



Getting to know...

Guns N' Roses' Bumblefoot

At first glance it looked like any other garage band rehearsal: six guys thrashing and bashing away in a warehouse in Al Quoz. But hang around for a song or two and you'd have felt the infectious musical charisma pouring from one member, a straggly guitarist clad in a weathered leather jacket and jeans, at odds with the five tentative Asian players standing awkwardly around in awe.

Between blitzing six-string workouts, he wanders over to a mic. 'Hey Axl – it's Bumble,' he says in an American drawl, 'I've decided I'm

'If I met Slash, it would make Axl feel weird – like if your friend went on a date with your ex'

going to stay in Dubai.' Everyone in the room giggles. 'Whaaaaaaat?!' he answers in a cartoon-pitched whine, beginning several minutes of improvised mock-dialogue between this man – Ron Thal – and his absent band leader, Guns N' Roses lead singer Axl Rose.

A night later, on October 5, the guitarist joined those five stunned rockers – otherwise known as Dubai band Point of View – on stage to launch their debut album, *Revolutionize the Revolutionary*. We took the opportunity to corner 43-year-old Ron, otherwise known as 'Bumblefoot' (a type of foot infection), for a chat.

He turned down the offer to join Guns N' Roses – at first.

'In 2004 Joe Satriani sent me an email saying, 'I've just recommended you for Guns...' At the time I was busy,

I was fulfilled with what I was doing, so I said no. A year and a half later we got back from touring and figured it out. It's a very strange story.'

He met Point of View two years ago, following a Guns gig in Abu Dhabi.

'We go all around the world and hear all these bands, but they don't always have that integrity. Point of View have a social conscience with the music they write, which makes you want to support it.'

He doesn't resent the fans who prefer the 'classic Guns quintet' (Axl Rose is the only remaining member).

'With Guns, it's not my own thing, and there's such a history and so many people before you, and there's a lot of people around telling you that. You've got 25 years of music and I'm just a tiny part. But I'm contributing. There are fans that want the classic quintet and I don't take issue with it. [But] I don't have to write a song to play a song.'

His solution would be to call the new band simply 'G n' R'.

'The only thing people take issue with is that Guns N' Roses was orange juice made of oranges. Then they started adding apples, and now it's all apples but it's still called "orange juice". It's such different music, with different members. I say it should be called "G n' R" – respecting the changes and trying to force people to see that it's different to Guns N' Roses.'

Slash is the only member of the original line-up that Bumblefoot hasn't played with.

'He's the one I haven't met, and probably won't, out of respect for Axl. If I met Slash, it would make Axl feel weird, like if your close friend went on a date with your ex – it's weird.'

Interview: Rob Garratt. Revolutionize the Revolutionary is available in Virgin Megastores now. For more on Ron, see www.bumblefoot.com.

The insider



This week we hear about more cool gigs on the way, and get caught up in a bit of MJ fever

It doesn't stop. Just when we thought the new nightlife season had settled into a groove, we've been bowled over with a host of happenings on the horizon. While October dealt us the sucker punches of four major festivals in four weeks, it meant there wasn't much room for smaller bespoke gigs, which might be why there's a load more one-offs on the way.

First up, we've heard that the Sheraton JBR's Bliss Lounge will host its first major live concerts, launching the Bliss on Soul night with a gig from US soul star **Barbara Tucker** on Thursday November 1. She'll have competition though, with Black Eyed Pea **apl.de.ap** performing at Nasimi on the same night.

We're equally excited about a kooky gig happening at Jumeirah Creekside Hotel on Friday November 9. South African sextet **Klopjag** – who, bizarrely, seem to be more famous in Germany than elsewhere – promise a mix of folk and blues with a distinct Afrikaans twist. Playing 100 shows a year, and with five albums and ten years on the road under their belt, we're expecting something special.

Yet December already looks as though it could top them all. Without even thinking about Christmas or new year parties, there are already a load of gigs to contend with, from the sublime to the ridiculous (we'll let you decide). The biggest news is that seven-time Grammy Award winner **Al Jarreau** is coming to town, bringing his trademark blend of jazz, R&B and pop to Jumeirah Beach Hotel on Friday December 7 – the day after American soul singer **Macy Gray** plays The Irish Village and the day before US rapper **Keith Murray** makes it at Sublime. Concert crazy.

Finally, those hankering to for another high-end club where they can spend vast amounts of money need look no further – the aptly named **Cash Club Dubai** opened on Friday October 19 at Ibn Battuta Gate. The glitzy venue marries an Aztec theme (ie lots of gold) with the latest technology (apparently the most advanced sound system in the UAE) and will keep its moneyed patrons swaying to sounds of R&B on Thursdays and Fridays only. Watch this space for more.

Virgin Radio's top 15 tracks

The most requested tunes on The Kris Fade Show last week

- | | |
|---|---|
| 8 Flo Rida
'I Cry' | + |
| 1 The Script ft. Will.i.am
'Hall of Fame' | + |
| 9 Austin Mahone
'Say Something' | + |
| 2 One Direction
'Live While We're Young' | + |
| 10 DJ Fresh ft. RaVaughn
'The Feeling' | + |
| 3 Justin Bieber ft. Nicki Minaj
'Beauty and a Beat' | + |
| 11 Maroon 5
'One More Night' | + |
| 4 Ke\$ha
'Die Young' | + |
| 12 Far East Movement ft. Cover Drive
'Turn Up the Love' | + |
| 5 Christina Aguilera
'Your Body' | + |
| 13 Conor Maynard ft. Ne-Yo
'Turn Around' | + |
| 6 Psy
'Gangnam Style' | + |
| 14 Karmin
'Brokenhearted' | + |
| 7 Taylor Swift 'We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together' | + |
| 15 Lupe Fiasco ft. Guy Sebastian 'Battle Scars' | + |



KRIS FADE SAYS...

'New music is taking over the charts this week. Justin Bieber Punk'd us all thinking he'd had his laptop stolen with some interesting footage on there – little did we know it was just a video for his track with Nicki Minaj, in at number three.'

'Enrique Iglesias is coming to town on Friday October 26, so check out www.enriquedubai.com and tune into Virgin Radio for your chance to win free tickets.' *The Kris Fade Show* airs Sun-Thu 6am-10am on Virgin Radio 104.4FM.