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Flynn flies solo



by Nikki M. Mascali

Maybe you know Pat Flynn from his popular former bands Mere Mortals or Bent Blue. Or maybe you know him from his current one, Underground Saints. Whichever way you might recognize the guitarist's face or name, on Saturday, Sept. 13, Pat Flynn will be seen on stage in a way he's never been seen before: solo.



ZOOM!

Flynn, 37, will play his first solo set as part of the "Hear 'Em at the Comm" series presented by Poconotes at the historic Waverly Community House. Also on the bill is Spencer Bohren.

Flynn's show came about via the guitar lessons he has been giving Pat Harper for the past two years. Harper founded Poconotes with Delores Hippler in 2006.

"She asked me if I wanted to do this, and I jumped at the opportunity," Flynn explained. "I think it could be an impetus to maybe do more shows like this in the future."

Should that be the case, Flynn certainly has enough material for Saturday's show.

"Throughout the years, I've always, in the different bands I've been in, had some material that doesn't fit in what I was doing, so I've had some instrumental pieces and stuff like that that I'm going to perform," he said.

The Weekender couldn't help but ask if Flynn was nervous about the show.

"No, not really," he replied after a moment's pause.

Flynn won't be flying solo for the whole show, though. He will have a little help from a friend: John Smith, his bandmate from Bent Blue and Underground Saints, who will put words to a few of Flynn's songs.

Thanks to his Uncle Jimmy, who gave him his first guitar, Flynn has been playing since he was 13.

"He gave me the spark to do it, and I'm actually going to be doing a piece that's dedicated to him," said Flynn. Other influences range from Eddie Van Halen and Randy Rhoads to The Edge from U2 and jazz musician Pat Metheny.

NEPA's music scene has certainly changed since Mere Mortals began in the early '90s, and one of the biggest changes Flynn has seen is the acceptance of original music.

"People weren't as open to it at that time. You didn't have the Internet," he said. "I just think the scene is much more open to original music and singer/songwriters and that's a good thing. It needs to be fostered because that's our identity — a big part of our identity anyway."

Series and showcases like Poconotes provide outlets for those identities.

"What they're doing that's really cool is they're pairing up local artists with nationally and internationally known artists that have been out there, have a story to tell and a long history," Flynn said. "That's the cool thing about it — people are getting to experience local musicians and these musicians that they wouldn't otherwise hear."

Perhaps Flynn's show on Sept. 13 will prompt him to give his fans something else they might not otherwise hear: a future solo album.

"It's something I've always thought about doing, so I might start working on compiling some material I've had. So yeah, I think I might want to get the time to do that."

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