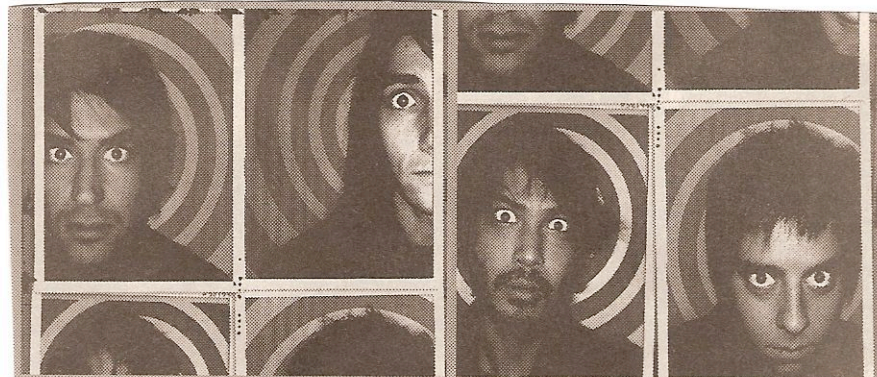


# SKRATCH

FREE

## AUSTIN CONCERT GUIDE 2006



### Riverboat Gamblers

"...my life its gonna leak in..."

The Riverboat Gamblers are the most exciting thing to happen to punk rock since Satan developed the power chord. The bands rafter hangin', peanut shell throwin', crowd molestin' stage show is as exciting as it is vital to a genre that can sometimes seem as stagnant as it used to feel raw.

From its Denton, Texas base, the band enjoyed a stellar 2005, which ranged from a show stealing opening stint on the Flogging Molly/ Hot Water Music tour to causing commotion on the Volcom stage of Warped Tour. Now with a new album in tow and an itching to get back on the road, the Gamblers are shaping what could be a breakout 2006. I got a chance to chat with Freddy and Mikey of the band over e-mail to see what is up.

**SKRATCH: You guys had been recording for a few months now. How did the album turn out?**

**FREDDY:** I think we did exactly what we set out to do with it. It's a bit different from our previous records, but not so much that people will be thrown for a loop. It's a good thing though, ya know, because who wants to be stagnant or stale? It's definitely a progression in the right direction for us. We can't put out the same record every couple of years. The only bands that can do that and get away with it are The Ramones and AC/DC.

**SKRATCH: Any surprises on the album? Full orchestras or maybe a rap song?**

**FREDDY:** Well, Fred Durst didn't return any of our phone calls, so we had to scratch the rap/rock track, but we did manage to sneak in a couple of surprises.

**MIKE:** The whole record is chopped and screwed.

**SKRATCH: How was the Warped Tour last year?**

**MIKE:** It was a 'best of times/worst of times' kind of thing. We did pretty much the whole thing in a van and that was the tough part because you never really get to lie down and sleep and there really isn't anywhere to go in the day when the sun is brutally beating you down. The Warped Tour is a type of crowd that we had never really played to so it was kind of weird playing to completely virgin (figuratively and literally) audiences that didn't always know how to take what we do. On the plus side, some of the kids were really receptive and we got to hang out with some cool bands. It was kinda like being a carnie (which I majored in at Junior College).

**SKRATCH: I have to admit that I was a little shocked that I found out about Sandra Day O'Conner leaving the Supreme Court from the Riverboat Gamblers at Warped Tour (Long Beach show). Though your**

**music doesn't seem ultra-political, do you guys fancy yourselves as fairly political people? And if so, is this album going to have any new political undertones?**

**MIKE:** I don't think we are overly political but in this day-and-age we're kind of forced to be. There is so much wrong stuff going on right in front of our faces that if I'm gonna write about what's going on in my life its gonna leak in in some ways. It's not so much political in the 'this is what is right' way, but more how it directly is affecting our lives as people. Like how I don't have health insurance, but if I lived anywhere in Europe I would. So there is a little politics mixed in with the nonsense on the next record. I don't know big words like Greg Graffin does, though.

**SKRATCH: What I like most about your live shows is that while you guys tend to go a bit crazy it never seems premeditated. Do you guys sort of go with the flow during shows or do you have like set songs where you wander into the crowd?**

**MIKE:** Nothing is planned out. It ain't jazz, but there is an improvisational element to the show. We play the same songs, but you can never plan how a crowd is going to react and my reaction is based off of their reaction, so hopefully it will be a different show each time. Also, by not planning anything out, it keeps it more fun for me and at the very least I try and keep myself entertained.

**SKRATCH: Did you guys get a chance to hang out with Valiant Thorr at all during the tour, and if so what the hell are those guys like in private?**

**MIKE:** We hung out a whole lot with V.T. on the tour. What are the Valient Thorr guys like in private? Well, they are pretty much what you would expect from any rock band from the middle of the planet Venus and a different time stream. Like I said, hopefully we will share a bus this summer and then the chosen delegates of planet Venus and planet Texas will form a deadly alliance.

**FREDDY:** They're actually just as weird off stage as they are on. I haven't yet been able to decode some of Dr. Strangers' (aka Nitewolf's) vernacular. It's some hybrid of Venus space jargon and English slang. I'm taking night classes just so we can hold a conversation.

Following a stint with the Horrorpops and a SXSW gig, the Gamblers are promising a big spring tour and more surprises in the summer. More info can be found at [www.riverboatgamblers.com](http://www.riverboatgamblers.com).