



The Telluride Jazz Celebration Newsletter

The Fresh Faces of Telluride Jazz: An Interview With Licorice

Telluride Jazz is always searching for hot new acts and Licorice is one act we think you should definitely experience. Consisting of David Lott on guitar and vocals, Chad Dinzes on keyboard and vocals, Matthew Epstein on bass guitar and Joshua Bloom on drums and vocals, Licorice recently sold out their Friday night debut at the infamous Blue Note in NYC and are starting to make waves in the scene. A local favorite at the 2003 Telluride Jazz Celebration, we are bringing them back this year, with the help of the Raynier Institute and Foundation.

Since the last time that Licorice played Telluride, the group has undergone some profound changes, adding Dinzes to compliment their highly fused sound. "We have a heavy focus now on songwriting and lyrical development. It gives us an additional platform to improvise on," said Lott. Still, the transition from an instrumental trio to a quartet with vocals was not seamless, as Dinzes explained, "It was a little nerve-racking. At first, I felt like every time we played I was auditioning." Taking gigs only weeks after first playing together, the young quartet quickly embraced their latest addition and fused his sound into the mix.

The transformation from trio to quartet only made Licorice stronger, landing them gigs at some of NYC's most respected venues. "Playing the Blue Note was amazing," said Epstein. "Musicianship is emphasized there, so we got to show off what we really do at rehearsal. It let us explore the space and take our improvisation to the next level."

At the 2003 Telluride Jazz Celebration, Licorice caught the ear of someone who is no stranger to next-level improvisation: Larry Coryell. After sitting in with the band during a late night set, Coryell took an interest in their sound and has since kept in touch with them, even giving guitar lessons to Lott. "We've had such a good experience with Coryell. He really took us under his wing," said Lott. When asked if Coryell would be playing anywhere with them this year, Lott's reply was cryptic: "You never know."

One of the many younger groups that play off the beaten path at the Telluride Jazz Celebration, Licorice will be gracing the Raynier Institute and Foundation Elk's Park Free Stage (Friday, August 6 from 3:00-4:00 p.m. and again, time and date TBA), as well as playing several night venues (locations TBA). In addition, Lott will be performing with Cloud Nine on Saturday, August 7, at the Telluride Convention Center. "One of our 2 side-stage sets will be a tribute to Miles Davis," said Epstein. "We really wanted to connect ourselves to the foundations of the festival. We're not a standard jazz band, per se, so we wanted to take our style and use it to make new music. We wanted to share our own adaptations ... It's going to be a whole set of Miles Davis 'remixes'."

Having one Telluride Jazz Celebration performance under their belts, Licorice already knows the perks of performing in Telluride. "We're very excited to be coming back," said Lott. "The audience here is exceptionally receptive, like at the Blue Note. We're more than happy to be a part of the festival."

"The thing that blew us away last year was that not one person had heard of us when we arrived," recounted Epstein. "We stood by the gondola and handed out flyers. Every single person took one and most came out to the show. It doesn't work like that in New York!"

To learn more about Licorice, recording their full length album debut this fall, visit their website @ www.licoricemusic.com.

Buy your tickets to the Telluride Jazz Celebration now! Call 970-728-7009 or visit us on the web @ www.telluridejazz.com.