Mitch Mitchell, Neil Peart; The guys that inspire me a lot," he marvels. Duda is inspired by the various musical aspects in which he is involved with. "I feel influenced by artists who carry a more visceral sound, such as Charles Mingus, Jaco Pastorius and Nico Assumpção. Behind the Magnolia album, the inspiration for great bass players like Geddy Lee and Tim Commerford is evident, for the killer phrases and timbres they own and the eternal Geezer Butler on the heavy, dark bass," he expresses.



Siquera loves Black Sabbath, Ravi Shankar, Scott Henderson, Mahavishnu Orchestra and so many other incredible guys. "But when I hear 'Magnolia'; Besides these indirect influences; In some parts I feel strongly influenced by King Crimson, Rainbow and Deep Purple,"

he tells me. For Mario Jr, there are various interests that bring something to the spirit and recharge the energies for music like yoga, nature, cinema, arts, cosmos, readings, documentaries, which enjoys exploring. Even the music taking up a lot of Dudas time, he is interested in old documentary films, on any subject, especially those of philosophy. "I like the understanding of how we build our way of thinking and living nowadays, how we are affected by the way we are inserted And realize that everything is in process, even our music." For Siquera, he finds it very difficult to stop thinking about music. "You who are musicians will understand me! Rsrs. When I'm not involved with the Hot Rats I'm involved teaching or producing music, since I'm also a mixing engineer. But in the short hours, very much observe paintings, films, sculptures, anyway ... any manifestation of art. I also love quantum mechanics and also everything related to the theme internal energy," he says. Hot Rats is a band that works very well, because of mutual respect among its members. "I think this is a differential. And this is reflected in the music we make, because we have achieved a unique musical chemistry. The energy that flows when we begin to play makes us take the musical performance to other places, not so obvious (As only reproduce the disc). We like to give as much life as possible to our cancers with energizing and interactive performances. This is only possible with the knowledge of ways to improvisation," says Mário Jr with spirit. The band's new album 'Magnolia' was a proof of this, because it was conceived very quickly, and with this mutual understanding. "We managed to give life to this whole

musical idea. It came from songs that Siquera had composed in another wardrobe and we added our vein Rock 'n Roll on top of that," explains Mário Jr. "We liked to put many of our faces in the songs, each one bringing some of their musical baggage, but without losing a sound unit, that is, that it was Hot Rats; This is what we are essentially looking for. They are tracks that have a diversity, but all have a little bit of dynamics, weight, riffs, and energy always instrumentally, besides clear vocals well placed. We can say that we have achieved a much better result than we had expected." The albums was recorded at J Studios, Itajaí-SC, and it was produced by Siquera. "He is a super producer, who knows how to extract the best from the musical performance and timbre of the instruments. Since we played a lot together, we did some jams, and soon (about a month) we started to record the album. The main intention was to capture the real energy we have when we play live," explains Mário Jr. "The battery was recorded in a more natural way, with Siquera and Duda playing together, to give more interaction, besides of course, to be able to come up with new ideas that could be used, and they were." The Future reserves Hot Rats now to put the 'Magnolia' album out to the world. "We want to publicize the album as much as possible through all digital or face-to-face platforms. The main idea is to play this disc live. We believe that playing live will be much more exciting for people. We are currently in the stage of preparation of the launching show and establishing partnerships of disclosure by the seal Valve Rock Discos. This partnership aims to put us on a specific advertising

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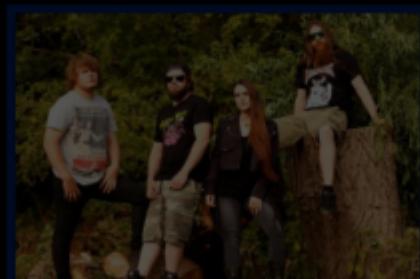
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platform (Target Audience) in addition to concerts at festivals organized by this label. Being able to communicate with a highly Rock'n Roll audience from the UK and around the world, we hope very soon to be there to do shows and play 'Magnolia' live for you. It will be very exciting," concludes Mário Jr, bringing an end to our conversation. Check Hot Rats out at www.hotrats.com.br/ www.facebook.com/bandahotrats/ www.instagram.com/banda_hot_rats/ www.youtube.com/channel/UCBpdBrurQTJzOn11BMCP17w/ <https://open.spotify.com/album/7Jh18gf0gxbTtucpEVuqgb?si=lFFbcP2FTpi2HLKEFD4A5A/> www.deezer.com/album/15126219?utm_source=deezer&utm_content=album-15126219&utm_term=1367992708_1486085591&utm_medium=web

From Cambridgeshire, UK, we find female fronted heavy rock quartet **POWDERHEAD**, who have an excellent new ten track CD out now called 'Don't Let Them Win' which runs in at just over forty minutes and is the band's debut release.



Powderhead are: Hels Johnson – vocals, Jack Lawson – guitar, James Miller – bass, and drummer Ollie Wallace. It's a sunny and warm English afternoon, and singer Hels Johnson, has just scoffed green salad with couscous and ham for lunch, with lots of water, and she is

looking forward to steak for dinner with some ruby ales to wash it down, later this evening. Johnson has always loved to sing and she has done so ever since she can remember. She would sing in every choir going as a kid and particularly remembers singing a solo in front of her middle school assembly – the most nerve-wracking gig that the young artist ever done. "Nothing else has been quite as brutal as that show! I also played clarinet in an orchestra during my school years and music class was always my favourite time of the week," she tells me. Johnson grew up on Bon Jovi, Michael Jackson and Adam and the Ants, then as a teenager, she found herself drawn to alternative, grunge, punk, classic rock and metal bands such as Muse, Metallica, Guns n' Roses, UK Subs, The Doors, Audioslave, to name but a few. Hels then started singing with an acoustic guitarist when she was about seventeen. "We played a lot of gigs on the Cambridge circuit and continued to do so for many years – I watched so many amazing local bands this way, which is still one of my favourite things to do. We picked up some other instrumentalists along the way – a mandolinist, a djembe player etc., and finally became a five-piece folk rock band after about eight years," she tells me. During that time, her musical tastes had become a bit heavier as she became an avid music festival goer, starting off with Glastonbury, then Download, Sonisphere, Bloodstock, Hammerfest, Hellfest etc. "I just love watching live music and the atmosphere at a festival is like nothing else, I still go to at least 4 festivals a year. By my twenties, I was listening to Alter Bridge, Iron Maiden, Black Sabbath, Anthrax, Heart of a Coward, I

could go on! I decided that I really wanted to start doing heavy/hard rock vocals and so when I saw an advert for a newly forming rock band in Cambridge, I thought – I've got to give that a go! That was the beginning of Powderhead," she enthuses.



'Don't Let Them Win' focusses on societal extremes, those living on the edge trying to make it work their way and refusing to conform. "I think we all live in fear to some degree of what others might think and it can be really destructive, stopping you reaching your full potential. It's not saying, go off the rails without a care, but to just go out and achieve what you want, accept some risk and to hell with the doubters – Don't Let Them Win," she says with a rebellious streak. The band's first EP was released back in May 2016, almost two years before 'Don't Let Them Win'. "What more can I say except that since this very early phase in Powderhead's career, we have come a long way as musicians and a band, and our sound has been refined into a different beast," expresses Hels. "The music is heavier, more in your face and takes no prisoners. The album also features a different lead guitarist, Jack Lawson, who has brought his classic rock feel to the tunes and some absolutely face-melting solos." After watching Slash at Download in 2010, Johnson was blown away by their vocalist, Myles Kennedy.