



The Trainwrecks are (from left) Chris Rodgers on guitar, Mitch Gallagher on drums and Anthony Cox on bass.

PHOTO/MARK EARNEST

On track

The Trainwrecks

The loose but gleeful atmosphere of the Trainwrecks has been in place from day one, and the casual vibes of this punkabilly band are nothing if not refreshing.

"We have fun in this band, and we take our music seriously," said drummer Mitch Gallagher. "We do try to play the best we can, but we're not afraid to be like, 'Gee, we haven't practiced in two weeks, let's just get out there and do it.'"

Luckily for the audience, the Trainwrecks aren't afraid to just let 'er rip. It's been the band's MO since it started in 2002, so why change now?

Gallagher has been behind the kit for its two phases: 2002 to 2007, then 2016 to the present day. He's joined by current Trainwrecks bassist Anthony Cox (a.k.a. Mr. A), who was with the band when it was formed with Leroy Virgil, who currently leads Hellbound Glory. That's the country-rock band the Trainwrecks will be opening for at Virginia Street Brewhouse.

In the early '00s, The Trainwrecks played with a revolving cast of musicians—who Gallagher called "a cavalcade of weirdos"—before they split in 2007. Flash way forward to 2016, when Virgil briefly reunited with the band. Gallagher and Cox wanted to keep it going after their comeback show, and the drummer had pretty simple reasons to get back on the train: "I missed it, you know. I missed it, and I hadn't played for 10 years."

Enter guitarist and singer Chris Rodgers, who also currently plays in Dusty Miles and the Cryin' Shame. Rodgers also led the Cowbelleros for many years, and he and Cox played in the band Punk Rock Frankenstein at one point.

"Luckily we got Chris, and he's a great singer and guitar player, and we've been having fun, right?" Gallagher said,

to affirmative nods from the other two Trainwrecks.

"When they hit me up about this, I thought it would be cool to do something different," Rodgers said. "It's just been fun. I always enjoyed playing with Anthony, and I enjoy singing."

"And your songs are cool, too," Cox added. The band plays a mix of their older material and new songs that Rodgers has brought to the group. They also added some flat-out punk to their sound—and feature a cover or two done in the Trainwrecks style.

"For me, I grew up listening to rockabilly stuff, country stuff, '50s rock and roll, the stuff I grew up with my folks," Rodgers said. "Then, as I became a teenager it was all the punk stuff, and that's kind of the same for all of us. We all had our punk rock phase. We do obviously love the rockabilly stuff, but we do it with a punk rock attitude."

They all agree that rockabilly is still an enduring style. "People recognize it, and the style of it is pretty easily digestible to everybody," Rodgers said.

"And it's danceable," Cox said. "It's just primal, that beat, man," Gallagher added. "It's like a simple kind of music, but it rocks. People hear it and can't help but want to move. It's something you feel."

The band's upcoming show in a bigger room will be a condensed version of the Trainwrecks' experience that audiences usually get, as they usually play three or four sets a night in the clubs.

"We may actually write a set list this time," Gallagher said. "Or we can just pick out 13 songs that we've never done before," Rodgers said to laughs all around. □

The Trainwrecks open for Hellbound Glory and Cory Branan at 7 p.m. June 22 at Virginia Street Brewhouse, 211 N. Virginia St. Read more about the Trainwrecks at www.facebook.com/TheLegendaryTrainwrecks.

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