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Zimmer's Hole enjoys madness, aims for ridiculousness on tour

musicpreview

Zimmer's Hole

With Savannah
Friday, 14 March at 10pm
The Velvet Underground

MATTHEW SCHOETTLE
Arts & Entertainment Writer

What do you get when you combine a prosthetic penis, a chicken on a microphone, and a casting kit meant, for all intents and purposes, to congeal the female anatomy? You get, in band form anyway, Zimmer's Hole.

If you haven't already figured it out, Zimmer's Hole—taking singer The Heathen, drummer Gene Holgan, and guitarists Chris Stanley and Jed Simon from popular Vancouver-based metal acts Fear Factory and Strapping Young Lad—is all about having fun. That way, explains bassist Byron Stroud, heavy metal isn't just about blood, gore, and playing in drop-C.

"For us, we're playing such ridiculously heavy music, I mean, [let's] have fun with it—lighten up. If you're having a good time, your audience will be having a good time. We want our band to be about a show: we want people to come out and see us live because that's when we're at our best, you know? We have props and all that

kind of shit."

And props are where Zimmer's idea of fun gets interesting. The Heathen, for example, is renowned for sporting devil horns, blood-red face paint, and, on occasion, a puppet chicken on his hands while grasping the microphone.

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BYRON STROUD
ZIMMER'S HOLE BASSIST

"That's his schtick. He's a heathen; he's a demon. He doesn't even do interviews—he lives it, you know?" Stroud says. "[The puppet is] for our song 'Fully Packed,' and it's got a bunch of *Chicken Little* samples in it. He's the singer so, you know, I think he can get away with it."

Samples from children's classics aside, the daily routine on tour can become monotonous, he explains. "You're just waiting around to

do the show. Once you're in the mode, tour can become pretty boring actually. There isn't much sightseeing."

In the case of Zimmer's Hole, however, "sightseeing" is relative.

"Our singer likes to bring out his casting kit with his molding gear that he has to cast female body parts when we're on tour," Stroud chuckles. "So, you know, you're walking backstage after a show, and you're like, 'Whoa! Okay ...'"

Pranks too, says Stroud, keep Zimmer's Hole entertained while on the road (if the casting of the genitals of fans backstage can be considered as more of a hobby than a prank, that is.) Enter the prosthetic penis.

"Yeah, we have a big prosthetic cock that we serve cocktails out of. You'll pass out on the bus or something, and there will be Polaroids of you with this big dick," Stroud laughs. "But when you're in your bunk, that's off limits; if you're not in your bunk, then it's game on."

But for Zimmer's Hole, all the prosthetic dicks, mic chickens, and plaster-cast chicks in the world are meaningless if the band—and the fans—aren't having fun.

"Oh yeah, it's all about having fun," Stroud says. "We write the heaviest music we can, but we also give the humour and the visuals to go along with it, so hopefully, everyone leaves with a smile on their face."



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