

MUSIC

THE AMISH OUTLAWS

By Bill Bodkin

It was April 30 during Bar Anticipation's Spring Bash in Lake Como. As I was taking photos of the event I noticed six Amish looking guys in electric blue shirts walking around. I thought it was some sort of gimmick, they couldn't really be Amish could they? And even if they were, were they any good?

Well on this night during a set for legendary shore rockers Dog Voices, these six Amish dudes with clever hip-hop stage names took the stage and absolutely stole the show. It didn't matter if Big Orange Cone, The Benjamins or even Monte himself were rocking harder than they ever had before, these guys were what everyone was talking about.

Subsequently, going to a few bars later the next week all I heard about was The Amish Outlaws. The owner of Joe Pop's told me how he drove to the Ringside Pub in North Jersey just to see these guys play and he fell in love with them. He later called STARS Productions (who the band had recently signed with) and told them "I gotta have the Amish Outlaws."

And that seems to be the trend, in rapid fashion both owners and fans are falling in

love with this unique cover act.

What makes these guys so special? Well, first off, this Amish thing isn't a gimmick. No, four of the six members of the band are absolutely, 100% legit Amish.

In the Amish tradition there is a pre-baptismal ritual named "Rumspringa" which allows young Amish at the age of 16 to live a year in society without the restrictions of Amish culture.

Brothers "Eazy Ezekiel" (real name Ezekiel), "Amos Def," "Hezekiah X" and "Brother McMullen" all took their rumspringa at age 16.

However, one is not required to come back to the Amish way of life if they do not want yet they are still considered Amish (much like if you're Catholic and never confirmed, you're still a Catholic).

The four men became enthralled with the non-Amish way of life. Ezekiel commented that it was music, especially rap music that he fell in love with.

His fellow "brothers" also fell deeply in love with music and when the four met in 2002 at a "Rock n Roll Hootenanny" in the Poconos they immediately bonded.

Hezekiah said he saw Ezekiel walking around in his Amish garb and they being fellow Amish men invited him to join them for the rest of the day, the rest became history.

They met "non-Amish" men "Jakob the Pipe Layer" and Ishmael L Cool J and they officially formed the Amish Outlaws, originally an all original

band but their love for covers just took over.

Love is a big part of this band. Not only do they a genuine love playing music with each, they have a love for music and performance. They are extremely passionate about what they play and playing for people. This really translates in their live shows.

For most of the time I spoke with the band, I swore they were putting me on. These were some of the most legitimately nicest guys I had ever spoken to. They were humble, polite and extremely friendly.

Yet when they hit the stage, forget the whole humble, sweet Amish image. These guys hit the stage and they are bona fide rockstars.

During their set at Bar A, they played only two songs. Yes, two songs. Their renditions of Kelis' "Milk Shake" and Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg's "Ain't Nothin' But a G Thang" were not only flat out hilarious but they were extremely well done. Literally you

thought Brother McMullen had channeled Dre because the vocal resemblance was uncanny!

Hezekiah and McMullen are the frontmen of the group while Ezekiel plays bass, Ishmael plays guitar, Amos plays keyboard and guitar and Jakob plays drums.

The band for only playing together for two years played as though they had been together for decades.

After their performance, the crowd was chanting for more. People like Bar A's Tom Jannarone were commenting how these guys were the second coming of The Nerds.

I've seen a lot of big name cover acts play before, but I've never seen a band create such a chemistry with an audience like these guys do. The show is just so fun you literally have to experience it to know just how good these guys are.

The band will be playing August 12 at Bar Anticipation in Lake Como along with cover veterans Blasted. For more check out to www.amishoutlaws.com



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- Fri, Aug 12 - Norwood Inn, Avon
- Sat, Aug 13 - Clam Bar at the Clam Hut, Highlands, 3-7pm
- Sun, Aug 14 - TJK Stadium, Keansburg, 3-8pm
- Tue, Aug 16 - Diamonds Tiki @ Surf Club, Ortley Beach, 7-10
- National Act Saw Doctors to Follow
- Fri, Aug 19 - Lacey Elks, Lacey, 9pm-1am
- Sat, Aug 20 - Jakeabob's, Union Beach, 6-10pm
- Sun, Aug 21 - TJK Stadium, Keansburg, 3-8pm
- Thur, Aug 25 - Tegiano's, Hackensack, 8pm-12am
- Fri, Aug 26 - The Grill Room at Sea Oaks CC, Little Egg Harbor, 8pm-12am
- Sat, Aug 27 - Torro Family Reunion, LBI, 2-6pm
- Sun, Aug 28 - TJK Stadium, Keansburg, 3-8pm
- Tue, Aug 30 - Diamonds Tiki @ Surf Club, Ortley Beach, 7-11pm



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