

TASTE OF MUSIC

The Heap

Bryan J. Howard, Jeff Rieter, Jack Stirling, Jeff Crouch, Chris Costigan, Kate Mikulka, Ian Werdan and Marc Gilley make up the funky, groovy sounds that are The Heap. They met up with us one evening before practice to share some of their stories.

Do you have a memorable dining experience on the road?

CHRIS: I thought Tabernacle was cool because we were all together.

JEFF RIETER: But we didn't eat at the Tabernacle.

JEFF CROUCH: What was that place?

BRYAN: Ted's...uh...something grill?

JEFF RIETER: ...Montana Grill is what I think it really is. But there was another time before that....

BRYAN: Ohhhh, yeah.

JEFF RIETER: We went to a Thai restaurant. I don't remember the name of it.

BRYAN: It's behind Smith's Olde Bar [in Atlanta].

JEFF RIETER: It's across the street from Smith's in the Ansley area. There are multiple Thai restaurants around there, but this is the one that's been around since 1977. We got the history of the whole place the entire time we were there. I'd like to know the name of it. The woman who runs it was very hospitable.

KATE: She told us the thirty...forty year history of the place.

JEFF RIETER: It was educational....

KATE: ...cheap and good.

JEFF RIETER: She told us who we should look up in Thailand when we go.

MARC: There was the barbeque pool hall in Macon.

JEFF RIETER: There was an interesting character there. What was her deal?

MARC: She was on cocaine.

JEFF RIETER: She kept touching me.

BRYAN: It doesn't surprise me.

MARC: It was weird....real weird.

AFC: How was the barbeque?

MARC: It was really good.

JEFF RIETER: Unexpected...you know, it's a pool hall.

CHRIS: There was a secret ingredient.

MARC: It was the smoke in the air. It just kind of latched on to make a nice glaze.

JACK: Nicotine smoke.

Which local restaurant is your first stop when you return to Athens?

BRYAN: For me, I think Sr. Sol.



KATE: The same here.

JACK: We tried going there on the way back into town.

Do you have a favorite local restaurant that you all eat at together?

JEFF RIETER: We've never been there [Sr. Sol] together.

KATE: We generally try to stay away from each other when we're in town. [laughter]

BRYAN: We haven't eaten all together in town. We're gonna have to change that.

If you were to write a song about food, what would it be?

JEFF RIETER: We've already written a couple...alcohol.

BRYAN: Really?

JEFF RIETER: Sure...alcohol.

BRYAN: I could get into writing a tune about a muffaletta.

JEFF CROUCH: The drawbacks of eating hummus and playing trumpet.

Is there a band drink?

CHRIS: Pabst...like every other band.

JACK: Free.

BRYAN: Whatever's back stage and cheap. I often like to start off with a shot of Jameson's and a PBR.

Do you have a favorite recipe?

KATE: I have several actually, but I cannot give you the recipes. I make Polish foods, specifically pierogis and stuffed cabbage rolls. You can get in touch with me for orders at Mikulka Polish Foods on Facebook or at mikulkak@gmail.com.

BRYAN: My wife and I used to do these smoked turkeys. We actually wanted to start a smoked turkey business, but then I burnt down the shed. They were fantastic. We'd de-bone them, and we'd brine them

overnight. Then, we had rosemary and pineapple sage and some other stuff we were growing. We'd smear that in, roll it up and smoke it over cherry wood. Oh, it was fantastic! Neither one of us could actually imagine having our hands in turkeys for years. They were so good...they would have sold. ...You make cheese.

MARC: I do make cheese. I make crepes with excellent fresh cheese actually. That's something I enjoy. I usually use a good whole milk. The full cream stuff is where it's at. It's surprisingly easy.

Do you have any advice for a band about to go on the road for the first time?

BRYAN: Just have fun. I think that's the most important thing. You're supposed to be doing it because you love it. Enjoy the road, and if you want to stop at the Cheese Castle in Wisconsin, you know...stop at the Cheese Castle. If you want to do little things, plan for it. Don't try to cut everything down to the minute. Enjoy yourself. That's what I would say.

JEFF CROUCH: Where is this Cheese Castle? It sounds like a mythical holy land.

JEFF RIETER: My advice would be to travel in the same vehicle.

CHRIS: And be prepared for weird looks when you travel in a Pentecostal van like we did.

MARC: In a band like this, if people are in like four different vehicles, you could lose one and still make a gig. You might even be able to lose two depending on the layout.

BRYAN: Who is in what car....

JACK: So, you're saying some cars are more important than others.

MARC: Well, you know....

IAN: [walks in] I like pizza!

When is your next show?

BRYAN: Athfest, Saturday, June 26th main stage 7pm.