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Thundercat: Blurred Lines Redefine Musical Genres

Tod Hardin · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

Stephen Bruner – AKA Thundercat – is truly one of the best new music finds I've come across in a very long time. For the past several years he's been known in the industry as one of the most creative and innovative bass players in the world, and his virtuosity on the instrument has been a highly sought after commodity by a rather interesting mix of artists. As a teenager he replaced the legendary Robert Trujillo (now with Metallica) in the punk/metal band Suicidal Tendencies, and he would go on to record with Erykah Badu, as well as with the critically acclaimed experimental artist known as Flying Lotus. It gets even more interesting on the performance side, with stages having been shared the likes of Snoop Dog, Stanley Clarke and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Odd mix, but tasty.

Equally impressive is his pedigree. His grandparents and mother were musicians, his father played drums for Diana Ross, The Temptations and Gladys Knight, and his brother, Ron, is a Grammy Award-winning drummer, composer and producer.

Fun Fact: His Thundercat moniker is inspired by his obsession for the animated series *Thundercats*.

What draws me to Thundercat, other than his obvious level of talent, is the inability to define him as any particular kind of recording artist. Funk, soul, prog rock, jazz fusion, thrash metal, punk, hip hop, experimental…They've all been a part of his journey thus far, and I have a feeling that he might just be responsible for inventing one or two new genres himself, before it's all said and done. This was evident in his debut solo effort in 2011, *The Golden Age of Apocalypse*, and even more-so on his recent follow-up, *Apocalypse* – both of which were produced by Flying Lotus and released to critical acclaim.

A bit of an enigma? Yes, but that's what's so damn appealing. Hard to define, but something you can't help but be drawn to once you discover it.

Judge for yourself by enjoying this video for the song *The Lotus and the Jondy*, as performed live at Echoplex in Los Angeles:

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