

IDIOT for April 2011

SPIRAL

Q.1 What is your real name (optional) or the name you would like to be called?

Most of the people here already know my real name, which I'm not too comfortable spreading around, so...

Yes, I've been widely-known :) as Spiral ever since 2005, if I remember correctly. The nickname comes originally from a Black Sabbath song Spiral Architect. I used it as a nickname for KNAC.com (American internet radio) chat, which I listened quite a lot in 2000 or something. Anyway, such a long nick was PITA in logins etc., so when I joined Kristal Audio Engine forums, I shortened it to Spiral.

I also sometimes go by the name of Slack Haddock, which again, comes from Black Sabbath mythology. The band used to call themselves jokingly Slack Haddock.

Q.2 What is your age group? 20 - 30. 30 - 40. 40 - 50. 50 - 60. Over 60.

30 - 40. I once wrote in a song "Do you miss being young and bold? I don't miss it I love getting old." but I now realize it was more about becoming an adult, not about growing old per se. Not too fond of that thought now.

Interviewer. Believe me Markus! From here on in as you age, you become less adult.

Q.3 How did you get started in music?

I do not remember a time in my life when I didn't think being a rock star is the ultimate goal and dream of every young man. Seriously, I was surprised when I found out that some young men do not dream about it constantly. :) I guess it has to do with all the hedonistic rock that was around me in the 80s when I was a child. You know, Kiss and 80s hair metal, all that stuff.

Anyway, this made me daydream about rock stardom all the time, so when I was around 7-8 we started our first "band" with my friends. Of course, we couldn't play any real instruments; we had buckets as drums and tennis rackets as guitars, you know, the usual stuff. We made the sounds with our mouths and drew the album covers and so on. The band was called "Max" and our first album was called something like "The terror of the village, Max", but in Finnish, of course. Pure 80s with a small-village-twist. But the main thing was of course the stage antics. For instance, we "played" on a tractor trailer (that was cool, like a real stage) but the big hit was when we started to incorporate our little treehouse/hut into our shows. There were young birches next to it and when you leaped and grabbed to it it slowly bent down 3-4 meters to the ground. Imagine doing that with a "guitar" hanging from your neck and thousands of imaginary girls screaming! That was so cool, just like Paul Stanley!

When I was about thirteen me and my brother scraped enough money together to buy an electric guitar and a small amp. I still have that guitar (in pieces, somewhat modified) and I still remember how it smelt when we first got it (metallic smell of rusty strings). Quite soon after that me and my mates started our first real band with real instruments. We called ourselves "Bullshit Boys" for some reason. The drummer from that band became a real musician (singer-songwriter) eventually, not terribly successful (yet), but still a pro.

When I was in senior high school I was asked to join a punk rock band as a singer. We played songs from Bad Religion, Nirvana, whatnot and some of our own songs. The other guitarist's interest in the band was waning, so I both sung and played guitar in the only cassette demo we recorded and that has survived. Good times. We had our practice often on Fridays. The first thing we did was to turn the heating on (we played in this big old school gym room), carried the equipment in, had a smoke and started playing. After some songs and many cigarettes it was time for the first beer. Beer, music, cigarettes... Usually we forgot about the music at one point of the evening and just concentrated on the drinking and smoking. Still, we even did two gigs. You gotta remember, this was rural Finland so gig opportunities for a punk band were few and far between. Good times, good times.

Q.4 Can you list your top 3 music genres?

Metal, prog rock and classic rock.

Q.5 Of the three, which do you associate with mostly?

Metal.

I used to joke that I listen to all kinds of music; heavy metal, thrash metal, prog metal, hair metal, death metal...

But I do listen to other stuff too.

Q.6 What is your talent? Don't be modest.

Guitar. I'm not a great guitarist, but I get by.

Q.7 Of the talents you have not listed, which would you like to do most?

Singing. Although, I think I can do a metal growl no other TTM member can. :) Then again, I don't think anyone else is even remotely interested in doing such a thing. :D

Mixing. To achieve consistent results. Now it's kind of hit and miss. Lead guitar.

Q.8 Apart from the 'rock' music you already listed and spoke about, do you have any other musical interests such as other genres in music or other artistic talents like video art or even painting?

As a metal head I guess I should say classical music, but I would be lying. I like some classical music, but not that many pieces speak for me. For some strange reason I really like 70s disco and funk. I guess I'm not a huge fan of visual arts, but of course enjoy them as much as the next man.

Q.9 Is there a vocal of your own we can listen to either here or elsewhere?

Many. These might be quite representative of my style, or lack of, for that matter.

Never http://www.ttmbandroom.com/index.php?t=audio_player&song_id=227

MJ http://www.ttmbandroom.com/index.php?t=audio_player&song_id=409

Tears of the Morlock http://www.ttmbandroom.com/index.php?t=audio_player&song_id=331

Q.10. You have not mentioned the many videos I and others have seen on You Tube. What and why did you get started on those.

Oh yeah, my Youtube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/laripsspiral>

It's mainly about guitar gear and playing, but I have some other stuff too. Videos of concerts or places I've been to. It started as test, I guess. I just wanted to see what kind of quality (audio/video) I was able to produce with cheap gear. I have now updated much of the gear so I'm pretty pleased with the quality of video and audio.

At the moment I have little over 1 million video views altogether, my most popular video has 100 000 views and the channel has about 260 subscribers. To me, this is huge! Especially considering I'm not a good-looking woman and I have skills and gear of an amateur. The latter part doesn't hurt though, people are interested in budget gear.

The only problem I have is that I'm not a native English speaker so I'm not too eager to speak in my videos. I've done some, but they make me grin afterwards. Also, although I'm quite used to speak in public, I feel awkward talking to my camera. :)

Furthermore, I have something quite (personally) exciting brewing related to one of my humble videos, but cannot talk about it just yet.

Q.11. Can you describe the modern music scene in Finland. Are there any top bands who have had international hits.

Like any other country, we have our pop Idols and whatnot. But I guess we're mostly known for heavier bands such as Apocalyptica, HIM, Nightwish, Children of Bodom, even Lordi (a Eurovision song contest winner). Also, bands such as Iron Maiden still play 40 000 seat stadiums here, which is huge considering

the size of our population (5 million). To be honest, I'm not the right person to ask about Finnish music scene, as I do not listen to radio and watch tv rarely.

Q.12 From the list of members you know, who interests you most and why?

(doesn't have to be because you think they own the best talent)

Well this is an interesting question. It could be fun to meet the aussie lot I've know for some time (Dino, Combobob, Mung, Sprock-i-never-learned-to-spell-his-nick), but then again, it could be I say this because the chances are slim and I'm not too sociable. :) Seriously, having a motormouth such as Mung and a shy Finn like me in the same room could be disastrously awkward! (Or not.) You know, after a while they'd start to wonder what the hell is wrong with this guy! Of course, give me some beer and whiskey or get to know me and you wish I'd just shut up. :) They seem to be such a fun and funny folks, aussies in general.

Karm is interesting (as proved by his IDIOT, after all, Karm was my suggestion) as an artist and as a person but I think he'd weird me out with some hippy-weirdy stuff. :) Could be cool though.

I'd love to hear more about BigB's political views, or his views of US politics and society. If for nothing else, just to get some contrast to other stuff I hear.

I once almost had a phone discussion with Smurf! But timetables and hotel phone problems got in the way. Anyway, in the message he left he sounded like a guy that radiates that American small town friendliness. Same goes for aswegohomestead, agradelous, Old Goat, Joom...

I have wanted to do a collab with Gazebo for ages. Maybe one day. I maybe have the most in common musically with rk. There's Badfinger who sounds like a sound guy.

All in all, there's way too many to mention them all. But the point is that having heard what they produce and some little snippets of their life, it would fun to know more about their lives and about the circumstances they live in.

Q.13 Have you ever collaborated with another member or members on a recording.

Oh yes I have. At least Mung, Ssqtprockket, rkennett, Joom (although I don not remember if we ever finished anything, sorry Joom! :), and some other stuff too, e.g. more general collabs, like the song for Old Goat.

Q.14 Which of your collabs did you enjoy most and why?

Well, I enjoyed the results of collabs with Mung and S the most. S is such a great singer as is Mung, and with Mung even I've been able to sing some lines too, every now and then. I've done quite many with Mung. S is easier to work with. :) He does his thing and that's it. Mung is all over the place! (Sorry Mung, the truth needs to be heard! ;) You send Mung a song and he adds a five minute intro to it and sends 74 tracks of vocals and voice acting and just when you have painstakingly synced these up he sends another batch with completely redone lyrics and vocals and he has used some strange studio magic to turn your dark heavy metal song in E minor to reggae in G major. Gotta love him.

Q.15 Have you a favourite mix from our bandroom? (Could be one of your own.)

Well, now that it's getting light and warmer here in Finland again, I gotta say this:

Time Wins (Mung and Spiral)

http://www.ttmbandroom.com/index.php?t=audio_player&song_id=299

I think the song structure and mix just works. Mung put awesome vox on it and although the lyrics might be a little bitter sweet I think there's something elevating in the whole song. I was going to put the OG tribute first but then I heard my vocal part again... Oh dear.

Q.16 What is your ambition both musically and personally?

To become a better guitarist and to learn more and more about recording technology. To write a 5-8 songs mini concept album. To get in a band again and play a gig.

Q 17 Do you belong to any other indie websites and will you name them?

I lurk at KAE forums. I used to be quite active there but not anymore since I don't use Kristal anymore. I still love the place dearly.

Q.18 Where do you see TTM in 5 years time? What role can you play in it's development?

I think there are two options. It will grow somewhat considerably or it will slowly fade into oblivion. I feel a bit uneasy about both options.

My role in it? Don't know really. I lurk here almost every day, but lately it has been quite slow here so I haven't posted much.

It's a great place with like-minded people, I do hope it keeps on going strong.

Q.19 Who is your next choice for the IDIOT?

I think it should be someone not so active and perhaps less known. You know, this might draw their attention to the site and our attention to them. Maybe Andy Social, Biker Babe or Old Goat. Whoever agrees first. :)