



Whiskey Myers

Whiskey Myers is loud, proud and not really all that concerned with “fitting in.” None of the guys had ever played in an organized group before they got together in 2007 and started bashing out songs in a big, unkempt band house in Tyler, Texas. And while they may not be overly worried about which chart their music ultimately ends up on, they certainly figured out how to fit in with each other just fine.

That chemistry is part of the real attraction of Whiskey Myers. The band coalesced for all the right reasons—they simply loved music and had to be a part of it. Plus, it beat growing up to work on the nearby prison farm. While their music understandably borrows from a bevy of Southern influences – Skynyrd, ZZ Top, The Black Crowes, Marshall Tucker Band – it is equally informed by the Outlaw Country movement of the ‘60s and ‘70s. These guys know how to write a taut, narrative Country song just as sure as they know how to churn out a swampy rock rhythm. No matter the style or the subject, Whiskey Myers’ music is propelled by an internal competitive gene that seemingly requires every member to evolve into a better player and a better musical partner. Firewater, their 2011 sophomore release, proves that formula beyond a shadow of a doubt.

“You gotta keep gettin’ better,” declares vocalist Cody Cannon. “If you don’t feel like you can get better as a musician, as a writer and as a performer, then you probably need to go ahead and just quit.”

Whiskey Myers’ roots extend back two previous generations, as it turns out. Cannon and guitarist John Jeffers played baseball together in Elkhart, Texas, where Cannon dropped hints as a youngster that he wanted to play guitar. His grandfather - “one of those wild-ass biker dudes,” Cannon says - spent much of his life on the road, but knowingly left behind an acoustic guitar for Cody to practice on.

It was Jeffers’ father that taught the two young boys their first guitar chords, however, and Cannon and Jeffers quickly became obsessed with making music. Cannon happened to work in a sporting goods store, where he met Cody Tate, a like-minded musician destined to take one of the lead-guitar roles in Whiskey Myers. The two Codys began writing music together and quickly added Jeffers into the mix.

After moving to Tyler, the trio met drummer Jeff Hogg, who was spending the better part of his days slaving away painting railroad cars. Hogg happened to witness an acoustic Whiskey Myers set one night that virtually screamed out for someone to sit in on percussion, and naturally, he was the guy to do it. With only a bass player left to round out the band’s roster, Cannon enlisted his cousin, Gary Brown, a real-estate appraiser and ex-jock who’d never played bass before in his life.

“Me and John had to teach Gary how to play the bass, and we didn’t even know how to play bass,” Tate recalls. “We’re guitar players teaching him root notes, little bitty scales and stuff like that, and he just took it from there. He was writin’ his own bass lines within weeks.” (con’t)



Since each member of the entourage had never been in a band before, none of the guys fully understood how they were supposed to function in that role. So they wrote their own rules and bonded around their love for the music. The people who drifted in and out of their pad became a willing audience, and when Whiskey Myers gave its first official performance in Montalba, Texas, the band simply plowed into the set list, practically making it up on the spot in front of 400 people.

“It was kind of nerve-racking to get out there on stage and not really know what I’m doin’ - playin’ a borrowed bass on a borrowed amp,” Brown remembers. “They’re goin, ‘What do you want in your monitor mix?’ and I’m like, ‘What’s a monitor?’ I had no idea what was goin’ on.”

Fortunately, Brown did discover that he liked the experience - as did his Whiskey cohorts, who were emboldened by the opportunity. They quickly secured an opening slot for a Roger Creager show in Gun Barrel City, a date that went over so well that the club owner booked them to open the next weekend for the Eli Young Band. In short order, Whiskey Myers was the hot new thing in the Lonestar State, sharing bills with bands like the Marshall Tucker Band, Reckless Kelly, the Randy Rogers Band and Cross Canadian Ragweed. So began a grueling schedule of dates that kept the band out on the road four to five nights a week.

It wasn’t long before the group also caught the attention of one of Nashville’s most prominent talent agencies, and after signing a booking agreement in 2010, the Texas five-piece found themselves opening for some of Nashville’s hottest stars, including Blake Shelton, Miranda Lambert, Luke Bryan and Randy Houser. The fans loved it, declaring Whiskey Myers a welcome addition to the Country format and bolstering the band’s confidence as an act with national appeal.

While Whiskey Myers’ debut album, *Road Of Life*, established the Tyler, Texas-based outfit as a worthy heir to the Skynyrd blue-collar tradition, 2011’s *Firewater* reveals a group whose songwriting and musicianship has grown by leaps and bounds. Produced by ex-Shooter Jennings guitarist Leroy Powell, the latest album from Whiskey Myers resonates with its absorbing tales of life on the road, lost souls and simple, common-man convictions. At the heart of it all, however, *Firewater* captures a band that is growing more comfortable in their own skin, and maybe, just a little damn proud of it.

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Whiskey Myers:

Cody Cannon - Lead Vocals, Acoustic Guitar
Cody Tate - Lead Guitar, Vocals
John Jeffers - Lead Guitar, Vocals
Jeff Hogg - Drums
Gary Brown - Bass Guitar

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