

MONOTONIX

Biography

Monotonix are singer Ami Shalev, guitarist Yonatan Gat and drummer Ran Shimoni. They hail from Tel Aviv, a city not necessarily famous for its rock'n'roll scene...

Ami, Yonatan and Ran all knew each other and wanted to do something together. When their previous bands started breaking up, it felt like the right time, and Monotonix started playing together in November 2005.

Rock'n'roll? It's not really part of the culture over there. Most of the music there draws from Russian, Greek, Arab and Mediterranean folk; contemporary Israeli music is a combination of cheap 80's pop, Mediterranean licks and soft rock. According to Yonatan, most rock shows there still occur in front of a seated audience eating hummus.

Monotonix didn't really like that. They wanted to do the complete opposite from what was going around them. Their inspiration is the raw energy and awesomeness of all the great classic rock bands, vintage pop and indie rock.

That's how the Monotonix style of performance started, and since the first time they did it in Tel Aviv — the trio, together, on the floor among the people, it's been a party every night. But in Israel, the party was often too loud and wild for their own good. After finding themselves banned from half of the venues in the country, and having power shut down and cops called on them, they got tired of listening to their audience boo the promoters. So they decided to fly a guitar amp and some drums to New York.

They started their first tour of the East Coast not knowing what to expect in the U.S.A.

Getting to know themselves and what they love about music and communicating with audiences all over again, they found the show had as much of a liberating effect on audiences around the world as it did on the band themselves.

Monotonix's book of show stories is becoming

epic. There's the guy in Knoxville who set himself on fire. Then there's the 55 year old woman in Haarlem, Netherlands who drank beer out of Ami's shoe. And in Richmond, VA the audience lifted the entire band in the air, including the drums and guitar amp, for the last song of the set.

They've been playing in front of similarly spirited audiences for a year and a half nonstop, playing nearly 300 shows in the United States and Europe in that time. They plan to be on the road for the majority of 2008, getting off to a fast start with two full months of shows all around America between February and April.

Monotonix tried to record their songs a couple of times in Israel (for the couple of days they were actually home!) but were never satisfied. During their last tour they thought that if they tried to record in a studio in the States after playing all those shows, they might be able to pull it off.

And pull it off they have with their first Drag City EP, "*Body Language*."

Addendum:

Please note that since the release of the "*Body Language*" EP, Haggai Fershtman has replaced Ron Shimoni as the drummer for Monotonix.

