



Contact: Nuje
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Thank you for taking the time to review this information about Drop Trio. In this package you'll find:

1. Band Description & Bio
2. Awards & Testimonials
3. Discography
4. Press clippings, including
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 - d. Live Review - Lubbock Hubstuff
 - e. Album Review - Houston Press
5. Selected upcoming & past shows
6. Promotional Photo

For more information on the band, visit www.droptrio.com.

For bookings, you can contact me directly at (281) 235-8830 (or email at info@droptrio.com).

I appreciate your time and consideration and I look forward to working with you soon.

Sincerely,

Nuje
Drop Trio

droptrio

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Description

Drop Trio is an instrumental band from Houston, Texas.

Born in 2002, the band has been playing original music across the southern United States, releasing two critically acclaimed studio albums and garnering many honors en route (among them, the Houston Press "Best Jazz", "Best Funk" and "Best Keyboardist" awards).

Drop Trio draws comparisons ranging from jazz / funk fusion to instrumental avant-garde rock. With no guitar and no singer, the band thrives on group improvisation; no song is ever the same twice.

The band's unassuming approach belies their deft chops and deep wells of creativity. They're just as likely to let loose with an airtight composition in 15/8 as they are a downtempo groove. With original things to say and the energy and technique to back it up, they keep their listeners continually engrossed.

Interest in the band is widespread: Drop Trio has thousands of fans across the nation and abroad, many of whom keep tabs on the trio through their website, www.droptrio.com, which is updated daily with news and freely downloadable live shows.

Lineup

Nuje (drums, percussion). Is a long time veteran of the Houston scene. When not on the road with Drop Trio, the Nuje teaches private drum lessons to more than 50 students. He recently left the successful rock band Southern Backtones to form Drop Trio.

Ian Varley (Rhodes piano, Hammond B3 organ). Ian earned a degree in composition and theory from Skidmore College. His performances have included stints with rock bands, traditional jazz combos, and atonal metal bands, and he has worked as an arranger, composer, and performer on all three coasts.

Patrick Flanagan (bass guitar) - Patrick studied music as a Rice undergrad, and got his J.D. from the UH Law Center. In addition to playing bass, Patrick is also a trial lawyer, a marathon runner, and a fluent Spanish speaker.



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AWARDS & TESTIMONIALS

Won "Best Jazz", "Best Funk / Soul / R&B" – Houston Press Music Awards 2004
Won "Best Keyboardist" (Ian Varley) – Houston Press Music Awards 2003
Official Showcase Selection - North Texas New Music Festival 2004
Best Local Album of 2003 – Houston Calling (DoneWaiting.com)
Official Showcase Selection - South By Southwest 2004 & 2005

What the press is saying:

"Drop Trio is poised to make its mark in the future of jazz." - Jambase.com

"Anchored by a rhythm section **tighter than the Texas education budget**, and a Rhodes that is pushed to its limit on every cut." - Matt Sonzala, Houston Press

"Easily the **coolest vibe of the night** ... the large crowd was really groovin', and Ian Varley attacked his keys pretty ferociously." - Bob Ruggiero, Houston Press

"The **jazzy, atmospheric groove** they create seems organic ..." - The Houston Chronicle

"If you get a chance to see Drop Trio, **do it.**" - Hubstuff Magazine

"While Drop Trio is fairly new on the scene, their **upper level musicianship** has taken them through the ranks quickly ... Drop Trio is a band you don't want to miss." - Houston Headline Magazine

What the industry is saying:

"... some **top notch** stuff." - Reprogram Radio, KPFT 90.1 FM

"These guys are easy to make sound good, because **they do sound good.**" - John Griffin, Sugarhill Studios

What the fans are saying:

"The **glow of hip** is lighting the way for this band." - Ed, Hastings, MI

"Drop Trio was **THE discovery** for me in 2003!" - Jessica R, Germany

"This is **amazing**, I could have it on repeat all day long." - Aron B, Auroa, CO

"I'm in a metal band, and let me tell ya... **I'm loving it.**" - Jason, Indiana

"You've got a **fan for life!!**" - Ivory, Houston

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DISCOGRAPHY

Leap—2004

Drop Trio's latest studio release, *Leap* was recorded at Sugarhill Studios on February 29th, 2004, and was 100% improvised. Combining the energy of spontaneous musical creation with the incredible sound fidelity that comes from working at a world-class studio, *Leap* shows Drop Trio as a fluid, surprising, rocking musical unit.

Big Dipper—2003

Drop Trio recorded *Big Dipper* in spring 2003 at SugarHill Studios, one of Houston's most respected professional studios. As the band's first full-length record, the release features new versions of previously released songs as well as brand-new material, and the record's pristine sound quality showcases the band's nuanced playing and inventive songwriting.

Live at Last Concert Cafe 05/10/03—2003

Live at Last Concert Cafe was bass player Marc Reczek's second show with Drop Trio. This release brings out the energy of the group and shows the dynamic spirit of the band in performance. A limited-edition, *Live at Last Concert Café* is given away at Drop Trio shows.

Plonk EP—2002

This rare recording is only available online at droptrio.com. *Plonk* showcases Drop Trio's acoustic side. Recorded live in studio.

Little Dipper EP—2002

Early on, the band recorded *Little Dipper* to give out to audiences as a free sampler. More than 500 CDs were distributed to new fans in the band's first six months.

In addition to the above releases, Drop Trio has an open taping policy and keeps copies of all live shows, which they periodically release online for download or streaming. Check the music section of the band's web site, www.droptrio.com, for several live shows available for download in full.



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PRESS CLIPS

Three Ring Circus Maxiums

For avant-garde instrumental progressive funk jazz lovers, Drop Trio's the only game in town
Bob Ruggiero, Feature Article, Houston Press - May 20, 2004

Ian Varley does not have any children.

This is readily apparent by the way the keyboardist for Drop Trio unthinkingly drops the F-bomb in the lobby of Monterey's Little Mexico, oblivious to the wee small girl with her mother paying for their taco dinners only feet away. He *is* married, though, and his red beard -- which I heard was approaching ZZ Top starter-kit length -- has been neatly trimmed. "I succumbed to wifely pressure," he offers. But he still can grow face fur that most men can only fantasize about. *Damn.*

Drummer Mike Blattel and bassist Ron "Nino" Batista soon arrive. Along with Varley, we retire to a corner booth. There, over potent margaritas and Elmer's glue-like quesadillas, they discuss life as the only "avant-garde instrumental progressive funk jazz" act in Houston. Try finding a shelf for *that* category at the record store.

But one bin you'll find in every record store is the one marked "soundtracks." And chances are that all of those bins will have a copy of the soundtrack to the new Cedric the Entertainer vehicle *Johnson Family Vacation*. And on that CD you'll find a Drop Trio song. The band has the Knowles family to thank for this little coup. One of the movie's co-stars, Solange Knowles (Beyoncé's little sister), sings a track on it called "Freedom" over the Drop Trio tune "Lefty's Alone." Seems that the younger Knowles caught a couple of the DT's shows, picked up a CD, became enchanted with the track and wrote some lyrics.

"It turned out much better than we expected. We thought she was just going to do a sample," says Varley. Blattel points out that the tune appears just before a Barry White track. "We're in the lovemaking section..."

Making love, stomping on the dance floor or just chillin' -- Drop Trio's music is adaptable to any of those activities. One can get lost listening to their excellent CD *Big Dipper*, finding something new in it with each spin -- which works out, considering the trio's diverse group of fans. "Some people come out to focus on us, and some just like it as background music, which is fine," says Varley, who plays Rhodes piano and a Hammond B-3 organ. In fact, they joked about calling a live CD *Playing to the Backs of Audiences*.

"We also have a desire to push experimental limits," Batista says. "But we know that's not for everybody. We've gotten into trouble for playing too loud at jazz clubs...the funk just comes out with the heavy beat."

In fact, the band never plays a song the same way twice, which, along with their groove-oriented sound, has led to happy huggies from the local jam-band community. "Those fans are very open-minded musically," Varley says. Of course, there are times when the staid jazz and happy hippie worlds collide and create friction -- as when two spin dancers were ejected from a DT gig at the posh downtown Twelve Spot for not wearing shoes.

Worlds also collide within their music. A major influence on Drop Trio's sound, which isn't always apparent, is prog-rock. All three are *huge* fans. So while "funk jazz" captures the general aesthetic of their sound, there are also plenty of intricate key changes, multi-melody parts and time-signatures shifts. "We can make odd time signatures danceable, but we're still dorks," Blattel says. [...]



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PRESS CLIPS (Cont.)

Drop Trio Drops Debut Album

Haig Assadourian, Album Review, Jambase.com

Houston's Drop Trio recently released its first full-length CD, *Big Dipper*. An acid-jazz constellation featuring the trio of Ian Varley on Rhodes piano and Hammond organ, Mike Blattel on drums, and Nino Batista on electric bass deliver twelve melodic jazz pieces that are fresh, atmospheric grooves. Their sound is welcome to any fan of Medeski, Martin & Wood and in many ways, they represent the more fluid aspect of that style. [...]

Rarely does a player solo. Or perhaps they are all soloing in unison? "Melody-Melody," the longest track on the CD at 5:26, is comprised of sections of moods and funky interludes. I found myself returning to this engaging and complex track more than any other.

Blattel's tight, yet understated, drum work is showcased on songs such as "Invisible Pants" and "Wet Dog." "Abbey Rhodes" teases the listener to a fun jam that should translate into intriguing potential for live show explorations. Hints of soul and funk are added generously throughout the mix of songs. [...]

The band cites a wide range of influences that cover funk, jambands and even '70s prog-rock. I could have sworn I heard a Yes influence on "Lefty's Alone." Aggregating these types of disparate styles successfully is a tricky thing for any band. Drop Trio finds ways to introduce musical phrases that add diversity to its compositions yet still stay true to its acid-jazz roots. With bassist Marc Reczek joining in on recent live shows, Drop Trio is poised to make its mark in the future of jazz.

Drop Trio - Nominated for Best Jazz Band, Best Keyboardist

Matt Sonzala, Houston Press, July 24, 2003

Houston isn't the greatest city in the world for live jazz, but folks like Drop Trio are out to change that. They don't really fit in with the avant-garde, the martini sippers or the purists; they're more for the young cats who like their jazz a bit funkied up with lots of energy. Drop Trio is anchored by a rhythm section tighter than the Texas education budget and a Rhodes keyboard that gets pushed to its limits on every cut. Think Medeski Martin and Wood, without their lame DJ, and then add in some elements of bayou funk and acid-tinged San Francisco hipness, and you're close to describing the sound of their instrumental jams.

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PRESS CLIPS (Cont.)

Drop Trio Drives Klusoz

Jay Reichard, Lubbock Hubstuff, June 2003

After an evening with Crosby, Stills and Nash, we decided to drop down to the Depot District for a quick rendezvous with friends to catch the Drop Trio band from Houston. My interest in lots of different styles of music beckoned me to hear the trio, billed as "one of Houston's best bands." I admit, I was not disappointed. Keyboard player and spokesman for the band, Ian Varley, recommended we should all get our daily allowance of funk jazz and indeed, we felt better for it. The band's melody-driven instrumental jazz was centered around tight keyboard work, a steady bass line, and some great beat from the drum kit. If you get a chance to see Drop Trio, do it. Their style is unique and refreshing in the club scene in Lubbock.

Big Dipper - Album Review

Houston Press, Aug 2003

There's something eternally cool and otherworldly about the sound of a Hammond B-3 organ. Instantly identifiable and soaked with a distinct atmosphere, the whirling and fat sounds of the vintage keyboard jump out from any recording or performance. [...] Though the classic B-3 ceased production in 1975, it still has a cult following, and new jazz artists like Medeski, Martin, and Wood and John Scofield are leading a new wave of interest in the organ.

Houston's versatile funk jazz band Drop Trio perfectly synthesizes this fresh approach, using the instrument as its prime musical source on Big Dipper's 12 instrumentals. Members Ian Varley (Hammond organ, Rhodes piano), drummer Mike Blattel and bassist Nino Batista somehow mix and merge a cacophony of notes into an utterly pleasing soundtrack. From the rhythmic work on "Second First" and "Lefty's Alone" to the funkier "Invisible Pants" and "Flux," there's space both for soloing and playing together. As a nod to the instrument's '70s heyday, there's "Wallawalla" (which could easily make the soundtrack for a Fat Albert cartoon) and "Gin & Nothin'." All three players are crack instrumentalists and elicit top-notch groovin' material, and Varley is as adept on the Rhodes as he is with the Hammond. [...]

Big Dipper makes for a great instrumental record, one with a fresh approach to a classic sound. Here's a "jazz" record with solid crossover appeal, even to those who don't know Thelonious Monk from Thelonious Monster.



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Selected Upcoming Shows

- Apr 1 **Jake's** - Lubbock, TX - With *The Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey*
- Apr 30 **Houston International Festival**
- May 21 **Cezanne** - Houston, TX
- Jun 2 **The Deli** - Norman, OK
- Jun 3 **Jake's Sports Café** - Lubbock, TX
- Jun 4 **The Bean Counter** - Abilene, TX

Selected Past Shows (2004)

- Mar 17 **Elephant Room** - Austin, TX - Official **SxSW** Showcase
- Nov 12 - **The Meridian** - 1503 Chartres, Houston - *With Mofro* - 9:00 PM
- Oct 21 - **Luna** - 6740 San Pedro Ave, San Antonio, TX - 9:00 PM
- Sep 11 - **Elephant Room** - 315 Congress, Austin, TX
- Sep 9 - **Hailey's** - 122 Mulberry, Denton, TX
- Sep 4 - **Breezy's** - 710 Ryan Street, Lake Charles, LA
- Aug 12 - **Cezanne** - 4100 Montrose, Houston - 9:00 PM
- Jul 25 - **Houston Press Music Awards** - Clarks - 314 Main, Houston - 6:00 PM
- Jun 19 - **Last Concert Cafe** - 1403 Nance, Houston - 9:00 PM - w/ *Moses Guest*
- Jun 4 - **Rudyard's Pub** - 2010 Waugh Dr., Houston - 10:00 PM
- May 8 - **The Art Studio** - 720 Franklin St., Beaumont, TX - 8:00 PM
- May 1 - **Candu Show** - 2819 Pease, Houston - 8pm till 2 am
- Apr 1 - **Flamingo Cantina** - 515 6th Street, Austin, TX - 9:00 PM
- Mar 20 - **SxSW** - Austin, TX - Saturday, Midnight
- Feb 24 - **Houston PBS** - The Connection - Channel 8, Houston - 8:55 PM
- Feb 21 - **Revolution** - 211B S Main St, Bryan, TX - 10:100 PM
- Jan 30 - **Elmo's** - 1721 Roseland, Tyler, TX - 10:00 PM
- Dec 13, 2003 - **Continental Club** - 3700 Main St., Houston
- Nov 30, 2003 - **Texas House Concerts** - 623 W. 12th St, Houston
- Nov 22, 2003 - **Ovations** - 2536 B Times Blvd, Houston
- Nov 15, 2003 - **The Mellow Mushroom** - Baton Rouge, LA
- Oct 24, 2003 - **Rhythm Room** - 1815 Washington, Houston
- Sep 27, 2003 - **Soular Grooves Radio Show** - KPFT 90.1 FM
- Sep 28, 2003 - **Cactus Music & Video** - 2930 South Shepherd, Houston
- Oct 11, 2003 - **Super Happy Fun Land** - 2610 Ashland St., Houston
- Sep 5, 2003 - **Elbow Room** - 3010 Gaston Ave, Dallas, TX
- Aug 23, 2003 - **Chelsea's** - 148 W. State Street, Baton Rouge, LA
- Jul 27, 2003 - **Houston Press Music Awards** - M Bar - 402 Main St., Houston
- Jun 23, 2003 - **KPFT 90.1** - 90.1 FM (listen live), Houston
- Jun 21, 2003 - **Red Star Bar** - 222 Laurel St., Baton Rouge, LA



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