

1.07 Up and Comers

Bands, clubs, artists, and businesses that you may not have heard of yet...but that we think are going to make a name for themselves really soon ~ and you get to hear about them here, right before they make it big!

Where Are They Now?



BAND

Funkatronic

Let's get funkyed up By Bobby Hankinson

Ladies and gentlemen, the funk has hit the fan.

Brothers Justin and Paul Caraher, collectively known as Funkatronic, infuse jazz, rock, electronica and a dash of jam-band to create a sound wholly their own. The result ~ as their name hints at ~ is almost too funky for words.

"We're like Parliament Funkadelic, but we could never be that funky," Paul said.

Oh, but he's being modest. While the legendary P-Funk is comprised of many, many members, Funkatronic reaches the same level of cool with just two. Paul layers loops with bass, keyboards, and guitar and Justin takes to the drums. Even with just the two of them, the sound is surprisingly fleshed-out and full. When they set up at shows, people are surprised to learn the size of the band. "I can almost predict it," Paul said, "They're looking at you, sizing you up, like 'Where's the rest of the band?'"

Don't confuse Funkatronic with other duos like the White Stripes or the Black Keys ~ the band isn't indie or punk influenced. Instead of citing the Pixies or the Kinks as their musical heroes, the brothers lean more toward jazz greats like Miles Davis and Charlie Parker.

Before they were exploring the New England jazz scene from their headquarters in Providence, the brothers grew up south of the Mason-Dixon in Nashville. Their mother sang in the symphony, so the boys got great seats for many performances. Paul said seeing internationally-renowned classical guitarist Angel Romero was a major influence on his musical development. The other turning point for him was taking lessons with Nick Nixon, a Nashville blues legend.

Still, Paul was drawn to hard rock heroes like Van Halen and Jimmy Page. It wasn't until he was older that he began to get interested in jazz. Both brothers have played in bands since they were young, but they learned that nothing could beat the experience of keeping it in the family. "We have like a telepathy going, because we grew up together and know each other really well."

After planning a move to the north, the brothers packed up and headed to Providence five years ago, hoping to capitalize on the region's jazz following. They have been touring the Northeast constantly, performing at Trumbull Bar and Grill in Spencer and Partner's Pub in Fitchburg.

The band is surely worth braving the cold, but if you feel like staying in, you can check Funkatronic out at myspace.com/funkatronics or pick up their CD "Up from the Underground" at cdbaby.com/funkatronic.

But regardless of whether you catch the band live or pop in a disc, you can at least be sure these two will play that funky music right.