



Your Robot Overlords

Not Your Average Local Band

BY LAURA LIEFF

There's something about self-taught musicians. They are scrappier, hungrier and usually more fun. Sometimes, they even dress up for their shows and give the shows names like "The First Second Annual Service Industry Appreciation Winter Formal." Your Robot Overlords is that band.

Comprised of five Vail Valley locals, Your Robot Overlords is made up of Audrey Ste-Marie (the sole female member of the band) on guitar and flute, Bob Aubrey on guitar as well, Robo Harrell behind the drumkit, Tyler Alvarez on bass and David Pleshaw providing the lead

vocals. While the band officially began performing together publicly in 2021, they began practicing together in 2018 — every Tuesday for five hours a night.

"I love music and taught myself guitar, because I wanted something more," Ste-Marie explains. "It takes dedication to teach yourself how to play an instrument, and we've all taught ourselves, so this band is like an art project that's ongoing."

Harrell grew up listening to punk and hardcore music, then became a DJ and then started experimenting with Aubrey's drumkit, which turned into teaching himself the instrument. Alvarez has been playing guitar since he was a

child and recently applied those skills to teaching himself how to play bass. "Music has always been there," he adds.

Although singing and songwriting was new for Pleshaw, he found that both provide an outlet — whether he's at band practice, performing or belting out lyrics in his car. "When we started the band, I was going through a breakup and needed something to focus on," he explains. "Singing helps me express myself and helped me get through what was going on in my life."

ECLECTIC SOUND

With influences that range from Frank Sinatra to Robert Smith to Sid Vicious, and various forms of metal, punk rock and reggae, the band's individuality bleeds through their shows, and audiences eat it up. Two fan favorite songs are "Banned From The Narrows" (ask Pleshaw about this one in person) and "Microchip Implants," which Ste-Marie explains, "Brings awareness to the world being taken over by artificial intelligence."

Everyone in the band loves music — there's no question about that — and Aubrey is the most apparent music nerd in the bunch. He has been playing guitar since fourth grade and cites a wide variety of influences, including the Dead Kennedys, Slash, Ian MacKaye and the Ramones. A self-described "musical instrument hoarder," he hadn't played music publicly for 15 years until he sold one of his electric guitars to Ste-Marie (who he had just met) in 2017, and they started playing together more regularly.

Recalls Ste-Marie, "When I bought the guitar from Bob, I didn't know anything about it, so I asked him to teach me, and then over time, the band came together. We all have the same aspirations for music and are happy to entertain people and have a good time."

TEAM EFFORT

While everyone contributes to songwriting and vocals to some extent, and the band is very much a collaborative

effort, Aubrey is the common thread that brought the group together. "Each of us has been playing music for a long time, so it's fun to play together and see our audiences dancing and having fun at our shows," he says.

When asked to describe the Your Robot Overlords sound, Aubrey says, "New wave by label, punk rock by heart." That description exemplifies what sets the band apart; their music is as eclectic as their members. Additionally, what makes Your Robot Overlords truly memorable is their creativity and willingness to take the music seriously – but not themselves.

"My favorite part of performing is hearing the full sound," says Harrell. "You can have a cool guitar riff or a great song lyric, but hearing everything come together and work is the best part."

POSITIVE LOCAL RESPONSE

The band's unique outlook, performance style and overall vibe is clearly working as Your Robot Overlords has garnered a great deal of local support over the last few years. In fact, they were recently recognized in the 2022-23 Best Local Musician/Band category in the Best of Vail Valley Readers' Choice Awards.

"Being in a band is marketing," says Aubrey. "Having that many people vote for us was amazing. Also, we would not be a live band without Ollie at Route 6. He's given us the opportunity to hone our live shows, and we appreciate him so much."

Adds Ste-Marie, "It feels great to have that many fans out there who were willing to vote every day for two weeks," adds Ste-Marie. "People are going to get a little bit of everything from our shows, and we're excited for them to see what's next." +

For updates on future shows, follow the band:

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