



Web Only

Blogs

What to Do In Pittsburgh

City Guide

Online Classifieds

Win Free Stuff

[Home](#) » [Music](#) » [Music Features](#)

[RSS](#) [XML](#)

Search...

GO

[Mail Article](#) | [Print Article](#) | [Add to favorites](#) | [Comments](#) (0)

[My Profile](#) | [My Settings](#)

JANUARY 29, 2009

Motorpsychos grow as they release their third album, *Coming of Rage*

BY [MIKE SHANLEY](#)



"Stand true or step aside": Motorpsychos

Heather Mull

While not exactly the *Behind the Music* template, the lives of Pittsburgh bands often follow a familiar trajectory: Band debuts and develops a following. Band puts out a CD and gets more attention. After repeating this last step -- with some touring occasionally thrown in for good measure -- band disappears. Sometimes the final step is the result of infighting, or side projects overshadowing the proper band. Just as often, real life gets in the way of practice, or the music becomes more of an effort than fun.

With almost nine years under their leather belts, and the same personnel for most of it, Motorpsychos are releasing disc No. 3. With *Coming of Rage*, the band shows no signs of slowing or toning down their pummeling punk-metal attack. If anything, when they sing "Stand true or step aside" in the song "Powerdrive," it sounds like a rallying cry of a band ready to plow ahead.

Since the Motorpsychos' 2000 debut, the band has won some Battle of the Bands-type contests, and performed locally on the Vans Warped Tour and X Fest, as well as in various East Coast cities. Their songs chart high on playlists for the Internet radio site Independent Artist Company, which has helped expand their fanbase at home and abroad.

Sitting in guitarist Pam Simmons' dining room, the four bandmates agree that the passage of time has helped them get more comfortable and develop their music. The band's early lineup included a lead singer, but now vocal duties are shared by

Sign Up
for Your



Spend less
time wondering
what's good -
and more time
discovering it.



got condos?



FOR SALE
STRIP DISTRICT
LOFTS FROM
\$183,000

www.ottomilkcondos.com

Got a thirst for city living? The Otto Milk Building is guaranteed to satisfy. Why rent when you can own a hot piece of downtown property, at a very cool price. Preconstruction prices and big tax credits apply, so get in on the ground floor.



OTTO
MILK BUILDING
CONDOMINIUMS

412-288-2566



NATURAL FOOD CO-OPS
EVERYONE WELCOME
**East End
Food Co-op**



Globally influenced
Locally harvested
Creative cuisine

Lunch | Dinner | Cocktails

736 Bellefonte Street
412-621-3152



Simmons, guitarist Abby Krizner and bassist Amy Bianco; the fourth Motorpsycho, Dennis Brown, is on drums. "We're all learning to anticipate each other a little more," says Krizner. "We can write for somebody else to sing because we know what our strengths are now, and we can fill in the blanks easier."

Coming of Rage changes songwriters with each track, although two songs were penned by all three. While each singer has distinct traits -- Bianco has the corner on the death-metal roar, Krizner can wail and Simmons snarls -- the end result follows Krizner's observation that "it sounds like it's one person writing, even though it's not."

Simmons offers a more concise evaluation of the current disc: "Technically, on the first CD, there's one guitar and one singer. On the second CD, there's two guitars and three singers," she says, laughing, "On this CD, there's two really good guitar players and three really good singers. It's better evolved."

In fact, the new album adds more weight to the sound, since the band, which normally tunes its instruments one note below standard tuning, drops down even further for four of the 10 songs. But the Motorpsychos aren't content with simply pummeling listeners with the brute force of a low-C chord. Most of the songs contain melodic twists and turns that add depth and kick to the searing metal leads and double-bass drum fills. "Powerdrive" and "Monster" prove that terms like "heavy" and "catchy" don't have to be mutually exclusive.

The lyrics of "Matriarch" touch on an issue the band still deals with after years of performances: being prejudged on the basis of gender. "You play like a girl, you drive like a girl, you punch like a girl ... Forgive the ignorant tradition / based on a dimly lit time / It's not an insult when / it's taken at face." Bianco, who wrote the song, explains: "It's so ingrained that people say that, and they honestly mean that as a compliment without thinking about what they just said." She adds, "Besides, there are professional women boxers who would knock you on your ass. So it's not an insult to say, 'You punch like a girl.'"

More often than not, the band says that skeptics who expect to hear a pop-punk girl band are quickly won over when the group starts a set. "People do stand near the stage and, when they've never heard you before, they expect you to suck and they can't wait until you start to suck because you're proving them right," Krizner says. "I think we've proven them wrong because we have a sound that's more aggressive and that's not anticipated for females. It's more of an inherent male thing to get up there and start screaming and pounding."

Simmons recalls sharing a bill with a female band that was heavy on style and yet light on substance, dressing sharp and playing three-chord rock with chirpy vocals. "They came up to us after [our set] and the girl said, 'Oh, I'm going to start taking guitar lessons.'"

**MORE
BEGINNINGS.**

With 23 two-year transfer programs and hundreds of core courses available, thousands of students begin their four-year college degrees at CCAC.



CCAC

**THE SYSTEM
HAS FAILED**



RELIEVE
YOUR ANNOYING
T-SHIRTS & PROPAGANDA
www.BINSHIRTS.com



Motorpsychos CD Release, with Broadzilla and Mojo Filter. 10 p.m. Sat., Jan. 31. 31st Street Pub, 3101 Penn Ave., Strip District. 412-391-8334 or www.31stpub.com

-- [E-mail us about this story.](#)



Advertisement

Take us on the town.

Find local bars, restaurants, movies, clubs and more right on your mobile phone.

To access, visit:
» www.citypapermobile.com

Share this article:



COMMENTS

There are no comments yet for this story. You can be the first.

Post a comment

GO TO



AT THE
SHOPPES
AT
NORTHWAY
MALL

FRIDAY
January 30
7:00 - 11:00 PM

