



<http://www.northeastintune.com/august/papa.html>



**Papa Hoodoo Medicine Show
"Papa Hoodoo Medicine Show"
(Self Released/Unsigned)
Ridgefield Park, NJ
By: Daniel Lavagna**

Gather round this band train folks, cause with a name like "Papa Hoodoo Medicine Show" you know you're in for some smooth jams. Hailing mostly from Bergen County (the greatest NJ county of course), the members of P.H.M.S. each carry a unique allure about them, adding to the force that is the band. When taking a look at their web-page (<http://www.papahoodoo.com>), one can stumble upon everything from song samples, to a message board, to bios that further emphasize the mystique of the band. By contributing musicianship, depth, and attitude to the project, the members of Papa Hoodoo Medicine Show guarantee good times for their listeners.

At first I was a little perplexed to discover very little info about the band on their press kit page. There were only two songs and two pictures available, along with a rather short biography. As stated previously, the website resolves this, filling in all the necessary spaces of information. And then of course there's the music, in which case good chunks of all six songs on the band's E.P. are available. For a second there I was worried I wouldn't find much on the band, so I must encourage others engaging in P.H.M.S. to check out their website if the press kit leaves them unsatisfied.

Percussive voodoo clatter initiates the first track ("Voodoo Garden") on Papa's self-titled album. For those of you who are strictly conventional: Fear not! The sound effects add aura to the music, and boy is it a change from your standard radio tune. I can recall being told this is the same way Marilyn Manson started, by giving the audience a show in addition to the music. These guys have both attributes under their wing, combining cinematic elements with the genre of Jam Band Americana. Great rhythm and presence in this introduction track.

"Put Yer Foot Down" and "King Solomon Hill" are the next two tracks on the album, which are also the the 2 tracks you can hear in full on the press kit page. It's here that you'll really find the vocals shine through the most, while in later tracks the individual instruments seem to play more to the spotlight. Don't get me wrong, you

still have your good ole' solos chock full of drum fills and guitar/ bass licks in these songs. Sadly though, you'll already be through half the album by this point.

Who doesn't love when cowbell kicks off a song, just as in the next track "Ode to Mountain"? If you're not having fun listening to these jams by now, I must wonder if you ever have fun at all. Being a jazz enthusiast I especially love the 5th track, "Tea Bag", which contains no lyrics in the 2 minute clip on the website. The guitar tone is nice and juicy as is the combined rhythm of keys/bass/percussion. These two songs really fill out the band's territory, which now covers areas from ambient to rock to jazz and beyond. The final song ("Deep Ellum Blues") tops off this genre cake with some universal blues action. Sure the album is only 6 songs, but amazingly it seems to cover all the bases (OK fine, there's no Rap but who really cares).

So what's the final thought on Papa Hoodoo Medicine Show folks? Well, to my pleasure it appears they are playing locally in August, so I'll get to check out the vibe in person. While most jam bands require much attention from listeners (as their jams usually go on for long periods of time), Papa Hoodoo and his crew do not. So next time you're in a situation that requires something to break the boredom or set a positive mood, I suggest some Papa Hoodoo. With the maneuverability of reasonable song lengths and the musicianship/rhythm of a jam band, Papa Hoodoo Medicine Show surely can sooth your ails.