



Limerick City Gallery of Art

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Friday : 10am - 6pm

Thursday : 10am - 7pm

Saturday : 10am - 5pm

Sunday : 2pm - 5pm

Admission to the Gallery is FREE

January - March 2007

Sean Lynch Exhibition

LCGA

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Since their inception in 2002, Roper have been following a hard path in an already treacherous industry. In a country with limited artistic outlets for home-grown acts, even commercial, radio friendly acts have a tough enough task to get heard. Metal bands are practically pariahs. However if you're as good as Roper have become, it starts to become impossible for the scene-sters and the powers that be not to take notice.

While some metal bands hold dear to the train of thought that 'it ain't metal 'til someone's ears bleed', Roper pull off a coup by managing to play music as heavy as lead slab while still being eminently listenable. The last two years have seen the band crowned Miller/Fender band of the year, then making the final 5 bands out of 600+ entries in the Brave New Stage competition in Dublin's Whelan's and the final of the National Student Music Awards also at Dublin's Temple Bar Music Centre and opening for Mudvayne on their first ever visit to Ireland in 2006.

As you are now, Roper have been around for about three years, but you've had a few line up additions and changes haven't you?

The band was formed in 2000 and started as a three piece, Myself my twin brother Brian and drummer Dave Daly. In 2003 Dave was replaced by Brian Meaney but later returned as a guitarist to make the band a four piece. In 2004 he left for college life and Bryan Griffin stepped up to take his place.

The current Irish music scene is awash with indie kids and depressed singer songwriters, and there is a distinct lack of venues and opportunities for radio airplay, Roper definitely stand out, but do you feel being such a heavy act in a country with a relatively limited music scene has ever hindered you?

Yeah its very difficult trying to organise gigs here as most people's attitude towards metal is quite close-minded, and they think it's just noise. There are some venues around that will cater for all genres like Dolan's and Bakers here in Limerick for instance. I'd hate to be just starting out. We entered a string of competitions and did quite well in all of them, which I think does stand to us when we approach venues but we had to do that to get the attention.

When you started out, was it with the definite aim of being as heavy as you are or was it just how it turned out when you started to play together?

Well our influences have changed since the early days but so too has the bands line-up. Each member has his own influence on the music, which I think is instrumental in developing our sound. When we started we would have listened to Pearl Jam where as now we're listening to Lamb of God.

The general consensus from reviewers who've heard the band has been one of pleasant surprise, even those who admit to not being fans of the genre. What do you think it is about Roper's music that induces this reaction?

There are a lot of people who dismiss us as just another metal act until they see us. I think we have an energy that is entertaining to everybody. We also don't take ourselves quite as seriously as some other metal bands. "Its not about satan and eternal darkness... it's about good music."

You've obviously got the album out now, where did you record that and who was behind the desk?

We recorded it with Mark O'Connor in his Annacotty pad and had it mastered by our would-be producer friend Dave Chambers. It was good to be working on it with people we knew and who's opinions and critiques we could value and respect. I think it resulted in a great record and all the feedback from it is very positive, which is encouraging.

How did the band handle that much time in studio which can be a claustrophobic experience at the best of times, and do you feel you've learnt anything that you might do differently next time?

On this particular occasion there was very little controversy compared to our visit to Cork in early 2005 (for the "Left To Stampede" EP). We all had to sleep in a hostel room with two bunk beds, which sounds reasonable enough. Until we realise that some of us like silence when sleeping where some of us like to snore. Poor Brian Meaney was on the brink of triple homicide by morning. Now we have to pre-arrange special sleeping quarters for him or he'll end up sleeping in his car like the first time we went to the North

You and Brian are obviously close, but do the trials and tribulations of being in a band ever bring either of you close to fratricide?

Only when he's being a bitch...

roper play the warehouse on march 24. contact the warehouse on 061-314483 or log onto www.dolanspub.com, www.roper.ie or www.myspace.com/roperIRL for tickets or further details. gallows hill is on sale now.

on the release of their debut album, 'gallows hill', limerick's heaviest, **roper**, play the warehouse as part of a national tour | derek keane talks bleedin' ears.

ROPERING THEM IN

