

Local Music on the Radio

The Only Two Radio DJs Who Regularly Feature Local Music Are Right Here Exclusively in the *Police Gazette*! Read On...

Fred Hotchkiss and That Sunday Show

That Sunday Show on Magic 101.7 is two hours of broadcast time dedicated to local music and musicians. We play CDs, interview the musicians, and whenever possible get them to play live on the show. And it's a whole bunch of fun. So how did it all come about?

The story begins several years ago, while returning home from seeing Donna The Buffalo play a music festival in Rhode Island. There were bands from all over the country, and I'm proud to say our very own DTB (as fans type it) was by far the most popular performance of the weekend. I say that purely based on the enthusiasm of the crowd. I admit I was very proud to tell my Rhode Island friends that this was a band from upstate New York, not New Orleans or Nashville. So I was wondering how many people in my community knew what a world-class act sprang right here in our midst? And then I started noting how many other talented musicians there are here.

Monday morning, back at the grind with my business, one of the many radio-advertising solicitors visited wanting to get me to put a schedule of commercials on the air. It was my little buddy Eileen from Magic 101.7. She's so totally genuine, you just like her as soon as you meet her. We have become good friends through the years. So on this particular morning when she asked for the order (like any good salesperson), I said "Eileen, why don't you guys put on a show about local music, and I'll sponsor it." Her reply was simple enough: it will never happen.

Fast forward the calendar a few years and along comes a flood that destroys my little business. We fought for just about a year trying to keep it going, but the damage was too severe and we made the decision to shut it down. When Eileen got the word, she came to visit and asked, like so many others, "What are you going to do now?" Being pretty sick of the question, I responded with what I thought was a wisecrack: "I'm going to come down to Magic 101.7 and put on that local music show I wanted to sponsor." She got all serious and said "It might be a conversation; let me get back to you." And she did.

It was several months before we actually hammered out all the details. It turns out that Sunday morning is a special time in radio. I guess the layman way to say it is "hardly anyone listens," so it becomes the time that a station might be willing to take a risk on something out of the ordinary, like this project. It also turns out that Sunday morning is not popular with many musicians who play out until the wee hours on Saturday
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The Local Scene with Ozone in the AM

Greetings, fellow Zoners! I hope everyone is well and enjoying large amounts of local music. If not, why not? There's a plethora of live music happening constantly right here in the Southern Tier!

This month I'm featuring the local band Happy Thieves In Paradise.... Are they happy thieves... and why? Read on, and we'll take an in-depth look at HTIP!

Happy Thieves In Paradise consists of Brian Kowalski (vox, bass, flute, extraterrestrial sounds), Idris Atakli (guitar, vox), and Andrew Tunnison (drums, vox). Together they form quite a potent power trio.

Some of the band's musical influences growing up and into now are Deep Purple, Black Flag, Grateful Dead... obviously an extremely wide variety of musical inputs. When I asked what genre HTIP would classify themselves as, they said "Prog rock, but we are rather eclectic and hard to categorize." Well said. But when "pushed" further for a genre Brian told me "Since I have facial hair and wear glasses, we MUST be progressive." I concur wholeheartedly. But the band intentionally avoids trends. Idris explains, "There are a ton of copy cats in rock music today. Did anybody have difficulty differentiating the Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Aerosmith, AC/DC, Black Sabbath, Pink Floyd, Kiss, Van Halen, Guns N Roses, etc.? These days very rarely you see bands which sound unique AND genuine. It was a no brainer to attempt to do something outside the box. I think we are somehow successful at that. At least we are trying!"

In their prog-rock themed songs, Idris and Andrew usually bring a few ideas or song riffs to practice, and all three band members will work together on an arrangement. I believe they call that "song-writing chemistry" in the music biz, which is a key component to any successful band. HTIP works in collaboration with Basement Audio for the recording and production of their music.

HTIP has an upcoming gig June 15th at Fitzies. So you should come out and catch them live! It is EXTREMELY hard to pull off a three-piece band and provide a full sound... without studio "tricks," of course. Hell, I can sound good in the studio! The guys in HTIP pull off the three-piece band sound with excellence! I have had the pleasure to see HTIP live several times. Every set was full of high-voltage energy! HTIP absolutely loves playing live gigs because "Live shows are the real deal. Nothing beats playing live... for the band or the audience." A few of the local bands that HTIP has enjoyed sharing the stage with are Shake Shake
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MINDFUL MUSIC Tips from Dave Rice



Listening to Yourself

Ever wonder why you keep cranking your amp but still can't hear your instrument or vocals in the mix? The solution might not be thousands of watts worth of equipment. Listen up!

You are most likely deaf from years of playing at Slayer volume in an area the size of a walk-in cooler. But if you've been wearing earplugs during loud performances you can cross this off the list of culprits. People who work in noisy conditions are prone to hearing loss unless their employer has taken OSHA regulations seriously. Legally you're allowed exposure to 90 decibels (db) for up to 8 hours at a time (about as loud as a jackhammer 50 feet away). However, hearing loss can occur as low as 85 db and can accumulate over time. If it's too hard to hear while wearing earplugs, get

a lesser-grade pair that block less sound and allow a little more through.

For those of you wondering what the hell a decibel is here's a quick science lesson. A decibel is one tenth of a bel (named after Alexander Graham Bell) and is used to measure the ratio of a quantity relative to an implied reference level. In other words, it's how loud or quiet your damn amp is! The loudest concert you've ever been to was 120 db. This is all taken into account in a controlled location with professional sound engineers. If it was irresponsibly louder, then you suffered hearing loss for sure.

Humans are supposed to hear frequencies from 20 Hz (low) to 20,000 Hz (high). A frequency is the number of occurrences of a single event per unit of time. Individual frequencies are different tones and you boost them in groups if turning up your trebles, mids, or bass. Picture the highest note you can hit on a guitar "occurring" thousands of times during the same amount of time it takes a low bass guitar note to slowly travel across the room at 30 Hz. Let's say you're exposed to a sound between 100-300 Hz at 150 db.... Chances are you will never hear those particular frequencies again. Hearing loss is permanent without the help of advanced hearing aids, and imagine trying to get a good guitar tone with 2/3 of the most important range of hearing GONE. Still think earplugs are dorky?

Guitarists and drummers are your worst enemy in the battle to preserve your hearing. Drummer hits every note too hard, guitarist

turns up. Drummer can't hear himself, so plays louder. Guitarist turns up again. Drummer is now bashing cymbals as hard as he can and guitarist is hooking up his second 1,000-watt cab. Meanwhile, bassist and singers are wondering if they are even playing the right song! Stay conscious of your dynamic and don't play over top of each other.

Try turning the drive down if you use heavy distortion. The more distorted your signal the less you will hear which notes you are playing. A clean tone actually makes your band heavier and it's the only way to feel the attack on each note. Don't lose your tone in a sea of hiss generated by cheap distortion pedals. And find your tone by placing the amp up high in the room. This is the only way to hear your "sweet spot" (the clearest sound of the amp) and if you're elevated on a stage this is where your audience's head level will be.

For low-end bass guitar, stick to single-cone amps with the largest width possible. For brighter, punchier tones use multi-speaker cabs with smaller-width cones.

To test for hearing loss simply read this article aloud on the opposite side of your rehearsal space. Any band member who doesn't change their tune must obviously be deaf.

Dave Rice owns and operates Basement Audio Recording Studio in Binghamton, NY. Please send feedback, questions, suggestions for an article or your own tips to BasementAudio@gmail.com.