

Behind The SCENES

No sour pussesses in Picklecatz



PICKLECATZ

Scene Setter

PICKLECATZ with DARKSTAR
 ■ **Where:** Zaphod Beeblebrox, 27 York St.
 ■ **When:** Tonight

File photo

By DENIS ARMSTRONG
Ottawa Sun

PICKLECATZ.

It's such a stupid name for a band, it's brilliant, the way a really cheesy horror movie can be really good. *Plan 9 From Outer Space*. You can't help but love it.

If you're cool, you get it. If not, fuhgedaboutit.

But in the competitive world of pop music, band branding can backfire, with hilarious results.

Recently, horrified organizers at the Humane Society benefit needed to clarify one thing before they booked the band for their fundraiser this March. "They booked us for the benefit, then panicked when they thought we were a nasty punk band called The Pickled Cats," says drummer Patrick Calnan.

What a larf.

The band, which plays Zaphod's tonight with Darkstar, is strictly tongue-in-cheek, from the cheesy, virtual reality of their Lava Lounge nightclub headquarters to the "Rat Pack"-style swinging lingo. "We're not looking for people to admire us as musicians," Calnan says. "We hate that. It's dull. We just want to be known for being a really good time."

For Picklecatz, the formula's simple. Write good tunes, stay in tune and show the audience a real good time.

"We used to have guys give out pickled eggs and other free stuff at every show," recalls Calnan. "But they ended up distracting the fans

from the band."

The merry band of partiers pump out a light-hearted blend of country and blues with covers of Alan Jackson and John Lennon.

"It's been described as Blue Rodeo on acid," he explains not altogether seriously. "It's psychedelic acoustic."

The quintet of 30-something hi-tech professionals from Mitel and JDS Uniphase — spearheaded by Troy Jones and including Stephan Meyer on keyboards, Rob Sample on bass and guitarist Matt Scase — came together for last year's Fringe Theatre Festival.

Techno meltdown

The show went well enough to record a four-track CD, *Catz' Tales*. A full-length album, *Sour Milk*, is on the way.

Then, tragedy struck. Ottawa's precipitous techno meltdown left half the band on the dole. "It's left us more time to rehearse," laughs Calnan.

For their gig at Zaphod's, the band has big plans.

"We're celebrating spring break for all those students who couldn't get away this week," he says. "We'll heat things up with a couple new songs, some audience interaction that'll make you think you're in Daytona. It'll be swanky."

If you want to check the band out online, click on to www.picklecatz.com. One of the advantages to having a band filled with techies is you can put together a killer website.

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