

the city and skyway

Mitch Lyon vocals **Barry Johnston** guitar/vocals **Dan Gilbert** guitar **Jordan Herrera** bass **Ryan Joyce** drums

Scientists would have a tough time genetically engineering a band more seemingly destined for popularity than **THE CITY AND SKYWAY**. The members of the Enid, OK, rock band's former lineups include members of a veritable who's who of seminal '00s rock, including DASHBOARD CONFSSIONAL, THE PROMISE RING, LIFETIME, HEY MERCEDES, LIMBECK and MARITIME, among others.

While some bands might be content to rely on good, old-fashioned nepotism to work their way to the top, **THE CITY AND SKYWAY** are determined to err on the side of overachievement. So it was that, less than a year after releasing their first EP (*Compose Yourself*, 2008), the Midwestern quintet headed back into the studio to record their debut full-length, *Everything Looks Worse In Black & White*, a punch-drunk ode to musical forefathers as varied as GUIDED BY VOICES, NIRVANA, THE SMITHS, DAG NASTY and THE REPLACEMENTS, whose song "Skyway" was swiped for the band's name.

"It's real. It's not dressed up to be something its not. It's imperfect. It's in your face," says guitarist and founding member Barry Johnston of *Everything Looks Worse In Black & White*. The album is equal parts brains, beauty and brawn, its dizzying melodic gloss propped up with muscular riffage and smart and imaginative song structures. Throughout the album, **THE CITY AND SKYWAY** eschew traditional verse-chorus modes, standard tunings and time signatures in favor of something more challenging to the listener, something with more staying power. Singer Mitch Lyon's caramel vocal hooks strike the listener immediately, but the sonic puzzles underneath make *Everything Looks Worse In Black & White* as much fun for the brain as the ear.

"We were looking to push the envelope with this one," Johnston explains. "We wanted to keep our melodic sense intact. We didn't want to lose or alienate the fans of the *Compose Yourself* EP, which was pretty pop-friendly and palatable. But we wanted to take that pop aspect of what we do, turn it inside out, turn it on its ear and take chances."

On the strength of their debut, **THE CITY AND SKYWAY** were able to legitimize the buzz a band naturally inherits when its resume reads like a who's-who of college radio giants. Through elbow grease, hustle and an impressive pop acumen, the band transcended the superficial hype and cultivated an honest and hungry fan base by pummeling the Midwestern club circuit. Now, with the release of *Everything Looks Worse In Black & White* around the corner, **THE CITY AND SKYWAY** are ready to blow the doors wide open. "It's been really amazing so far," Johnston says of the fans' support thus far. "There's a feeling of real organic goodness in the air."

The band got its start in the winter of 2006, when Johnson and Lyon started experimenting with what would eventually become the first **THE CITY AND SKYWAY** songs. By that point, in addition to serving in numerous bands of their own, Johnston had years of experience as an engineer on the road for bands like ALKALINE TRIO, BAD RELIGION, ANTHRAX and many more. During that time, he and Lyon learned exactly what to do in order to be a successful working band – and, just as importantly, what not to do. "In a time when it seems that more and more bands and artists are concerned with cranking out singles, we're more interested in making and writing records. It's an art form that we're not ready to give up on," Johnston says. "The thing that you learn over the years is that you have to surround yourself with guys that push you. If you're not around the caliber of players or people that make you dig down deep, then you're never gonna get anywhere."

Armed with that knowledge, armed with a wild pedigree and a prizefighter of an album, **THE CITY AND SKYWAY** have their eyes on the horizon. This isn't about cashing in on the past. This is about blowing the future wide open.

"We wrap ourselves in it. We live inside it," says Johnston of the band's prospects. "No excuses. No settling. We're just going for it."



BLACK LODGE PUBLICITY

www.blacklodgepr.com • Jeff Breil - jeffb@blacklodgepr.com • Jeff Royer - jeffr@blacklodgepr.com