**Unusual guitarist gains fame through his skill and reinvention.**

By Kenneth Baskett  
Senior Staff Writer

Jason “Lefty” Williams is not your run-of-the-mill blues-rock guitarist. He was raised in Atlanta and took interest in the guitar at a young age. “[I started playing because] my dad played,” Williams said. “I really don’t remember starting, so it kind of hard to remember why I wanted to start. When I was middle school, I kind of became a creative outlet for me and a way to get my frustration with being a teenager and anger and that kind of stuff out. The more I played the more I loved it.”

Choosing a different route to stardom than most young musicians, Williams attended Atlanta Institute of Music after high school and graduated with honors. He stayed on as an instructor there until he was ready to make his music career his full-time job. After playing with several local groups, he decided to form his own band. And oh yeah, he’s only got one hand.

Williams was born without his right hand. To overcome his disability, when he was only 6 he created a pick w a harness to wear on his arm. Now Big Plans, the debut album of the “Lefty” Williams Band, is being released on Second Heaven Records.

“This record is a culmination of the songs I’ve written over the past 6 or 7 years,” Williams said. “I’ve been in various different bands and I’ve been inspired by various different things.”

Playing with Williams on the album are his band mates Ray Dumbowski on bass, Bellian Marshall on drums and Mike Shears on percussion. Big Plans also features Tom Knight, who did drum work for TLC, and Adam Nity, who is currently touring with Aaliyah, who is currently touring with Aaliyah.

“Some critics have called the album’s sound ‘genre-defying,'” Williams said. “I had to work hard to make it a blues album, but I think we did it.”

The story revolves around the emotional haz ing, binge drinking and admission to the fraternity. The book captures the essence of Jack Young's novel Epsilon Zeta.

The author was actually in the fraternity Sigma Chi in Florida State University. He states that the book is fictional in characters but is based on truth. Young said, “The events that take place in the book are things I witnessed or knew about. A lot of the dialogue is from that time. The main ensemble characters are fictionalized. They are composites rather than strictly based on a particular person.”

The intriguing book narrates the story of a fraternity at Northwest Florida University, which goes through its share of hardship. The fraternity has been taken to court on various issues such as date rape and marijuana, but the wrongdoings do not seem to stop, causing the president to deactivate any brother partaking in behavior considered illegal.

This includes one brother, who stadium dives during a football game causing a sister to dislocate her knee, and a lawsuit to follow. Other lawsuits seem to keep coming up as well, questioning whether the fraternity will be able to survive for much longer.

The story revolves around a pledge class of 16 and the different activities they must complete to be considered part of the revered brotherhood. This includes the emotional haz ing, binge drinking, and admission to the fraternity. The book captures the essence of Jack Young's novel Epsilon Zeta.

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my wife and I were hanging out at the house one night with one of her friends that she had grown up with in Vermont with… One of [the friend’s] professors in college told her about this law. In Mississippi, an orgy is legally defined as any time that four or more people are in a room with their shoes off. I thought it was ridiculous, so I made up a story about going to Mississippi and getting arrested,” Williams said.

“Room with a View Reprise” is one of the greatest instrumental songs I’ve ever heard, with intricate picking and a slower groove that you can’t help but hum along to. On the title track, a song that echoes Georgian artist Shawn Mullins, Williams proves he can belt out a soulful ballad like the best of them.

“The song is my view on… how things have been going with the music industry and how I’ve been feeling about that.”

As a whole, Big Plans is a remarkable debut album. If you love music the way it used to be played, simple and with emotion, you will love this album. It is even exceeding Williams’ expectations. “I think there are already five or six hundred sold out of an initial thousand, and I’ve only had it a couple of months. [At the release party] we almost sold out Smith’s [Olde Bar]. We were about 50 people short of putting the room to capacity.” Williams said.

Not one to sit on his hand, Williams is excited about the future. “I will probably do a follow-up album next year… I’m in the middle of writing a bunch of material right now, and I’m kind of going through a little writing spurt. I’ve pumped out about seven new songs in the past three weeks that I really like a lot and the band seems to like a lot, but I don’t want to rush into it too quickly. I want to give this album time to breathe and let it do what it needs to do.”
Over It releases album

Poprockers’ fourth album full of potential singles, top 40 hits

By Kenneth Baskett
Senior Staff Writer

In this day and age, originality is completely optional when it comes to recording music. This is a good thing for Orange County quintet Over It, who released their fourth full-length album a few weeks ago. After signing with Virgin Records in the spring of 2005, the group recorded 13 songs, both old and new, for their first major label release, Step Outside Yourself.

Three albums is a lot for a band to make on an indie label, and Over It’s last record, Silverstrand, sold over 20,000 copies world-wide. This kind of thing only happens when people really like the band.

After listening to Step Outside Yourself, it’s easy to see why. Over It has gotten ten radio-friendly pop-punk down to a science. Everything on this record sounds like it could be the next play-it-until-you-want-to-shoot-yourself radio single.

It is ridiculous how catchy these songs are. I’ll be amazed if Over It is not a household name by the end of the year.

But originality is not Over It’s strong suit. They sound just like Yellowcard, Hoobastank and [insert name of west coast pop-rock band here]. If you’re into innovation in your music, then move along. There’s nothing to see here. But if you’re like so much of America today and just looking for a fun, catchy tune that you can sing along to, you’re going to love this band.

The album leads off with “Think Against the Grain,” an upbeat song with a powerful guitar riff that serves as a great introduction to the band. “Siren on the 101” is the first stand -out track on the album. It gets in your head like a heroin addiction and is probably the catchiest song on the entire album, a shoe-in for a single. The best chorus on the record belongs to “Come Out With Your Hands Up,” a percussion-driven pop anthem. “Now is the time to come out with your hands up! We’ve got the whole place surrounded! Neighbors are dialing the nine and the one, one! Now is the time to talk it over.”

Listening to Step Outside Yourself was the weirdest experience I’ve ever had while listening to music. I don’t generally like pre-packaged pop music. But listening to this, I had to constantly stop and listen to the weirdest music I had to make sure the secret RIAA scientists weren’t using subliminal messaging as a form of mind control.

Listening to this...
I had to make sure the secret RIAA scientists weren’t using subliminal messaging as a form of mind control. It’s kind of like eating an entire carton of ice cream; you know it’s wrong, but it feels so right. So, should you buy the album? I cannot conscientiously recommend it because of its side effects.

If you listen to this album, you may find yourself unexpectedly listening to Star 94 and Q100 with a strong compulsion to get your hair frosted. If your friends are the type that only listen to bands that no one has ever heard of, then there’s no way to listen to this and still look fashionable. But, if you listen to Over It, you’ll like it. No one has to know.

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Two Bits man analytically assesses the insanity better known as Atlanta traffic

Welcome to another Two Bits. While I am anonymous, many of the events that I describe have happened, although they are based on something that has happened. These events are generally thematic, and often involve stupidity. Stop throwing in some form. The amount of stupidity portrayed in my columns is all too real, even if the names are concealed to protect the (as far as I can tell) anonymous (my identity).

This week, I've got aARGER close to home. Literally. Yes, I, Two Bits Man, have parents. They are very real, and very annoying. While I love them dearly (well, that is the best I can make of it here), I still must make fun of it.

My parents are suffering from “Empty Nest Syndrome.” The most serious symptoms of this disease take a few years to manifest, but are incredibly vicious. It’s most common in parents who have a relatively low number of children, and the intensity is inversely proportional to the independence of the offspring in question. Many parents don’t know they are infected, and the best solution to this problem is to not give up on the education on the part of a third party.

Additionally, while unrelated to Empty Nest Syndrome, my parents constantly criticize my driving. I could be going five miles an hour below the speed limit, and they still complain about my speed. They don’t like that I change lanes often. When I look out on I-75/85, I see a marvelous island of modern engineering. Who wouldn’t want to drive a 16-lane highway? I was a century ago! Atlanta’s interstates are also fun to drive in when they’re not backed up with traffic.

Of course, that’s a personal opinion. The major problem I have with people who aren’t from Atlanta is that they don’t understand Atlanta driving.

To prove this difference of opinion, I present two quotes. My dad said, “Mom said she was praying the entire time that you drove us to the restaurants last night.” My girlfriend said, “I have certainly ridden with drivers much worse than you. Of course, your parents don’t know how poorly most other people drive, and they don’t understand Atlanta driving. I’m glad you’re my mother on that list. She drives like she’s afraid of the traffic.” What seems like a dangerous high-speed maneuver to someone from the country is generally called “changing lanes” by us TIFers.

Another thing that has been aggravating me lately is car insurance. Statistically speaking, male teenagers are at the greatest risk for automobile accidents. Have I had a car accident? No! I want a refund.

I long for the days when we can all walk from home or our bathrooms and not have to pay for parking, gas, insurance, regular maintenance and last night’s book. Perhaps hitch-hiking will see increased popularity as transportation costs continue to rise. All of those people driving along in their cars are going to be sad!

Except for physics instructors—I’ve never hitch a ride with them. Knowing too much physics is probably detrimental to driving a car. It will help you determine how an accident occurred, but a study of momentum won’t help you get around the old couple driving ten below the limit in the left lane. Now there is something that should be illegal.

Of course, I believe there is some movement towards higher limits. The Trans-Texas Corridor will have a maximum speed of 85 mph. Where better to incept mandarins 55 mph on interstates through a city? Have they ever driven in Atlanta?

Any retard who drives 55 mph on I-75/85 or 1-285 deserves what’s coming to them. That video that circulated worldwide showing a interstate 85 mph on I-285 was made to prove a point. Those guys have guts. Next, I’d like to go into hand-to-hand combat with bears to demonstrate why bears are the number one threat to America. Then some of thosedirtyass decorators need to write a decent speed legislation. If someone runs on a platform of raising speed limits, they will have my vote. The number of skeletons in their closet.

Now I know Atlanta drivers aren’t perfect, but they may have an excuse. One-way streets, while useful in certain situations, are extremely aggravating. Having a seven-lane one-way street, in my humble opinion, is poor engineering.

My latest pet peeve, though, is that Atlanta drivers don’t use their blinkers. Several times while driving I’ve said something like “Where the [expletive deleted] are you [expletive deleted] going?” Use your [expletive deleted] signal, you [expletive deleted]!” Every time you change lanes without signaling, God kills a puppy. Please, think of the puppies.

This is Two Bits, reminding you to explain city driving to your children. God’s really nothing to be afraid of.

And don’t forget to think of the puppies. Those poor puppies...