

Freeflow's music does exactly that

Fusion: Genre-Hopping Kitchen-Sink band defies industry's need for easy Categorization

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On Music

The five members of the Vancouver-based soul, reggae, hip-hop, rock and kitchen sink band hail from all over, from Toronto and Orillia, Ont. to Revelstoke and the Kootenay's.

Three of these guys – Vocalist Jason Evans, bassist Simon Davies and drummer Ryan Davis – were enrolled in the music program at Selkirk College over in Nelson, while keyboard guy Wilson Padmos and guitarist Reece Worth were at Capilano College on the North Shore.

They all coalesced one way or another about five years ago at the El Cocal on the Drive, home of the Mexi/Spanish atmosphere, regular live music, and the \$5.50 pitcher of beer, as convivial a home a young jam combo could ask for. It was Freeflow's musical haven for the first six months.

It used to be people would shuck school and generally drop out when they committed a life to music, living that nocturnal, boho dream, but not according to these guys. School is where you get started.

“For a lot of people it's a great place to make musical contacts as well as improve their chops,” says Evans. “For me, especially, it was a great place to network and find other people that were on the same page musically... This was a jazz-based program. A lot of ear training and harmony. It was pretty eye-opening.”

The band's mantra, philosophy and mission statement – also on the cover of their new, debut CD – is “You Can Do Almost Anything” a take on life that's helped them through these past five years. Nobody's getting rich here, after all. There are day jobs from landscape-company foreman to music teacher to stay-at-home dad to ESL teacher.

But if there has been an underlining philosophy for these guys it's rejecting the notion that different genres are mutually exclusive. Growing up in Toronto Evans was exposed to a lot of urban stuff – hip-hop and reggae – while guitarist Worth comes from a classic rock background and bassist Davies was a big Chili Peppers and Primus fan. Drummer Davis is a jazz dude.

OK, so what do we call it?

“I think that's something we've all struggled with as a band,” says Evans. “Not so much for us because we know what we're playing...but as far as industry people, they're going, ‘Where can we put these guys?’ I just respond [that] we're a rock band with hip-hop and soul roots. The fusion of music now is going on everywhere.”