

For Zebras in Public, It's Not All Black and White



Zebras in Public, Reverbnation



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Zebras in Public

Rating:

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Zebras in Public, or 'ZIP' as they're known by their family, friends and ever-growing number of fans have released the latest track that gives us a glimpse to the other side of this well-rounded and bar raising group of musicians. The name itself conjures up the images of the black and white striped animal that runs wild in Africa. Not unlike this creature, ZIP is composed of musicians of Caucasian and African-American ethnicity. But you know what? It doesn't matter. The sound that is produced from this group from the Cincinnati area knows no boundaries, no stereotype and above all, no limits.

Known for their upbeat and positive tunes that transcends the normal messages in the majority of today's music, ZIP doesn't sing about violence, prejudice, or negativity. With songs like, 'Ladies Rock', and 'Propaganda', the message that front man Zebediah Williams preaches, is about love, being positive and as heard in Propaganda, "It's okay to be yourself." And that's obviously not a problem, as several months ago as I went to meet Zebediah Williams, Justin Smith, Brandon Masters, Chris Himes and Ian Z., and see them play at the Mainstay Rock Bar in downtown Cincinnati, and found Zeb in the parking lot, with head phones on and rapping to a song in order to get warmed up. I thought to myself, "He's a rock rapper?"

I had the opportunity to sit down and talk with the group prior to their show, and learned about their beginnings, their goals and their dreams. Individually, and as a whole. As if their outgoing personalities and fun loving ways weren't enough to charm the skin off a snake, I noticed the numerous people coming over to the table to say hello and shake hands, full of smiles and obvious excitement of what was about to come.

Once on stage, it was obvious that all five were comfortable, at home and knew how to work a crowd. I'll admit, they didn't have to work too hard, as their music did the job for them. However, they didn't stay on the stage in front of a microphone, or even pace back and forth. They actually got off the stage, mingled with the crowd. Justin Smith, and Brandon Masters on rhythm and bass guitars, respectively, performed flawlessly while walking among their fans, and Zebediah moved from stage to bar top and back as if some sort of rock ninja. I was mesmerized, and quickly added my name to the black and white attack of ZIP fans.

I knew that Zebras in Public could rock the house and get the floor jumping, but I wondered about their adaptability. After all, great rock bands are not only known for the bombastic performances, but they always have an ace in the hole. A ballad. Today, I noticed two new tracks added to their Reverbnation page. These being 'S.O.S. (Sounds of Sacrifice)' and 'Let it go'. And there it was. 'Let it go' will quickly go down in ZIP history as the song that slow dances, broken hearts and lost loves have in common. It's a song of pain, of a hurting heart and what one man would do just to have another chance. With lyrics, such as, "Am I out of time? I never wanted to hurt you. I just wanted to be special.", one cannot help but mentally place themselves in Zeb's shoes and think back to a lost love, or missed opportunity, worthy of a song such as this.

As I write this article on one of the great up-and-coming bands in the Cincinnati area, I hear the words of 'Let it go' cascading through my head, and Zeb's haunting sound of "I just want to be special."

Well congratulations, Zebras in Public, you are special, as many, many of your adoring fans will attest to. But, from a reviewer's perspective, I can't show favoritism. So, I'll just sit here, finish this article, and hit the play button....for the umpteenth time. Zebras in Public. Check them out. Now.