

Jeremy Porter

Music Now Artist/Band Spotlight Weekly Series

Americana/Acoustic Musician Jeremy Porter is bringing his experience, background, passion, heart & soul to the music industry as a solo artist. Jeremy is taking the good and bad that comes with his past band experiences and giving his fans all of him through his new solo project. Our Webzine recently had an opportunity to speak with the artist about his music and life as a solo artist. Here is what developed. Enjoy!

Isaac: I just listened to several songs off your new EP/CD. What was the inspiration for making your new album?

Jeremy: Hi Isaac. The record came about after a year of playing and writing by myself and for myself outside of the context of a band. When The OffRamps were coming to an end in late 2008, I started playing some solo-acoustic shows. Then last year, I did a little bit of touring and realized that not only did I have a bunch of new songs without a home, but a record would be a great vehicle to play more shows and connect with more people.

Isaac: Who were your influences?

Jeremy: When I was really young, I would go through my parent's records and listen to stuff like The Beatles, Stones, Beach Boys and Dylan. Then I heard KISS, and shortly thereafter came Cheap Trick and The Knack. A few years later I heard bands like The Clash, The Replacements and Social Distortion and everything changed. Finally, it was Johnny Cash, Gram Parsons and Tom Waits. So it's kind of all over the place, but heavy on music with hooks and good songwriting and full of characters.

Isaac: What do you consider to have been the highlight(s) and lowpoint(s) of your career to date?

Jeremy: Well, anytime a band breaks up is a low point. You put so much work into getting to a certain point that it really sucks to see it end. A couple times in my life that has happened with a new record either just released or ready to be released and that waste of time and effort adds some extra sting. But you move on and look forward to the highlights to come!

The highpoints have involved touring and road trips with bands, the general camaraderie that happens on and off the stage, and all the adventures. My current band Fidrych has been a great experience - connecting on levels that I haven't experienced in years (or ever). As a solo artist, releasing my new record on Magwheel records and touring to support it have been very rewarding.



Jeremy Porter

Isaac: Brief history about your background plus the style of music you play.

Jeremy: Ok. I grew up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and helped form one of the first punk bands up there in 1985 (The Regulars). In 1988 I moved to the Detroit/Ann Arbor area and joined a band called Chutes & Ladders, played lots of shows, and then formed Slugbug. For most of the 90s Slugbug toured, recorded and played regularly for a Chicago based indie label called Red Eye Growler. Despite some success and label interest we broke up in 2000. Less than 6 months later I formed The OffRamps. For 7 years, we played a ton of shows and put out 2 records that I am proud of. It was near the end of that band that I started doing the solo-acoustic thing which was the catalyst for the new record. Last year I formed Fidrych with the OffRamps bassist and 1/2 of a band from Ann Arbor called Porchsleeper. Between my solo stuff and Fidrych I have plenty to keep me busy!

My style is sort of a schitzo-blend of good old hook-laden power-pop rock and alt-country/Americana.

Isaac: How easy is it to get gigs for you as an artist? What is the live music scene like in your area?

Jeremy: Getting gigs is easy. Anyone can get a gig, I don't care who you are. Getting GOOD gigs takes a lot of work. It helps to have a record behind you, and it helps to know the right people. If you are going in cold, you also have to know the line between being persistent and working for a show, and when you are being annoying and need to back off.

The scene around Detroit isn't great unless you have a real buzz going. People don't really just go out and see bands like they do in some other cities I've played. There are some really cool bands and good venues around here, but it's not easy to keep at it.

Isaac: What do you think of the state of Indie music at the moment? Do you listen to radio much at all? Has the Internet helped music grow or hindered it in your opinion?

Jeremy: I don't think you can stop the progress of technology, so I choose to focus on the positives. I think the Internet is good for music. Even social media sites, which can be really annoying, have a positive effect. Bands can communicate with their fans easier and music fans can find bands and check them out easier. The downside is that there is so much out there that you have to weed through a lot more to get to the good stuff, but good music is worth working for.

There's a band from a town adjacent to mine called Over My Dead Brody that I've been listening to. I found them, or they found me, on MySpace. Great stuff right next door that I might never have heard had it not been for the web. There is still so much great music being made - even at the indie level. Again, it seems like there are so many bands out there that the good ones have to work even harder to stand out, but they're out there.

I listen to Sirius Satellite Radio when I listen to radio at all. The Outlaw Country channel is one of my favorites. I was into the Springsteen channel, too. Oh, and the traffic channel is a big hit with me!

Isaac: If you could create a fantasy band - what would be the line-up and why?

Hmm. Good question. How about Rick Nielson on guitar, Tom Petersson on bass, Bun E Carlos on Drums and Robin Zander on vocals. I would stand in the back, occasionally play tambourine
Jeremy: maybe, and watch. Every night would be the best show you've ever seen.

Isaac: What CD's do you currently have available and where can they be purchased from?

Jeremy: My new record Part of one is available on iTunes and online. Go to the STORE link on my website for several options: www.jeremyportermusic.com.

Isaac: Where can fans access your music, videos, blogs, and anything else about you online?

Jeremy: At my website, MySpace and Facebook pages.

www.jeremyportermusic.com

<http://www.myspace.com/jeremyportermusic>

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Jeremy-Porter/43142869424>

And don't forget Fidrych: <http://www.myspace.com/fidrych>

Isaac: Message to your fans?

Jeremy: Yeah - support your favorite bands by buying their music and seeing them live. Don't be lazy - go to a show! Get there early to see the opening bands that might be great and aren't getting paid much, buy their merch if you like them, even if it's just a sticker or a pin. Encourage your friends to do the same.

[Jeremy Porter's Official Website](http://www.jeremyportermusic.com)

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