

I first met the Restless Age about 8 years ago on a Friday night in Athens, Georgia. I was walking downtown past the Globe when I heard a band upstairs crushing a cover of James Taylor's *Lo and Behold*. It was too good to miss, so I cancelled my plans and went inside. They were playing in Connor Kennedy's band, *Minstrel*, and had a day off between tour dates so they'd booked this impromptu gig. The bar hadn't promoted or even planned for a show that night, so the band was playing for a crowd of three or four when they decided to open a large window behind the drums to pull in a little bit of autumn air and maybe try to sweep a few music fans in off the street. And it was working.

As the band worked their way through the set, the music kept pulling in strangers. And at the end of the night, a small crowd of lucky, liquored-up patrons were left to reckon with what they'd just witnessed: a group of twenty-something kids playing not just like seasoned veterans, but like high-caliber session players, ripping through both classics and songs that sounded like they might become classics with individual dexterity but also a type of cohesion that takes years if not decades to develop. It all seemed to subvert time and age and expectation, like some kind of cosmic anomaly. And I count it as one of the luckier and more magical evenings of my life.

So I wasn't surprised when Steely Dan's Donald Fagen later invited them to become his backing band, christening them the *Night Flyers* for his solo tour. Or when Kate Pierson of the *B-52's* did the same. Or when Rachel Yamagata or the *Lemonheads* or any other artist acknowledges what is readily apparent the moment you see these three guys perform: that by cosmic intervention or sheer force of will, the stars rotate into alignment and something self-evidently unique and special occurs. It's music created not as a sketch of or an aspiration toward something greater, but instead something that is fully and intentionally articulated. And that's a rare thing to witness in-person.

These days, the band--Will Bryant, Lee Falco, and Brandon Morrison--are mostly tucked away at the Building, their recording studio near Woodstock, NY, recording songs that, like their live performances, seem to exist outside of time. Sharing songwriting and vocal duties, swapping instrumental responsibilities, and self-producing their work, the band is

slowly documenting a catalog of songs that are steeped in tradition, but are also personal and urgent and modern. They write with the same dexterity with which they perform: at times cheeky and self-effacing, other times pensive and self-reflecting, and still other times hopeful and optimistic, weaving the charm from their live shows and their trademark three-part harmonies together with colors and textures from across the musical universe to create a sound that is uniquely the Restless Age.

Of course, they won't tell you any of this stuff. Will predicts in Loser's Party that no one's going to write their names in stone, and Lee claims in Change On a Dime to be worthless and washed up. And yet the accolades keep pouring in, despite their protests. Perhaps the secret was always to disregard the hype and to keep writing more songs.