



# ACORN PROJECT

Press Pack 2011

# BIOGRAPHY

**Deep electro-funk grooves and sonic instrumental exploration interlaced with a provocative indie-rock song writing ability have become the signatures of Bellingham, Washington's Acorn Project. As a long time staple on the touring circuit of the Pacific Northwest, the sextet has spent the past three years expanding their region and is a recognizable touring machine on the West Coast, British Columbia, and out through Colorado and the Southwestern United States.**

Formed in 2002 from basement jam-session beginnings, original members Andy Pritiken (guitar/lead vocals), Sam Lax (Saxophone/Percussion/Vocals), Todd Benedict (Drums), and former member Kale McGuinness (Bass) came together in the most incubescent way. Not one member had played in any organized musical group. For this reason they chose the name Acorn Project in 2004 symbolizing their collective effort to grow as a musical entity with focus and dedication for their passion for live music.

Additions were made including Oskar Kollen (Keys/Vocals 2005), and long time guest musician and virtuoso Tristan Curran (Lead Guitar/Vocals 2006), bringing the bands sound to new heights. Scott Vaillancourt (Bass 2010) recently replaced McGuinness and has efficiently adopted Acorn's repertoire with over fifteen years experience under his belt as a professional musician. Vaillancourt rounds out the current six-piece ensemble as they continue to produce an irresistibly unique sound with the same focus, dedication, and dream-worthy energy of their beginnings, and current aspirations of becoming an established national touring act.

*"Acorn Project, who conjures up the appealing marriage of mid-period Pink Floyd, early Radiohead and the blues-jazz-dub whap of Morphine... cuts a broad cloth that could fit classic rockers, jam fans, and jazz heads with taste for prog. Often mélanges of this kind come out mushy and indistinct, too many ingredients dulling the sharpness of individual elements, but Acorn's production and arrangement savvy keep things bright and together throughout. A hard touring bunch... unlike many road dogs, they clearly know their way around a studio, too."*

**-Dennis Cook – Jambase (Editor)**

**[www.dirtyimpound.com](http://www.dirtyimpound.com)**

**October 20th, 2010**

Acorn Project's debut album "We'll Be Fine," released in May of 2006 quickly spread their music around the nation. The album charted as high as #5 on the jambands.com national index, and #4 on CMJ charts throughout the country. Eartaste.com rated it one of the top 12 albums of the year, and great reviews flooded in from all parts of the U.S. and Europe. "We'll Be Fine" took home the album of the year award in the 2008 What's Up Awards sponsored by What's Up Magazine.

Their sophomore studio effort "Generation Debt," was released in September 2010 and improves where "We'll Be Fine" left off. Debuting at #1 on jambands.com national radio chart and holding in the top 25 for nearly three months, Debt has escalated Acorn Project's national recognition and impressed critics with "a swinging, sensual mood prevailing in a darkly thoughtful set of songs." Generation Debt is an intricately written and cohesively designed album that is simply perfect for it's time.

Boasting an impressive resume, high profile performances are common for Acorn Project. Since fall of 2007 the band has performed with seasoned professionals such as Widespread Panic, Tea Leaf Green, EOTO, RAQ, Zilla, BLVD, Hot Buttered Rum, The Bridge, Blue Turtle Seduction, Izabella, Flowmotion, The Everyone Orchestra, Kyle Hollingsworth, Steve Kimock, David Grisman, and The Motet. Acorn has been welcomed to world-renowned festivals and premier venues alike; attention promoters: whether you're looking for a late-night set filled with live electro-funk and trance instrumentals, or a polished and high energy main stage act, their live performance and expressive light production will never disappoint!

**The Santa Cruz Metro perhaps stated it best in their show preview from 2008:**

*"While classic jam bands are a dime a dozen; indie rock jam bands are slightly more expensive. Bellingham, Washington's Acorn Project gives listeners their money's worth with funky epics that rock enough to make a good Christmas present for your Deadhead uncle but are jazzy enough to play for your hipster friends... Constantly changing and seldom boring, this is a show not to be missed."*

## MEMBERS:



**ANDY PRITIKEN - GUITAR, VOCALS**



**OSKAR KOLLEN - KEYS, VOCALS**



**SAX LAX - SAXOPHONE, ELECTRONIC PERCUSSION, VOCALS**



**SCOTT VAILLANCOURT - BASS**



**TRISTAN CURRIN - LEAD GUITAR, VOCALS**



**TODD BENEDICT - DRUMS**

# PRESS

"Classic jam bands are a dime a dozen; indie rock jam bands are slightly more expensive. Bellingham, Washington's Acorn Project gives listeners their money's worth with funky epics that rock enough to make a good Christmas present for your Deadhead uncle but are jazzy enough to play for your hipster friends... Constantly changing and seldom boring, this is a show not to be missed."  
October 15th, 2008  
Santa Cruz Metro – Santa Cruz, CA

"I love an album that's simply perfect for the times... Tasty. This entire album is a shout-out. The players are all superb, the solos touch the heart. Fine job all around. While there's no doubt these guys are rock and roll, there is plenty of jazz, soul, and pop influence to keep Acorn Project constantly on the edge of creativity... Easily one of the five best all-round albums I've heard all year."  
August 8th, 2008  
Eartaste.com – Austin, TX

"Acorn Project's swirling mixture of rock, blues, and funk serves as a cohesive format for the instrumentation of choice. Apart from the multifariously talented drummer and exceedingly impressive saxophonist Sam Lax, each member specializes in an instrument in which they have clearly studied up on... The group has made the evolution from primarily a "live band" to studio whizzes with heaps of good songwriting ideas up their sleeves... There is guaranteed to be something for everyone's current psyche on the intricately resounding *We'll Be Fine*."  
*By Mike Mineo*  
August 14th, 2008  
Obscuremusic.com – Berkeley Heights, NJ

"To their credit Acorn Project are difficult to pigeon hole and cannot be easily added to any current glut of similar bands... The sax is not common to prog rock which gives Acorn Project an angle, offering a hint of Morphine, which evens things out nicely."  
*By Patrick Wilkins, Saturday, October 25, 2008*  
Americana-UK.com – Liverpool, United Kingdom

"Though it presents an impressively grand departure from 2005's *Odd His Sleepy Soar*, Acorn Project's latest offering, the nine-song *We'll Be Fine*, still captures the trademark smoothness and funk that has made them a Bellingham favorite... *We'll Be Fine* demonstrates a perfect balance of whimsy and work ethic and it's precisely the ability to keep things so effortlessly composed that ensures Acorn Project a lot to look forward to."  
*By Stephanie Ashton, May 2008*  
What's Up Magazine - Bellingham, WA

"Saturday was kind of a slow-it-down and relax day (but), The Acorn Project stood out in the afternoon, then the Yard Dog Road Show was filled with performance artists... entertaining for the eyes"  
"Summer Meltdown 2007 Festival Review"  
*By Val Batik*  
September 7th, 2007  
Billboard.com

"The next afternoon, a number of up and coming bands to the Northwest scene performed including fun Acorn Project, from Bellingham, WA... Acorn was embraced by newcomers and long time friends enjoying themselves out at the festival and they had a unique sound that will help as they continue to grow."  
"Vince Herman Melts with Flowmotion"  
*By Greg Lake, September 18th, 2006*  
Kyndmusic.com

"Within minutes, fans and people in the crowd hearing Acorn Project for the first time are rocking out to funky keyboard riffs, wild saxophone bellows and the lead singer's soothing yet powerful voice. But the members of Acorn Project never dreamed they would be playing, much less headlining, The Showbox, where countless famous bands, such as Pearl Jam and Reel Big Fish, have played."  
"Bellingham's Humble Hitmakers"  
*By Amanda Raphael, February 2006*  
Klipsun Magazine

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