

## The Local Scene with Ozone in the AM This Month: Danny Castro

Greetings Fellow Zoners! I hope everyone got a chance to get out and see some local bands and talent right here in Binghamton and Broome County. There's a ton of local talent around here, so please don't say there's nothing to do or no good bands to go see... because there are!

This month I'm going to put the spotlight on Danny Castro. Not only is Danny involved in CastroFate, Cataclysmic Metal Records, DevilLock, and Hit The Lights, but he is an incredibly talented and gifted musician. If you listen to my radio show on WHRW-FM Binghamton, you've heard every single cut off his first three CastroFate albums. Absolutely rippin' material! I'll reiterate it. If you listen to CastroFate music and you don't buck your head then there's something genetically wrong with you, and you might wanna get that checked out ASAP!

CastroFate consists of Danny Castro, lead/rhythm guitars/lead vox; Dan "Dok" Dwyer, bass and low-end funkiness; Dante Battaglini, all drums and percussion; and Tom DeFazio lead/rhythm guitars. Absolutely stellar lineup! I was actually in for a treat the night I saw CastroFate, because they did a few tunes from their band Hit The Lights... which is Metallica from the Cliff Burton Era.... Nice! They did "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and "Seek and Destroy!" My neck will never be quite right after that, and that was only two tunes! My poor neck is so screwed when I watch a full set from Hit The Lights! The lineup is the same for CastroFate and Hit The Lights, so it was a real treat to get a tasty sampling of both re-

cently at The Martini Room in Kirkwood.

Danny does all of the lead vocals, and he and Tom switch off on the rhythm and lead roles on guitar. While I'm on guitar leads, Danny did something that separates the men from the boys at that show. He was bending the piss out of his strings... shocker I know!... and one string let loose. It happens folks! Danny let loose a rip roaring five-out-of-six-string guitar solo! Absolutely unreal. Immediately after that set I asked Danny about the solo, and he just smiled and said "I just went a little farther up the neck." That's easy for him to say. Doing something like a solo from scratch, on the fly, shows me an impeccable devotion to his guitar-playing craft.

"Dok"... not his real name... fills the bottom-end duties of CastroFate very well. I asked Dok about his name, and he told me "It's just a stage name;" Dok(tor) Bass to surgery immediately please! He has kind of a fuzzy tone, but he still has that punch-you-in-the-chest tone that we all know and love and have come to expect! It looked to me like Dok played a majority of the band's tunes with his fingers. Having a punchy lower-mid in his tone is key, especially when playing with fingers. Playing with a pick is much easier to attain a punchy, fast-attack sound. Dok has gotten that bass punch sound down to a surgical science.

Dante on drums is an excellent fit for this band because he is such a powerful drummer. As I've noted in previous columns I don't care for pussy-foot toe-tapper drummers. Hit those drums like you mean it! Dante delivers! I especially liked his tasteful use of the kick drum/pedal. Double kick drumming (in my book) can be overdone. Dante has an enormous drum kit, and he uses every drum on that kit. I really liked his tasty fills going down the kit. Drum overfills (to me) can be a problem too. A drummer's job should be to acquire and maintain the timing of the song, and hold it. Not faster, not slower. It's gotta be right in

"the groove." Because of Dante's drumming, CastroFate has an extremely thick groove. Very Nice.

Tom DeFazio on the Gibson Guitar also fits the CastroFate band because of his guitar-playing talents. There are no slouches as far as players in this CastroFate lineup. Can you imagine having Danny as the "other" guitar player in the band? My God, just keeping up with Danny, Dok, and Dante would be something unattainable for me. Then Tom does leads on top of this incredible rhythm section, which is quite a task in itself! With Tom's ear-punching Gibson sound, you better be prepared for his sonic onslaught.

I didn't ask any questions about Danny or Tom's particular guitar-tone settings or anything, but I can say that Tom and Danny's guitar tones certainly complement one another. Tom's leads to me sounded really creative and complex, which again falls into the practice-makes-perfect category. Guitar players can complement one another, or completely overpower one another... in respect to the individual bands or settings. I was pleasantly surprised to see how well the two lead players complemented one another.

CastroFate, DevilLock, and Hit The Lights will be doing several upcoming gigs and events. Mark your calendars when you see any of these bands playing gigs. I know DevilLock is playing the Shelter Slam 5 gig this weekend at the Choconut Inn. Stop by and check them out! I'll either be working the door or getting in trouble somehow at the Shelter Slam 5 gig. All of the bands above are on Facebook and ReverbNation. Keep an eye on my Ozone Facebook page for updates!

As always, thank you very much for tuning in Ozone In The AM at WHRW-FM 90.5 Binghamton. You can also check us out online at [www.whrwfm.org](http://www.whrwfm.org). You guys and gals in the Ozone Nation are the best. Hope to catch up with you every Monday morning from 7-10 AM at WHRW. PEACE!



## MINDFUL MUSIC Tips from Dave Rice

### Social "Not"working

To fully grasp the point of this article turn off your cell phone before reading. I'd like to take you on a little journey to the ancient past... before you were virtual friends with your entire extended family, 375 bands that you don't even like, and the guy who sits in the cubicle three rows down from you at work who sometimes talks to you in the parking lot.

Before you answer the text that just came in (for those of you who ignored step 1) go outside wherever you are. If you're in Binghamton it will be raining—that's ok, and might even encourage you on to the next step. Now, scream "F\*\*K MY LIFE" into the sky as loud as possible regardless of who's watching. The experience should humble you if executed correctly. Note that no computer screen stands between you and the judgment of your peers!

Next, crawl into the nearest dark hole or cave... if none are available, try your drummer's apartment. Live in the disgusting hole for the next three months. Your only task whilst there is to whittle a single block of wood into an instrument of your choice. Note that strings for this instrument are not readily available and require the sacrifice of local cats (ancient times remember, before you get mad at me).

Now that some appreciation has grown for what you have, return to your rehearsal space. Note the stacks of equipment that may be covered with dust. Suddenly that Peavy amp with the blown fuse is looking pretty easy to repair! Sit down and write a song about your experience in the hole. You'll find lyrics easily flowing from your brain and the pain you are certainly in will be real!

NOW you've got something to post about on your music-related social networking site. Your "friends" will "like" the fact that you suffered at great extent to build your own cat-gut guitar, even though the thought of it makes them sick and they would never do such a stupid thing.

So here's the most important part about returning to the future... learning to control yourself. Your animal instinct may be to invite 50,000 people manually to see the cat-gut thing. But please, chill out. You should have learned back in the cave that good things grow over time. The guitar that cost you \$1,500 sat alone, became warped over time, and was

abused by every pseudo guitarist who ever played it... but you'll be damned if a single fly lands on the creation which consumed three months of your life! You are confident that you worked your absolute hardest and that is the kind of work that promotes itself.

Over-posting is quickly becoming a disease. An affliction without cure as more and more options become available for musicians to ruin their careers before they even start. Fans are equally affected by the condition. Music fans in the past were literally institutionalized as a result of their rock n' roll addictions. If you picture a league of monsters chugging beer all wearing the same band t-shirt and being louder than the concert itself, you are assuredly correct. Compare to the attitude of safely "liking" a band, but never once seeing them live, buying merchandise, or sadly even HEARING the band first.

Before I become guilty of the affliction myself, I must wrap up this lecture and remove myself from the computer. Please turn your cell phone back on if you have a yearly plan and your service didn't expire in the cave. You've missed three issues of the *Police Gazette*—if you survived this challenge you should pick them up.

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](mailto:BasementAudio@gmail.com).