

Ryan Peel

The Otherlands Café
Memphis, TN

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The Players: Ryan Peel, lead vocals, drums; David Parks, bass; Pat Fusco, keyboards; Noah Hernandez, guitar.

Material: Ryan Peel is a young singer-songwriter and percussionist who performs material that is soulful, yet rocking. Peel's songs have some obvious influences of icons like Isaac Hayes, Stevie Wonder and even Michael Jackson; however, there are also hints of more recent artists like Maroon 5 and Justin Timberlake. Standout songs in Peel's set are "Even If," a smooth tune with an old-school R&B vibe; and "Valentine," a contemporary catchy tune that starts out with southern rap and works rock, R&B and soul into the mix before its finale.

Musicianship: Not only does Peel captivate the audience with his smooth, yet soulful vocals, his dynamic percussion brings this talented performer's songs to life. In addition, he surrounds himself with a trio of impressive players who understand the dynamics of the environment.

Bassist David Parks is a lively player who applies R&B riffs and slap funk where needed and then



Ryan Peel: A professional and well rehearsed musician shining with natural talent.

flawlessly transitions into rock when necessary. Keys-man Pat Fusco and guitarist Noah Hernandez are both professionals who, though clearly talented, realize that subtlety is often more effective than showing off one's expertise.

Performance: Ryan Peel's spirited performance kept the crowd pumped up throughout the entire set. In fact, all four members complemented the soulful rock nature of the music by contributing to a powerful group

performance. Each new song was met with enthusiastic cheers. The real treat of the evening, however, was the band's encore performance. They started out with a rockin' cover of Michael Jackson's "Do You Remember the Times" and turned it into a medley that included the Beatles' "Come Together." It was clever, imaginative and the crowd went crazy.

Summary: Ryan Peel is not only professional and well rehearsed; he

possesses natural talent and has already garnered national attention by some top name producers. With continued live performances, and working on writing more contemporary songs like "Valentine," this young artist could be well on his way to a long and successful career.

—Anne O'Neary

Shopyy

The Terrace
Pasadena, CA

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The Players: Chad Villareal, lead vocals, drums; Matt Wyckoff, bass, vocals; Gabe Hartman, keys, sax, flute, vocals.

Material: If you want to check out a band that'll give you more than one genre, then Shopyy is the group to see. Rap, funk, blues and heavy metal are all covered in one set. They jump from one genre to the next like a monkey in a rainforest and are able to accurately cover each style of music. Eyes closed, it would be hard to tell if it was one band on stage or a set of rotating musicians.

Musicianship: Having at least two jobs seems to be a requirement in this band. Gabe Hartman is the multi-tasker of the group, sitting quietly at the keyboard surrounded by his instruments. In a Phil Collins-like style, Villareal makes his mark as both the drummer and the singer while pulling off some impressive vocal changes, most notably when



Shopyy: An ambitious, inventive band painting with many shades of the sonic palette.

switching from rap lyrics to a heavier sound. His counterpart, Wyckoff, backs him up on vocals as he slaps into the night on the bass.

Performance: Thanks to their constant variation in genres and frequent changing of instruments, Shopyy certainly delivered fun music and a mercurial live show. Their performance was like a pencil that just needed to be sharpened.

The lead singer was drum-kit bound, which put the actual frontman in the back. More movement from Wyckoff on the bass and an occasional standup from Hartman would have helped increase the band's stage impact.

Summary: This ambitious, inventive band paint with many shades of the sonic palette, and present their music live with an

unusual band setup. Ultimately, however, a tighter, more coherent vision must be married to a more energetic stage show. Currently an interesting band, the members of Shopyy must now figure out how to take their art a full step higher and become uniquely compelling.

—Tom Laurie