

Interview with Band Memphis Crawl!

Written by Sally Rosen - OFC Contributor - Last Updated Monday, 26 September 2011 11:44



[Memphis Crawl](#)

September 25, 2011. OFC recently did a Q&A with Matty O'Brien, front man for rock n roll's best kept secret - Memphis Crawl! Based out of NYC, these fellas are bringing southern rock n roll up north where it definitely stands out and breathes like a breath of fresh air. Memphis just released their debut EP **FALLING DOWN AGAINST THE SUN** this year and their fan-favorite track, "Wildflower Annie", has been garnering them all sorts of success!

Formed in the summer of 2004 by songwriter and singer, Matty O'Brien, Memphis Crawl has been regarded as one of the best and most exciting live acts around. O'Brien himself has been described as "one of the most charismatic rock n roll front men of all time, with the voice and looks to back it up". He amplified and perfected the sound with the addition of lead guitarist Bryan Stevens, bassist Mad Freik, drummer Mike Vincenti, and rhythm guitarist Nick Vincenti.

Armed with a 40-song arsenal, Memphis is no stranger to the stage. The band has performed from NY to LA. sharing the stage with notable acts like Leon Russel and Silvertide, building a solid following with their fusion of psychedelic rock-blues and hypnotic live performances.

Click [HERE](#) to [download Falling Down Against the Sun on iTunes](#)

OFC: Congratulations on Memphis Crawl's recently released debut EP, FALLING DOWN AGAINST THE SUN. The record came out early this year and getting stellar reviews from critics and fans. I understand the band formed in 2004. You guys are obviously hot, what took so long to get a first record out?

Matty: Oh my God. A million line-up changes, non-stop touring and a two year hiatus kind of put recording on hold. But for a while now everything has been great! We're all about touring and recording!!

What is the record making experience like – did you go into the studio with songs written and ready to record or did you evolve the music as you went through the recording experience?

We picked out four songs beforehand for the recording. But as we went along in the studio, each song changed and evolved a little bit. I think most songs change along the way and that's what keeps them interesting.

Are you signed with a label? If so, what steps did you take as a band in the journey along the way?

Actually right now we're an independent group. We have been approached by a bunch of different labels in the past year or so but we haven't found the right fit yet.

Memphis Crawl has toured nationally with some pretty big names including Leon Russell. What was the experience like – did you get to jam with Leon and his band?

That was insane. Leon has been a hero of mine since I was a kid. We didn't get to play with him, but we did get to hang out with the band and they actually liked Memphis Crawl which was a huge compliment coming from Leon. I was on cloud nine.

How did the band start out? Did you start out playing clubs in New York? Are all of the original band members still together?

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I started putting Memphis Crawl together in July 2004. We've played every club in New York twice (laugh)! Myself and bassist Mad Freik are the two original members.

Was there a specific turning point or a moment when you realized that music, and the blues, is what you wanted to do with your life?

There was never really a turning point. I've been singing soul music my whole life and I think when it was time for me to put together a band, the blues was my first love and the sound just evolved out of that.

You have been described as "one of the most charismatic rock n roll front men of all time, with the voice and looks to back it up". Who were some of your influences as a blues man?

Oh man, there's too many to list (laugh)! As a vocalist I love Gregg Allman, Levon Helm, Marvin Gaye and Otis Redding.

I loved your video from Great South Bay Music Festival! Great rockn' blues energy and I particularly enjoyed the hula hoop gal on stage. Was that planned or did she just impromptu come up out of the audience?

I actually jumped off the stage in the middle of "Dust" and when I was running through the crowd, I saw this girl just wailing!!!! I just grabbed her hand and said "Get up there Girl!!!!"

The youtube on Great South Bay Music Festival video notes that you are playing a song called "Dust". Is "Dust" on FALLING DOWN AGAINST THE SUN?

No "Dust" isn't on FALLING DOWN AGAINST THE SUN but it will be featured on our upcoming full length.

Is there a song on FALLING DOWN AGAINST THE SUN that you are particularly proud of or happy with the outcome? Is there a story behind the name of the album?

I think each member has a different favorite on the album. I think the vibe on each one is very different. As far as the title goes, I think it's kind of a metaphor for my work ethic, kind of like I'll finally rest when I reach the top!!

Are you planning to do more festivals this year or into 2012?

Yes, we're planning on playing SXSW (Southwest Music Conference and Festival) and have a bunch of other festival shows in the works. But SXSW is a priority for us.

If you could pick one artist/band to collaborate with, who would it be?

I've said it before a million times – Neil Young hands down!!

What was your biggest breakthrough in your career as a band so far? What was your biggest struggle?

Our biggest breakthrough was the success of our latest EP FALLING DOWN AGAINST THE SUN. The hardest struggle for us was finding the right line up.

What was your reaction to the death of Amy Winehouse? How does a rocker who is exposed to drugs and partying lifestyle survive the drug culture?

I think her death was terribly sad and I feel for her family. She was very talented. As far as surviving the drug and alcohol culture, I think a ton of great artists have blown it because of that. Listen, it's a "been there, done that" kinda thing for right now. But if someone can party and sustain the music, more power to 'em. But if they're makin' a fool of themselves and pissing on their gift, I think it's time to change the channel. The music should get you higher than anything. I think it's a myth that you have to be vomiting on yourself to create soulful music.

What do you think of the music industry today, the age unsigned artist and digital media

platforms? Is it easier for bands to break in or is it more difficult?

I think it's easier for bands to be known. But a lot harder to make money and support yourself with it. But I think if you're unique enough and at the top of your game, you can really get out there to a lot of people.

What do you think of the some of the new music applications Pandora and Spotify? Are these new "Napsters" essentially overriding the artists royalties or do these tools support the bands?

I think they are good and bad for bands. I think I'm the wrong guy to ask though. I'm still spinning records in my house and enjoy reading the liner notes (laugh)! I'm still trying to figure out the whole computer age.

What's on the horizon for Memphis Crawl? Tour dates?

We're going back to the studio in January 2012 and we're currently putting together a Fall/Winter Tour as we speak.

Do you have a personal message you would like to impart to your fans?

Thank you for your support and being part of our cult and we think you have great taste in rock n roll.
