

From The Shadows ...



RANDOM NINJAS

Comes a Los Angeles based rock band like no other. **Random Ninjas** has generated a dedicated fan base in California and their brand of music (which involves a nice blend of hard rock alongside epic symphonies, bebop jazz and heavy beats of taikou drums with wailing electric guitar solos). And now the band has their eyes set on performing in other venues around the country and the world. J!-ENT takes on the task of interviewing randomly innovative band known as the **Random Ninjas**.

From The Shadows ...

Comes a Los Angeles based rock band like no other. RANDOM NINJAS has generated a dedicated fan base in California through their unique brand of music. Their sound involves a nice blend of hard rock, bebop jazz, powerful taiko drum beats and wailing electric guitar solos. And now the band has their eyes set on performing in other venues around the country and the world.

When we first attended a RANDOM NINJAS concert in the Pacific Media Expo 2005, we were amazed at the enormous energy being created by this unique band. First thing we noticed about the band would be their image. Mysterious, yet powerful, these ninjas were displaying an awesome arsenal of martial arts, dance, and of course musical abilities. The audience were euphoric as they danced along with some of their favorite video game and anime music.

After attending an encore return performance to Pacific Media Expo 2006 it was wonderful to see RANDOM NINJAS undergo some growth that is quite evident. This allowed the band to become stronger as artists as they performed much more of their original music. Titles such as "Hoy!" and "Random Journey" are just a couple songs the audience

favorites of the night.

We were honored to have the RANDOM NINJAS spend time away from training (stealth) as we got to learn a little more about


these mystical warriors.

J!-ENT takes on the task of interviewing randomly innovative band known as the RANDOM NINJAS!



RANDOM NINJAS LEAD VOCALIST YUKO AOYAMA

Photo by Karlo David



“Although I’m influenced by all genres, my music inspirations rarely come from other music groups. They usually come from random aspects of my life experiences and all the random things I see. Basically the concept of birth, living, death and rebirth.”

RANDOM NINJAS GUITARIST full metal NINJA.

Photo by Karlo David

WHAT'S HOT IN MUSIC - RANDOM NINJAS

(Clockwise from left):
Random Ninjas are:
full metal NINJA (Guitar),
Kaato (Bass Guitar/Vocals),
funk masta NINJA (Vocals/
Freestyle BBOY),
caliginous NINJA (Drummer),
Nico-Sama (Keyboards),
Yusuke "super lucha NINJA"
(Taiko Drummer) and
Yuko "Kunouichi Oyuu"
(Lead Vocalist).



Photos by Karlo David

WHAT'S HOT IN MUSIC - RANDOM NINJAS

*Random Ninjas
rocking the
audience at Pacific
Media Expo 2006
in Los Angeles.*

Photo by Nergene Arquelada



J!-ENT: HOW WAS RANDOM NINJAS CREATED?

FULL METAL NINJA: I created Random Ninjas as a side project in Sept. of 2004 to keep myself busy while my main band, X-Syndrome, was on hiatus. My singer for that band got sent to Iraq halting all activities for that band. So I decided to start Random Ninjas, and basically, everyone else in Random Ninjas joined the band and treated it as their side project too. Since we really didn't have time to write songs together for our first gig in Oct. 2004, we played mostly covers except for one song which was "Random Journey". That's pretty much the short version of how it got created. Random Ninjas is definitely not a side project for us anymore though.

J!-ENT: WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR MUSICAL INSPIRATIONS?

KAATO: In terms of western music, I've had a lot of exposure to classical influences like Bach, Heitor-Villa Lobos, Bela Bartok and Antonio Vivaldi. Their music is like sex on paper but that may not be the best analogy since their music is pretty old by now and old-sex isn't so sexy when you picture it in your head. And weird music like prepared guitar or atonal serialism interest me since I'm a big weirdo myself. But in terms of pop stuff, I'd have to say I've been incredibly influenced by Eastern takes on popular music, with artists like ASIAN-KUNG FU GENERATION, Pornografitti, Do As Infinity and High and Mighty Color

on regular rotation in my Nin-Pod. And I'm a pretty big fan of Japanese artists like Sambomaster and the Ulfus: the immense soul, feeling and funkiness in their music is something I think is lacking in a lot of the new pop/rock music today.

YUKO: I grew up with some classical music (like Chopin) and a lot of j-pop artists... mainly female artists such as Namie Amuro, globe, SPEED, OLIVIA, Nanase Aikawa, Every Little Thing, hitomi, Ayumi Hamasaki and some J-ROCK bands like GLAY, etc..

CALIGINOUS NINJA:

FUNK MASTA NINJA: Oh, Caliginous Ninja, doesn't talk much cause when he does, his power is too great for anyone to handle. Anyway, my inspirations come from DJ Shadow, DJ Krush, Jurassic 5, Rage Against The Machine, The Pillows, Greyboy Allstars, Incubus, K-OS, Portishead. I love a lot of music out there.

NICO-SAMA: Video game music in general, like Hitoshi Sakimoto. Also stuff like old 8-bit Ninja Gaiden soundtracks! Classical music, jazz, world pop, and fusion in general. Anything that's pretty hyper and has energy.

SUPA LUCHA YUSUKE: Since I play taiko, a lot of my influences are taiko groups from Japan such as Ondekoza and Aska Gumi, Shidara. Other musical inspirations are some great bands like Linkin Park, S.O.D., Slipknot and recently got introduced to bands like Lamb of god and Cradle of filth. Drummers like Peter Dinklage, Terry Bozzio, Akira Jimbo, Jeff Pocar are other musical

inspirations as well.

FULL METAL NINJA: Although I'm influenced by all genres, my music inspirations rarely come from other music groups. They usually come from random aspects of my life experiences and all the random things I see. Basically the concept of birth, living, death and rebirth.

J!-ENT: WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT PERFORMING?

SUPA LUCHA YUSUKE: Playing at different places, playing for the audience and our fans. And simply just playing

NICO-SAMA: When it comes to the Random Ninjas, jumping up and down.

FUNK MASTA NINJA: The adrenaline rush I get when I know the fans are enjoying the show!

KAATO: Funk Masta also enjoys all the women that flock to him during shows!

FUNK MASTA NINJA: Look who's talking man!

KAATO: Anyway! I think in the course of a person's regular life, there's so many things that preoccupy us. Work, school, relationships, where the hell did all those stains on my underwear come from, etc. But at our concerts those things seem to go away and all that's left is energy and sound... and to me that's a beautiful simplicity we don't nearly have enough of in "regular life".

FULL METAL NINJA: I agree with Kaato regarding the energy and sound. I think it's also similar to when robots form one giant

WHAT'S HOT IN MUSIC - RANDOM NINJAS

robot. There's that energy present that surrounds them protecting them while they lock in.

J!-ENT: WHAT DO YOU ALL LIKE TO DO ON YOUR FREE TIME AWAY FROM PERFORMING?

FULL METAL NINJA: We hangout together writing music. Working in our respective day jobs, some of us go to school, we love jamming, playing video games, eating at random food places, eating Yuko's cooking, writing music, martial arts or pretending to practice. Thinking about rockin' out, writing music, going karaoke, hanging out at our super secret lair and did I mention writing music?

J!-ENT: HOW DOES YOUR FAMILY FEEL ABOUT YOUR MUSICAL ASPIRATIONS?

FULL METAL NINJA: Our families are very supportive of our musical projects. Ninja families have to trust each other in order to survive. So the trust was already in place. They know that we won't do things irresponsibly.

J!-ENT: WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR GOALS AS A MUSICIAN?

YUKO: To perform more concerts in different places and I want people to know our music! And my final goal is to chart in the Oricon top 40 (The Japanese version of the US Billboard charts)!

SUPA LUCHA YUSUKE: Keep growing and becoming a better musician

FUNK MASTA NINJA: Well, personally I just want to better my vocals and performance skills. I just want to always better myself so I can put on the best show possible.

NICO-SAMA: To be able to play anything and play it well!

KAATO: Definitely to strive to a higher level of musicianship! Random Ninjas is composed of such great musicians that sometimes I feel dwarfed by my peers' power and talent. So, all I can do is focus, do my best and try to match their brilliant level of musicality! Oh, and I really want to play on top of a ridiculously tall building. That would be swell.

J!-ENT: WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR INSPIRATIONS TO THE VISUAL ASPECT OF RANDOM NINJAS?

FULL METAL NINJA: Our inspiration doesn't necessarily come from a visual stand point. It's more of a state of mind. A state of RANDOMNESS mashed with



Photos by Karlo David

Are you ready for the Random Ninjas?

anything ninja.

J!-ENT: WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATIONS FOR USING DANCE AND KUNG FU CHOREOGRAPHY IN YOUR LIVE PERFORMANCES?

FULL METAL NINJA: Pretty much martial arts movies from serious to funny to "suppose to be serious but funny instead". Basically movies with Bruce Lee, Jet Li, Jackie Chan, Tony Jaa, Donny Yuen, Michelle Yoh, Van Damme and Steven Seagal. We also like movies such as "Beverly Hills Ninja", "Enter The Ninja", "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" and "The Matrix" Trilogy. As for the dance, we just wanted more randomness in there.

J!-ENT: WHERE DID THE NAME "RANDOM NINJAS" COME FROM?

FULL METAL NINJA: An old website on Asian Avenue. (http://www.asianavenue.com/gateway/canvas/index.html?username=Random_Ninjas)

J!-ENT: IF I WERE TO RIDE IN YOUR CAR RIGHT NOW, WHAT CD WOULD BE PLAYING?

FUNK MASTA NINJA: CD? What's a CD? I listen to MP3's! Haha...

YUKO: You'd probably catch me listening

to WaT's "Sotsugyou Time". Wentz and Teppei-chan are so cute!

KAATO: Haha! Well, today it was "Master of Puppets" by Metallica, so I guess you would have heard that!

SUPA LUCHA YUSUKE: Depending on what I feel like during the day. Sometimes it'll be some metal bands, rock, 80's or J-Pop

KAATO: Funk Masta, you know MP3s can be played off CDs too right?

FUNK MASTA NINJA: Oh yeah... Well, only certain CD players!

KAATO: HAAAAHA!

FUNK MASTA NINJA: SHUT UP!

CALIGINOUS NINJA:

FULL METAL NINJA: None. Because some stupid drunk driver crashed into my car and my car is now gone!

J!-ENT: RANDOM NINJAS PERFORMED AT PMX IN LOS ANGELES LAST YEAR. IN WHAT WAY HAS THE GROUP SINCE YOU FIRST PERFORMED THERE IN 2005?

FULL METAL NINJA: There are many obvious differences such as growth. But the most important difference to me would be how the fans recognize us more as an original artist than a cover band. There's always this misconception that Random Ninjas is just a cover band. Even our originals are mistaken as cover songs,

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Random Ninjas performing in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles.

Photos by Nergene Arquelada

which is probably a good thing. But I do understand that because in the beginning, we played mostly covers just to get us going since our super busy schedules were delaying us from crafting more songs. We do like playing fun covers though for the fans still but playing only covers in my opinion defeats the purpose of being a true musician.

J!-ENT: CAN YOU TELL US SOME OF YOUR UPCOMING PROJECTS?

FULL METAL NINJA: We have a lot of projects in the works. New songs, New concert/behind the scenes videos, Random Ninjas music videos, Random Ninjas animation, Random Ninjas live action videos and many more projects of randomness! Expect an album sometime in 2007.

J!-ENT: FULL METAL NINJA, AS LEADER, PLEASE DESCRIBE EACH MEMBER OF RANDOM NINJAS IN ONE WORD.

FULL METAL NINJA:

YUKO: Cute

FUNK MASTA NINJA: Pimp

KAATO: Geek

FULL METAL NINJA: Serious

NICO-SAMA: Lighthearted

SUPA LUCHA YUSUKE: Intimidating

CALIGINOUS NINJA: Powerful

J!-ENT: IN EVERY INTERVIEW, WE HAVE A WORD PLAY SECTION WHERE WE ASK THE PEOPLE INTERVIEWING TO GIVE US THEIR DEFINITION OF EACH WORD. SO, IN THIS CASE IT WOULD BE THE RANDOM NINJAS DEFINITION FOR THE FOLLOWING WORDS:

FULL METAL NINJA:

SUCCESS: Spreading Randomness with music

HAPPINESS: Living Life creating music

SADNESS: Living life with no music

LOVE: Sharing a life with music

SEX: Having sexual intercourse with music

J!-ENT: FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT YOUR MUSIC WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL THEM?

YUKO: I'd tell them to LISTEN TO OUR MUSIC FIRST... And I hope you like it.

KAATO: I would say that if you're skeptical about our music, just don't listen to it because YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY NOT READY TO HAVE YOUR FACE SLICED OFF BY NINJA SOUNDWAVES! And yes, the superfluous capitalization indicates that I would be yelling that part of the sentence.

FULL METAL NINJA: Haha! Well, nothing really. If they're skeptical then that's good. People shouldn't just listen to music that is spoon fed to them. It's good when people think more.

SUPA LUCHA YUSUKE: Nothing too, if they don't like it they don't like it. If they want to give it a try even better for us. But you really can't tell someone to like your music. I don't like every music that other people like no matter what they tell me.

FUNK MASTA NINJA: You can think what you want but we'll still rock yer face out!

J!-ENT: DO YOU HAVE ANY FINAL COMMENTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOUR FANS?

FUNK MASTA NINJA: You guys are the best. A huge chunk of my motivation is

when I see our fans enjoying the show. It really makes it all that much better. I'm not one that's good with words but all I have to say is... Thank You.

KAATO: I'd like to thank all you guys for supporting us so fervently for the last couple of years: without all of you, this gig wouldn't have been half as fun as it is! And I especially want to give a secret shout out to our Street Shinobi, our street team that helps promote and rock out with Random Ninjas - Ufno rh SZB! You will receive your decoder rings shortly.

SUPA LUCHA YUSUKE: I just want to say thank you for supporting us and being really awesome fans. Some coming as far as Arizona just to see us. Even some feeding us since we're so poor musicians. We still have a lot of big things and surprises in store for RN so stay tuned and take care.

FULL METAL NINJA: Thank you to everyone that continue to support us. We keep fighting an uphill battle but with fans supporting us, it definitely helps us to keep going.

YUKO: Thank you for supporting Random Ninjas! I always greatly appreciate people who enjoy our performances. I really like to meet fans at our concerts, but also on Myspace and our Random Ninja Forums as well! Korekaramo ouen douzo yorosiku onegaishima-su!!

RANDOM NINJAS: THANK YOU! ■

For more information on Random Ninjas, visit their official website at:
www.randomninjas.com and
www.myspace.com/randomnjinasmusic

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