

Mp3 Nation - Sex Drugs Rock & Roll



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Digital rock roll, electric boogie rage: heart pounding techno with actual song structure. 13 MP3 Songs
ELECTRONIC: Pop Crossover, ELECTRONIC: Techno Details: It's not often you'll see a techno band do an acoustic set to promote its new CD, but then again, the members of Nation aren't your average club kids. Instead, they are the band brave enough to be writing dance and digital rock tunes right in the heart of Memphis, a place known more for its blues than its boys in eyeliner. They're also the ones who toted their guitars into Memphis' Tower Records Feb. 9 to promote the release of the band's second CD, "Sex Drugs Rock Roll," facing a crowd that most likely wondered where the drum machine was. Yet Nation doesn't need no stinkin' beat machine. Its members, which include two hair-band veterans, indeed have the musicianship to pull off an unplugged set. And although "Sex Drugs Rock Roll" is full-on dance music, it's also melodically sound enough for the songs to be played acoustically. But when Nation does plug in, oh the synthesizers! The band's digital rock style means on "Sex Drugs Rock Roll" you'll also hear guitars, but mixed in with all the techno, they beckon listeners to shake their booties rather than bang their heads. The CD has its quieter moments -- like the drawn-out intro to "Down to My Dungeon" that is reminiscent of Depeche Mode. But overall, "Sex Drugs Rock Roll" is a good reflection of the high-energy live shows the band is known for. Sometimes on the new release, Nation even goes and gets a little funky, like on "Disco Sucks," the song where members dare to ask the question "If disco sucks, what are you doin' here?" "Sex, Drugs Rock Roll," is clearly more mature than the band's first release, "Clubnation." The songs have greater depth and variety. But most importantly, it seems the band is at last having as much fun writing and recording its own songs as it does performing them. Learning to enjoy themselves during the production process is something Nation vocalist Rawleigh Hartzell said was key to the band's sophomore release. "I was really into ('Clubnation'), but it didn't take very long after its release

for me to reflect and come to the conclusion that the first CD was more the end of a chapter than the beginning of a new one," Hartzell said. "The music on the first CD reflected what we had learned from the band's inception up to that point, but it didn't really accurately reflect who we were then. "We also focused more on writing songs for 'commercial' success instead of just writing what we like, be it commercial or not. That's the biggest difference between the two (CDs). The first contained songs we thought people would like; the second is full of songs we like. Period. "The digital rock 'n' roll quote stems from our insistence that digital music can be rock 'n' roll, too... We are attempting to create digital dance music that is also as aggressive, in your face, erotic and loud as rock 'n' roll. The best of both worlds, so to speak," Hartzell added. "We actually write all kinds of music," Hartzell revealed. "Rock, pop, country and (we) are actively pursuing a publication deal with our songs outside of Nation. One thing for sure, I personally like to perform music that is uptempo and aggressive or it bores me, so the new CD is much more honest as far as my personal taste goes -- and that includes the subject matter of the songs as well. It certainly is not meant for kids. It is much more for mature audiences who are open-minded." Definitely true of a CD that begins with a spank and a groan, not to mention carries a risqu title. "The CD title is click on purpose," Hartzell said. "The idea is that the clich images conjured up from those three words are exactly what I want people to think of when they think of this band: sex, drugs, rock 'n' roll." About both the CD and Nation's unique blend of music, Hartzell said, "I think critics who don't get it are looking way too deep and missing the point that we are really just trying to have fun."

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