



THE VITROLUM REPUBLIC



Printed Press:

- “This is music you can escape into...it’s important for you to truly feel it...the way the it creeps into your bones, your soul, your very being. Live, seeing the emotion play out along with the music only adds to the growing legend of The Vitrolum Republic.”
- Wired.com, Curtis Silver, Feb. 20, 2012
- “The Vitrolum Republic isn’t content to do things the easy way. To create its debut album, “For Highbrow Sideshows and Rowboat Serenades,” the band invested a substantial 2 1/2 years, crafting an assured collection of restrained yet stirring old-fashioned European folk songs, elegantly realized through graceful violin, accordion, piano and sweet vocals.”
- JSOnline, Piet Levy, Nov. 2, 2011
- “At their core, The Vitrolum Republic’s songs are kindered to the emotional folk-pop of Mumford & Sons, but they touch on far more influences than that group, juggling both American roots and Eastern European folk-music traditions.”
- Shepherd Express, Evan Rytlewski, Feb. 1, 2011
- “This is an album and a band that should not go by unnoticed... Every once in a while, an album comes along that forces you to exclaim, ‘This is how this entire genre should sound!’”
- QRO Magazine, Peter Henckel, Feb. 2, 2011



The Vitrolum Republic Biography

The Vitrolum Republic's sound is a combination of various styles that can best be described as classically infused folk music. Over the course of their latest album, they cover many different styles of music, but all in a way that feels rooted in a style all their own, which they have come to call Gypsy Noir.

Their original compositions blur genres, combining classical elements with singer songwriter, folk, bluegrass, blues and gypsy tango styling. Their music is diverse and draws upon the acoustic instrumentation each member brings to the stage; violin, piano, acoustic guitar, accordion, mandolin, banjo, upright bass and a variety of percussion instruments.

The group was founded by two brothers, Nick and Jordan Waraksa. They grew up performing classical music, and as a duo, they recorded two full-length albums of original music and composed an award-winning soundtrack for a short film that was screened at the Cannes Film Festival in 2008. Each graduating from both MIAD and the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee with degrees in visual arts and music performance, Nick and Jordan have no shortage of creative talent. Jordan toured with Tuscia de Operafestival in Italy in 2006 and 2007, while Nick has lent his composition skills to various ad campaigns including Alverno College.

In 2006, the duo expanded to a trio with the addition of bassist Chuck Lawton. A self-taught musician, Chuck was coached by his father who got him started with drums, bass and guitar. Through his formative years, he explored a wide variety of musical stylings from rockabilly and blues to pop-punk, and developed a love of music production and recording through independent releases of his band's music. With The Vitrolum Republic, the group gained not only a bassist and guitarist, but also an outside influence, which helped take the group in new directions with additional vocal harmonies and ideas for arrangements rooted in musical improvisation.

At the end of 2008, The Vitrolum Republic began work on their first full-length album, *For Highbrow Sideshows and Rowboat Serenades*. Produced by Chuck Lawton with the members of The Vitrolum Republic, the group focused on creating a more complex and diverse album than their previous efforts. Their music reflects the collective talents of all of its members, and the album features musicians outside the core group who resonate with their ideas and expression of music.

Following the 2011 release of *For Highbrow Sideshows and Rowboat Serenades*, the group again expanded to a quartet with the addition of percussionist Benjamin Schaefer. Benjamin began exploring percussion at age 15, migrating from his first drum kit, to congas, bongos, djembes, and cajons. At age 18, Benjamin's musical interest led him into a phase of prolific recording and touring. After 7 years playing with various acts in different styles, Benjamin comfortably blended into The Vitrolum Republic's diverse catalog. He now uses his background with world percussion to translate a traditional drum kit into a dynamic range of sounds that help push and pull the band in live performances.

The Vitrolum Republic continues to perform around the midwest, creating live experiences that captivate listeners and draw them in. They continue to write and record new material for an eventual new full-length release, and they've begun shooting live one-take music videos in historic Milwaukee landmarks that demonstrate their artistry, musicianship and roots in their home town.











