

JERRY CASTLE & THE STRIDE

Jerry Castle – guitar, vocals
Michael Dale – drums
Mike Vargo – keys, backing vocals, acoustic guitar
Jeremy Brashears – bass
Chris Hunter – guitar



Jerry Castle, a Virginia native and five year Nashville TN resident, delivers straightforward American rock that is gleefully twisted by swampy grooves and hook-laden pop sensibility. His sound is a combination of Americana, Rock, Pop, and Punk. "Tom Petty on steroids" is a phrase that is often used in describing Jerry's sound. The truth of the matter is that Jerry Castle & The Stride have a sound that is all their own. Jerry's songwriting and vocal delivery make you believe every single word that he says. His blue collar, no whining personality is reflected in all of his songs on his upcoming record, "The Back Side of Down".

Even though Jerry Castle & The Stride is a brand new band, none of the guys are newcomers to the music scene. All five members in the band have had extensive touring and studio experience. Jerry spent four years fronting the popular Virginia jam band TOAST and he spent three years fronting the hard rock band The World Outside. While with TOAST, Jerry released two full-length records, 1997's *Game Called Life* and 1999's *Simple Pleasures*; the two records sold a combined 4000 copies. The support of these records carried Jerry to colleges and clubs throughout all of the Southeast United States. In 2000 Jerry formed The World Outside and in 2002 Jerry took his new band, van, trailer, and home demos to remote regions in the Midwest and Great Plains of the US. While with The World Outside Jerry did a massive amount of home demos and touring. He played a whopping 264 dates during the year in the Great Plains and Midwest regions and sold 5000 of his home demos in states like Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Minnesota.

In the summer of 2003 mutual friend, engineer, and producer Chad Brown introduced Jerry Castle and drummer Michael Dale. Michael had spent several years as a band member of Capricorn recording artist's The Honeyrods and he was also known for his work with the Emo band Mod Lang. Chad also introduced Jerry to his new roommate, utility man Mike Vargo. Vargo, originally from Ohio, spent seven years fronting funk cover bands before moving to Nashville TN. Mike's voice, all around musicianship, and love of the Beatles was something that Jerry really appreciated. So in October of 2003, Castle, Dale, Vargo, and engineer/steel guitarist Jeff Servais went into the studio to record songs for "Back Side of Down". The chemistry between the four was automatic, leading to eighteen-hour studio days and a plethora of magical moments. Dale loved what the four were doing so much that he called up two of his Honeyrods and Mod Lang band mates and invited them to come into the studio to do some overdubs. Those two guys are bassist Jeremy Brashears and guitarist Chris Hunter. The cool thing here is that Dale, Brashears, and Hunter are childhood friends and that they have played together for sixteen years. This is how Jerry Castle and The Stride came to be a band.

Even though the bulk of "Back Side of Down" was recorded during October of 2003, the record actually began as a 3-song demo back in February of the same year. Jerry had been looking for someone to produce, mix, and engineer his demo, and Chad Brown suggested three-time Grammy winner Warren Riker. Jerry sent Warren some songs and Warren agreed to work on the project. When asked why he agreed to take on an unsigned artist Riker stated, "No doubt it's the songs. Most writers in the Americana, Roots Rock, Alt-Country vein of music are one dimensional, Jerry is a very multidimensional songwriter".

There is never a moment on one of the thirteen tracks on "Back Side of Down" that you are let down. From the rowdy hard rocking opening track, "Guilty" to the eloquent sparse but lush closing track, "Broken Wing", the record "Brings the Magic" at all times. Castle's prolific writing and the fact that there is a diverse amount of engineers, producers, and musicians on this record probably have something to do with that. Guys like former Black Crowes guitarist Audley Freed, former Wilco drummer Ken Coomer, and former Stevie Ray Vaughn and Double Trouble keyboardist Reese Wynans all made guest appearances on the record.

Jerry Castle's work ethic and attitude are best reflected in his motto, "Live Long, Be Strong, & Rock On! It may sound a bit brash, a bit preachy, or a bit trite but it definitely gives you an idea of the guy behind the music. Jerry Castle & The Stride look to be one of the freshest most original bands in 2004.