

RACK

Biography

2008 was the year that **RACK** broke through and truly became a regional band, playing all over Baden-Württemberg while making inroads into Bavaria and Austria. "It was nice to see the pieces start to fall together. We had a good demo and present ourselves professionally, and the promoters and bar owners really responded to it," describes Oliver. Booking over 30 gigs in 2008, and winning one of the two slots for "Best New Band" in Weingarten's Innenhof Festival Band Contest are just some of the bright spots from 2008.

RACK formed in 2005 when **Oliver Sampson** (bass) and **Yann Zimmermann** (drums) of woodLawn decided it was time to start a band more able to reach a wider audience, and truer to their own roots in the Hard Rock and 80s Metal they grew up with. After a short series of personnel changes, the right mixture to complement that vision was found in **Ralf Lerner** (vocals) and **Michael Schürbrock** (guitars). Yann puts it like this: "Michael has a sound that really is the essence of our music. He can be melodic, heavy, progressive, pop, aggressive, and intellectual all in the same phrasing. Ralf's energetic and impassioned vocals are the icing on the cake. He interprets Oliver's lyrics, and lives the characters in our songs on stage. He's able to take the different parts of the music, tie them together, and convey them to the audience in a way that keeps the crowds coming back for more."

RACK has been successful in doing something most bands only dream of--they've created their own sound. "Yeah, everybody says they can't describe their band, or they can't be compared to other bands, but we've sort of done it without trying. We free our personalities into the music; you really hear something original with our sound," muses Oliver.

What do they call it? **Hard Pop Rock**. "Well, it's not Hard Rock like **Led Zeppelin**, but it sort of is. It's not Pop Rock like **Foreigner** or **Halls and Oates**, but it sort of is." The band welcomes suggestions for comparisons.

Part of the success RACK has shown in 2007 and 2008 can be seen that the promoters always book RACK again and again. Ralf treasures the connections with the fans, "We love coming back to clubs that have become our second homes. We see the same faces, and always new faces, and we really value the new friends we make. The music is really reaching a wider audience every time we play." The band values new media avenues like **Myspace** and **Soundclick**. "When we say 'Myspace friend,' we really mean 'friend.' We want to know our fans."

In 2007, RACK filmed their first video for the ballad "Skin" which got picked up by regional TV station, [Regio-TV](#) (formerly **Euro-3**) for three two week runs of five times per day. "I think that a big part of going 'regional' was the saturation the video received on Euro-3. Club owners and their audiences already knew who we were, and that opened up the doors to some new places to play," says Michael. The video has been viewed about 10,000 times in the Internet.

"Right now, the band is enjoying just the beginning of some success. We know that we still need to work hard to find more of the right venues and audiences for our music. We just want the music to reach as many people as possible, and are working to that singular goal. For example, the new EP and CD will be available as free downloads. Everything else will take care of itself once the music finds its home."

RACK practices and records in Bad Waldsee. An EP of material from their forthcoming CD will be released in January 2009.