



Opposite Ends take a break from crafting new tunes at their Sparks practice pad. They are, from left, Jacob Rubin, Landon Gray, Manning Gray and Kevin Bryant.

PHOTO/MARK EARNEST

Young and loud

Opposite Ends

Most bands have a tough time describing themselves. That's especially true in the big, broad churches like rock and metal. A new Reno-Sparks band called Opposite Ends, though, has a neat little elevator speech to peg themselves.

"We make heavy music, but you can still read our logo," said Jacob Rubin, the band's bassist.

Indeed, Opposite Ends is plenty aggressive, but there's also a clarity musically and lyrically that helps them stand out. It's a sound that's pretty popular now: riff-laden hard rock and metal that veers between gruff vocals and cleaner melodies. Some of it could fit very easily on 21st century rock radio, but some of it is way too ugly—in a good way—for the mainstream.

"We feel like we are pretty fluid with every song when we write it," Rubin said. "Each one has a different sound. I like to say that we all fall under the metal umbrella, but I can't say exactly where."

"I put in our bio that we are post-hard-core, because that's the closest thing we can get to it," guitarist Manning Gray said.

Finding their niche is just one of the early steps for this band of deceptively seasoned players. Despite their ages, this isn't the first metal rodeo for Opposite Ends, formed just seven months ago from the ashes of two other bands. Three of the bandmates are 17 years old: Rubin, vocalist Landon Gray and drummer Kevin Bryant.

Manning Gray, 14, is Landon's younger brother, and all agreed that it's great having relatives in the band. "It's definitely beneficial, because we always practice and write together," Manning Gray said. "We think a lot alike, too, and have been through the same experiences, which is really the same

with everyone here," Landon Gray added. "We can all relate."

Everyone also goes to Innovations High School, where the band has performed during assemblies. Opposite Ends is also considering recording at the school's studio. For now, they have one song available called "Stalemate," recorded at Dogwater Studios and featured in a video shot and edited by Rubin.

Like their other songs, "Stalemate" has lyrics that speak to what they see as teens. Other songs cover subjects like toxic smartphone culture and alcohol and drug addiction. Landon Gray writes many of the lyrics, but everyone pitches in.

"In the last band I was in, I played bass and just did a little bit of vocals, but I feel like I have a lot of build-up on emotions about things and opinions," Landon Gray said. "For the most part, it's all things that I've had in my mind that I put to paper, and then we put it to music."

"It's not a given in music, and there's not a guaranteed route to go to make it a success, but I know that we are all in it for the right reasons," Manning Gray added. "We just want to get a message out now, not try to be famous."

Opposite Ends has been bringing that message to some diverse Reno audiences so far. They'll play at Jub Jub's Thirst Parlor twice in early December, and in the past they've been at The Holland Project. They agreed that opportunities are somewhat limited due to the lack of all-ages venues in town.

"We're more than happy to play 21-and-up shows, and we do appreciate anyone coming out to see us, but we definitely want to play more all-ages shows," Rubin said. "Thank god for The Holland Project, or else all of the younger local bands would be screwed." □

Opposite Ends plays as part of the Reno Pirate Punk and NV Death Metal community toy drive at 7 p.m. on Dec. 7 and opening for national band Nonpoint at 7 p.m. on Dec. 13, both at Jub Jub's Thirst Parlor, 71 S. Wells Ave. Learn more at facebook.com/oppositeendz.

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