

Green Fiend: High from Charlotte North Carolina
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Drugs. The word invokes one of a few initial reactions. A scourge upon what would be a normally functioning society? A necessary remedy for symptoms of an illness otherwise plaguing one's existence? Or, perhaps, time to party? It could be one of the above, or it could be all three. Regardless, Drugs are here to stay. Love them or hate them, partake or abstain, they aren't going anywhere. Neither is Charlotte North Carolina based Stoner/Hardcore/Punk/Metal Band, Green Fiend. And much like Drugs, Green Fiend offers the user a multifaceted array of potential applications. You should strongly consider trying them.

Green Fiend, at the time this article is being written, is currently engaged in their residency performances at Snug Harbor. As a bartender at Snug Harbor, I've had the opportunity to inhale Green Fiend every Wednesday Night for the entire month of April. It's been a more than enjoyable high, let me tell you. The energy this band emits from the stage will take the listener through a gamut of hardcore speed, to the downs of a dope low, and right back up into the brutality of an alcohol fueled rage. Founding member, Joshua Taddeo, has a reputation of crowd pleasing musical projects in his stash and Green Fiend might be highest quality substance he has peddled yet. So, why all the drug references? Well, let me pass this on for you to puff on yourself. When I asked Taddeo what makes Green Fiend the band that it is, his response was, "Drugs". Funny and not at all surprising. Obviously meant to be taken tongue and cheek, But make no mistake, this band is not some kind of gimmick band that is trying to elevate their notoriety via some controversial taboo. They are the real deal. Musically, that is. A truly organic growing process wherein various musical influences from each member's past, solid musicianship, and very cohesive song writing has truly made for an awesome strain of music that results in songs that really offer a little bit of everything to any aficionado of heavier styles of music. True, they party, a lot. But, it's a lifestyle that

existed before the band, during the band, and will so long after, I'm sure. Even if drugs and partying aren't your thing Green Fiend still offers the sincerity and spirit in their music that any fan of aggressive music will appreciate regardless of lifestyle. Drummer, Taylor Arthur, notes the frequency of straight edge fans at their shows despite the band's obvious references to drugs. Possibly a result of the band's clear diversity concerning what makes Green Fiend sound they way they do. But, we will get to that shortly. These guys are all good friends outside of the band as well, and after sitting down and talking to the entire band, it became clear that what these guys are dealing here is as genuine and passionate as any band I've encountered in the Queen City.

Green Fiend was born from a conversation, whilst getting high of course, between Taddeo (Scowl Brow/Vulture) and co-founding member, Taylor Arthur (Stone City/Viajando). Nothing profound, nothing epic. Just two friends talking about how they really should make some music together. Some of the best things are procured in such a way. Initially beginning as a three piece, with Taddeo on guitar/vocals, Arthur on Drums, and long time bandmate of Arthur's, Justin Bickley (Stone City, Viajando) on bass, the trio knew right off the bat (or maybe it was a bowl?) that they were onto something good. Their initial songwriting attempts were already yielding music that all three found enjoyable. A second guitarist, Kennan Kerr (My Hero is Me), enters the picture shortly thereafter following a casual conversation with Taddeo/Arthur. Not long after, guitarist John Stone(Columns/Vulture) was brought in, at first to fill in, as Taddeo was suffering from a broken hand (from a fight, perhaps? Oh that, Taddeo!) but wound up becoming such a compliment to the band's performances and song writing process, that he became a permanent member, leaving Taddeo to focus on vocals. And the Green Fiend joint as it is now, was rolled, and ready to burn! So, enough with the punny drug references? Fine, we'll do it your way. What makes this band, musically appealing to me is that what is often contrived and boasted with other bands is truly apparent in this one. And that is the culmination of members, that while they all have musical influences and back grounds in similar bags, they bring a substantial degree of different musical inputs to the party. It comes through in the music. Green Fiend might get labeled as a Stoner Rock band, or a Hardcore Band, or a Metal Band, etc... but one can clearly hear examples of all of those styles in the music. The band's earliest recording, a split EP with Toke (Wilmington NC), displays a little more Stoner Rock than perhaps the other elements, with an original track called "Purge" (one of my personal favorites by Green Fiend), and a cover of an Eric Clapton song, "Cocaine" (shocker!). The evolution of the band's music and the influence of each member's collective input becomes much more apparent on the band's first solo EP, "Higher Than Heaven, Heavy As Hell". Right out of the gate you might ask yourself, "This is a Stoner Rock band?!". Because track one, "Dying Sun", blisters the listeners ears with hardcore/punk tempos and riffs that wouldn't at all seem identifiable as "Stoner Rock", but be patient. That buzz is coming about two minutes and forty seconds into the song and it flows from speed freakdom into stoned-off-your-ass as smoothly as your favorite soda flows down a cottonmouth, parched throat. Track two, same story, "Erectnophobia", bashes you around the pit with all the abrasiveness of hardcore/metal core, but slams you right into the chunkiness of great sludgy southern metal. Tracks three and four are my standouts on this EP. "Three Minute Exhale", is a beautifully written southern sludge tune that grooves and pounds with the best of them and caps off with a Sabbath-esque riff that invokes your head to start nodding, willing or not. Track four, "Captives", is another great example of the bands diversity. The song maintains a Metal/Metalcore feel but cascades in and out of a

punk/hardcore vibe and does so so fluently that none of those styles dominates the song. It just becomes it's own beast! The EP finishes off with the title track, "Higher Than Heaven, Heavy As Hell". An apt title for a song that pushes the listener through all the highs and lows, all the speed and heaviness, all the aggression and groove, that makes this band precisely what they are. High and Heavy!

If you love heavy music, regardless of the sub-genre, Green Fiend more than likely has something you can sink your teeth into or fill your lungs with. Their recordings, thus far, should leave you looking no further. Their live performance offers every bit of what you hear on record; all the energy and all the party that they are in the studio. This isn't some kind of local Charlotte side project, either. All the party jokes aside, this band is very serious about what they are doing and where they are going. With a full length record to come later this year and the search for the right record label deal already underway, Green Fiend isn't going anywhere anytime soon. You might like it. You might love it. You might hate it. It might kill you. You should try it either way. Just like drugs.

GreenFiend666.Bandcamp.com

Facebook.com/GreenFiend666

- Check out their EP on Spotify and Apple Music.

My City Magazine does not endorse the use of illegal substances and the author of this article, Tommy Heffner, is, ironically enough, a sober person.