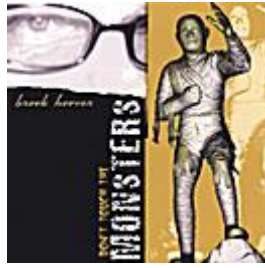


Mp3 Brook Hoover - Don't Touch The Monsters



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Clever power pop that rocks . No mushy love songs. Layers of electric, acoustic, slide and baritone guitars with good vocals. Hidden track is a full-blown guitar freak-out. The album has a nice variety of textures ranging from Beatlesque to harder rockin' 12 MP3 Songs ROCK: Modern Rock, POP: Beatles-pop Details: Article From Cram Magazine Buried at the back of an Iowa City bar, full of college-aged music fans listening to their friends pound out rock music, is 41-year-old professional musician Brook Hoover. With well-cut, wild hair and rose colored lenses in his glasses, the guitarist of The Meerkats didn't stick out like most men his age would in that atmosphere. Hunched over a binder composing a set-list for the night's show, Hoover was inconspicuous, although unnaturally organized. Musicians of opening bands loitered around tables of friends with beer and cigarettes living up the night and their momentous fame. Hoover remained constant in his business-cool attitude not needing to relish the moment because he is living the dream. Cedar Rapids based rock band The Meerkats keep a regular schedule playing shows most Friday and Saturday nights. Hoover plays with bassist Joel McDowell and drummer Erik Marshall. In an area congested with musicians in their 20s, The Meerkats command respect with their commitment and regional success. A current Cedar Rapids resident, Hoover grew-up with The Meerkats' bassist, Joel McDowell in Fort Dodge, Iowa. Hoover performed with his friends for house parties, school dances and talent shows. Claiming his identity as a musician was something Hoover always seemed comfortable with. "Before I could play, I was in a band just smashing it out in the basement," Hoover said. "It was just really fun." As Hoover got older, he attempted other careers including caring for the mentally disabled, construction for one day, making sandwiches and substitute teaching. "Restaurant work was a disaster," Hoover said. "I tried other jobs. I just kept spacing off thinking about rock 'n roll." Hoover attended the University of Northern Iowa majoring in art education. He received

his teaching certificate in '87. Although he never became a teacher at a public school, Hoover used his training to teach guitar lessons. Hoover claims he would teach no matter what kind of a career he had. "Not everyone has the patience," Hoover said of teaching. "I really enjoy it." Hoover's students include Breaking Even guitarist John Seidel and musician Dick Prall of Chicago. "A lot of them are touring the states and world," Hoover said of his students without pride or jealousy. Hoover took his turn touring the country back in the '80s. However, he returned to Iowa because he liked what was going on here. While some musicians seem look for a way out of the Eastern Iowa music scene, dreaming of greener pastures, Hoover knows a good thing when he finds it. He described the old alternative papers of Eastern Iowa and shows he played at the Iowa City landmark Gabe's Oasis. Hoover admits to being a dreamer, but he seems to have something special that makes all his dreams come true. He holds an amazingly positive outlook stating that all anyone has to do is find a hobby and turn that into a career. It all sounds simple when he says it, but what's the secret? "Just take little steps and figure out logically what to do," Hoover advises fellow dreamers. "It's typical eighth grade stuff about setting goals," Hoover said as though the answer was obvious. So maybe common sense is the golden key Hoover possesses that has opened the door for his success. Owning his own studio was a goal Hoover achieved, as was recording his own CD. Hoover never dreamed of a big record contract. Instead, he built his studio to record music on his own. He does record other bands, however they are usually friends of his. The studio serves a purpose as more of a side project for Hoover rather than a serious business. The name of Hoover's studio even sounds like a side project. Some know it as Black Door or maybe Kinky Mullet. Hoover seemed to still be considering the name of his studio suggesting the casualness of the business. "I just want to play stuff that makes me feel good," Hoover said. "At the same time I don't want to be too underground," he added exposing more of that common sense. With no plans to retire from his stage career, Hoover joked that it's all in the genes. "My mom is hot," he said only half-serious. Hoover is releasing a new album with another already in the works. His most recent project will be recorded at Catamount Studios to feature an outside producer. "When you are recording stuff by yourself, it gets pretty lonely," Hoover said. He understands that a fresh ear can bring a recording to a higher quality. While Hoover goes into the studio, fans can pick-up his recently finished album this spring at The Meerkats shows and their favorite Eastern Iowa Indie record store. "I feel blessed I get to work as a musician," Hoover said. "It's an honor." Although making a living as a musician seems impossible to many people, Hoover's advise to everyone is to work

at what you are good at. "Find a hobby and turn that into a career like I did," Hoover said. His success is a testament to that eighth grade goal setting and an inspiration to all dreamers.

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