

# JAZZ/FUNK & BLUES



Photos courtesy of Cocktail Revolution

## Get Better Reception with Cocktail Revolution

SPOTLIGHT story by Katie Flannery  
Katie@ColoradoMusicBuzz.com

The most unique band in Denver is set to release their first official album on Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup> at Jazz at Jack's. Cocktail Revolution is planning an exceptional celebration with music, unique visual elements, special guests, gifts and other distinctive surprises. The band wanted to have their one-of-a-kind album release party in a special space where all the focus would be on the band. They had a short list of venues but kept coming back to Jazz at Jack's. "The venue has always been so good to the band," said keyboardist Chad Aman. "We knew that

Jack's would be a perfect place to have the release. The focus inside the venue is always on the band, it sounds great and [managing partner] Sandra has always been great to us. Sandra had a lot to do with the decision."

Planned for the evening is a special visual component designed and produced by artist Mel Aman. She mentioned that there would be "banks of TVs, cameras for each instrument and an interesting lighting design for the stage." When pressed for more specifics, she smiled and said she didn't want to give too much away, but stated, "it will truly be a show...a great performance." Guests are requested to wear "rock star formal" attire. The beauty of this request is that it's subjective and completely open to interpretation, which will result in some interesting garb. Hand-made, specially designed invitations by Mel will be sent to the band's email list as well as to long time friends and supporters of the band. This event is not invitation only as the public is highly encouraged to attend (read: don't miss this event). The night will consist of three sets that will include the performance of the entire new album entitled *Better Reception*, new songs and a set with DJ Check One who will also be spinning between sets. There has been talk of an after party, but as of press time there are no hard plans. Keep your eyes and ears open at the show for extra post-release festivities.

When asked what kind of music the band plays, Chad Aman will quickly say, "nu school." Others have explained the band as playing nu-jazz, live drum and bass, acid jazz and more. The band's sound has evolved over time to include aspects of electronic music and this is apparent on the new album. Included with the ten tracks are more than 50 mp3 samples for DJs to spin. These samples are bits and pieces of sonic gems taken from individual tracks and are found in a separate folder on the CD that can be opened when inserted into a computer. The band has created a website ([CocktailRevolution.net/Creations](http://CocktailRevolution.net/Creations)) for creative individuals to share their mixes that include the Cocktail Revolution samples. The band explicitly demands that mixers "spin it don't lift it" since all samples and music are copyrighted. DJ Walt White, DJ Wesley Wayne and DJ Check One are a few DJs in Denver that already use the band's samples.

The band was in the studio on and off since February of 2004. They also appeared at the Toronto North by Northeast Festival in 2004 and were the critic's pick of bands to watch. Due to some pressing health issues that resulted in "a really tough stretch" and the fact that drummer Zach Pietlock moved out of state and then moved back again resulted in an absence from both the fledgling touring and recording process for about a year and a half. There were about 30 songs recorded in three days and the majority of these tracks were composed at Kyle Jones' (who also recorded The Flobots) Sleeping Brotherhood studio. *Better Reception* was mixed and mastered by Kyle Jones with some additional arranging and mixing by Reese Smith. According to saxophonist Jon Hegel, the tracks that weren't composed in the studio were written on the stage – such as track two on the album "Ambient." "This is our first *real* record, and we're very proud of it," said Chad Aman. "It's very strong. I don't know of any other band

that sounds like this. We've grown a lot since the recording of this album...we sound even better now than we did while in the studio." The album certainly shows the evolution of the band as three different bassists are featured. Each bassist – Matt Deason, Colin Mitchel and Artie Moore - spent some time as a band member over the years. Current bassist extraordinaire Chris Harris is not on the album as it was recorded before his current tenure in the band. Don't miss his prodigious bass display at the release party. The album also contains performances by special guest guitarist Damon Wood, and vocalists Brian Handlos and Zac Colletti. "There are different styles on the album," explained Chad Aman, "from Cajun styles to nu-school drum and bass. That's kinda the way we are."

There will be the typical band t-shirt and sticker offerings at the party as well as more unconventional particulars such as a dog tag necklace with a special code on the back. Those that receive the necklace can log onto the band website and use the code to download a free track that was not included on the album. Mel Aman emphasized the attention to detail in all aspects of the party and hinted at more surprises. The possibility of the inclusion of a red carpet was mentioned as well: "Well, a reddish carpet," deadpanned Jon Hegel. "Perhaps it will be something more mauve. The carpet will be somewhere in the red color family..."



Cocktail Revolution plans on using their new release as a platform to get into the music festival circuit and obtain more exposure – chiefly on a national level. *Better Reception* will be sent out to a number of large record labels in distinctive packaging. The overwhelming potency of the album should speak for itself; especially at a time when scores of music industry eyes are on Denver and the singular talent that is presently coming out of this city. Considering the fact that it took four years of illness, uncertainty, and changes in band members, the

end result is a stunning example of exceptional musicianship found right here in Denver. I was encouraged by Chad, Jon and Chris that the album was worth the wait and that the release party was *the* one to attend. After a tumultuous four years Chad explained how "the band is trying to push forward and to keep making the band better than it's ever been." The guys in the band are particularly grateful to their fans and the fact that they've been extremely supportive over the years. Cocktail Revolution recently played a City Park jazz concert and drew in many more new admirers. "There was a great response and we sold a lot of copies of the new album... even before it was officially released," said Chad Aman. The band is happy and proud of the new recording and they are poised to take the next step. Cocktail Revolution wants to thank Denver for all the support so be sure to attend the party and experience the Cocktail buzz! ❖

Cocktail Revolution album release party for *Better Reception*. Jazz at Jack's Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup> 9:00 PM.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Style:  
Nu-Jazz / Drum & Bass / Dub

Location:  
Denver, CO

Band Members:  
Zach Pietlock - Drums  
Chad Aman - Keyboards  
Chris Harris - Bass  
Jon Hegel - Saxophone

Recording:  
To be Released Sept 20th  
[CocktailRevolution.net/Store.html](http://CocktailRevolution.net/Store.html)

Find 'em:  
[Myspace.com/CocktailRevolution](http://Myspace.com/CocktailRevolution)  
[CocktailRevolution.net](http://CocktailRevolution.net)

Select dates:  
Sept 20th Jazz At Jacks,  
Denver

**Fri-Sat | Sept 19th -20th**  
**Baker Street Pub**  
**DTC - 8101 E. Belleview**

"Colorado's best 80's cover band"

[bakerstreetpub.com](http://bakerstreetpub.com)  
[kellisaid.com](http://kellisaid.com) [myspace.com/kellisaid](http://myspace.com/kellisaid)

**TROY'S** [myspace.com/troycustomtees](http://myspace.com/troycustomtees)  
**720-255-6844**

**T-shirts with your design or mine!**

**CUSTOM TEES**

[www.troycustomtees.com](http://www.troycustomtees.com)

**What are you wearing?**