



Bringing you the best unsigned artists.

The Navigator

Taxi's membership has now surpassed 11,000, and some exceptionally talented bands and writer/artists are emerging from the ranks of the industry's preeminent independent A&R service. Whenever we locate a particularly viable act, we give you the lowdown in this space; the rest is up to you.

BOY IN DECEMBER

The four brothers who make up Goderich, Ontario's Boy in December are not lacking in ambition. They're on a quest to become the biggest band in the world, and they truly believe they can not only pull it off but do so without making any concessions to what is presently deemed "commercial." The underlying idea is that, if a band is both inspired and *real*, people will respond. There are historical precedents for this sort of ambition; you'll find them in your CD collection.

"These are salt-of-the-earth guys," says Randall Lobb, the band's producer, of the Hussey brothers, who happen to be as telegenic as they are virtuosic. "They all have day jobs, from construction to Web design. Their music enables them to transcend the grind and takes them to a different place. They have this drive to play for the biggest possible audience, and it's not about the limo or the helicopter. But even if it's 20 people in a club, they still play like they're the biggest band in the world."

"We always feel that way," says bassist/keyboard player Mark Hussey, without a trace of either pretense or irony. "When we play music, there's this feeling in all four of us that it's what they're on this planet to do. We want to have the kind of success that will enable us to get up every morning and create. There's nothing that gives us greater satisfaction. And the outflow of that would be getting other people inspired and questioning things. You have to be willing to challenge yourself and to challenge everything, so that, just maybe, we can make this world a better place."

That kind of self-belief can't be manufactured, and when it's combined with rarefied talent, the one-two punch can be potent indeed. If things keep going as they have been, the '00s will go down as the Niche Decade, a time of radically diminished expectations and low ceilings. But why be the next indie darlings when you can make music that's lasting and get it to a lot of people? That's what Boy in December is shooting for.

Roughs of the band's debut album have been blowing our minds for weeks—these are widescreen anthems that simultaneously achieve grandeur and intimacy—it's like they're picking up where *Joshua Tree* and *The Bends* left off. There's no way that last sentence doesn't come off like blatant hype, but wait till you hear this stuff. On tracks like "Islands," "Wish You Were," "Dylan" and "Silent Sky," they reach for and attain spiritual elevation, as Matt Hussey's impassioned vocals soar above the epic soundscapes. We get chills just thinking about it.

Boy in December morphed out of the regionally popular band Silence three years ago, and they've been working up the material for their debut album ever since, experiencing exponential growth over the last year and a half. When they were ready, they got in touch with us.



"We've been in a period of reevaluation," says Mark, "so we were testing some things, and when TAXI appeared on our radar, what we heard back from the critiques was basically what we had been thinking anyway. That was exciting, because it reinforced the sense that we were on the right path."

The next step, obviously, is getting the word out and building an active base—a task they're well equipped to undertake, given their charisma and proficiency in live performance and their technological know-how.

"We're preparing some Internet stuff and booking shows so that when we have the record in our hands, we'll be able to launch everything all at once," says Mark of the coming offensive. "I don't want to sound too geeky, but we're Web 2.0 savvy. Sometimes the songs are a loss leader—we've been putting out podcasts and videocasts of live stuff and alternate tracks, using the free music and piracy boom to our advantage. It's just a snapshot—maybe 100 people in a small town that know our music when we haven't even released it yet. And there are already clips on YouTube. Are people gonna look at them? Well, no, because they don't know us yet. But we're testing the infrastructure and spreading the seeds out there."

The band has yet to approach any labels in Canada or the States, nor has anyone yet approached them, and these days it's extremely rare to find something this musically advanced that hasn't been poked and prodded by a host of weasels. Think of this as an opportunity to be the first kid on your block to ride this shiny new bike.

"We're just trying to find the right people to work with," Mark explains. "The most important thing is relationships, and people getting what we're about. The industry is a great marketing machine, and we don't have a problem with that. We're looking for those people who will see who we are and find value in that. So there's chum in the water, and our attorney is raring to go; we're just waiting until everything is right, and it'll be right when the CD is done in a few weeks. But no matter what happens, we're gonna do this."

We suggest that you immediately jump on line and go to our brand-new artist-hosting site, presently in beta testing, www.taxi.com/boyindecember, and stream or downloaded the rough mixes—and be assured that "rough" is a relative term in this case. It shouldn't take more than a verse and chorus of "Islands" or "Wish You Were" to get you motivated. When you do, give us a ring for more details. Operators are standing by.

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