

▶ THE FALLEN STARS

Bands to Watch

Roots Rockers Mix Old and New for a Classic Sound

There's always room in the world for another well-written song, another story to be told," says Bobbo Byrnes, absently strumming an ever present guitar. He, together with wife and bass player, Tracy, guitarist Mike Robby, and drummer Chuck Rogers, make up SoCal roots rock band, the Fallen Stars.

Currently working on their debut album, the Fallen Stars feel there's a void in today's music. "There are music fans that miss seeing authentic rock and roll just played from the gut." Citing such classic rock bands as Bruce Springsteen, the Rolling Stones and Tom Petty, Byrnes sets the bar high, but with their warm, rootsy guitar tones, distinctive vocals, and intense live performances, the band stands up to the challenge.

Growing up in a typical middle class suburb, Byrnes found his earliest inspiration in the music of Charlie Rich, Jim Croce and the Irish Rovers. Byrnes recalls listening almost exclusively to U2 and REM in his early teens until "the whole world broke loose when I bought the Replacements album 'Let It Be.' Everything just made sense." Today, the mixed influences of traditional country and folk crossed with early alternative and garage rock are clearly audible in his songwriting.

With a style that leans toward the more traditional narrative than today's emotional solipsism, Byrnes writes songs that are "just about people and their lives, telling stories." Songs like *Double Down*, a driving rock song about a man pinning his last chance for happiness on a Vegas road trip, or *Diner Door*, a classic country song about a small town waitress looking for escape.

You'll find a recurring theme of traveling and escape in their music, perhaps reflecting the cross-country move the Byrnes' made two years ago when they left Massachusetts for the opposite coast. Once here, they searched for over a year before finding their

complement in Robby and Rogers. Now, the band works so well together that while recording the album, "we found out that the four of us playing together in one room at the same time gave us the best vibe." Although this technique made each take harder since everyone had to get it right, it resulted in a more organic and cohesive sound overall.

"The sound that I'm after, it's not really a new sound. You know, we're two guitars, bass and drums - a lot has been done with that in the past 40 or 50 years. We're not trying to reinvent the wheel, just find our place in 'the song.'" ★

"The whole world broke loose when I bought the Replacements album 'Let It Be.'"



Left to right - Chuck Rogers, drums; Tracy Byrnes, bass & vocals; Bobbo Byrnes, guitar & vocals; Mike Robby, lead guitar

Quiz

Could You Be a Fallen Stars Fan?

Take this quiz to see if you have the right stuff to be a fan of the Fallen Stars!

- Do you prefer music that is:**
 - Honest, genuine and natural
 - Phony, bombastic and slick
- Do you like live shows that are:**
 - Energetic, fun and sweaty
 - Boring, scary or filled with pre-teens
- Which genres of music do you prefer?**
 - Roots rock, alt.country, classic rock, garage rock
 - Angry rock, pop rock, emo, metal, rap
- Your favorite artists include:**
 - The Replacements, Wilco, Neil Young, Gram Parsons, Bruce Springsteen, Whiskeytown
 - Britney Spears, Creed, Steely Dan, Blink 182, Eminem, Megadeth, N'Sync

If you answered mostly **A's**, congratulations! You have what it takes to be a Fallen Stars fan! Go immediately to the nearest computer, log on to www.thefallenstars.com and sign up for their mailing list!

If you answered mostly **B's**, you are in desperate need of new musical influences! Go immediately to the nearest computer, log on to www.thefallenstars.com and sign up for their mailing list!

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The Fallen Stars at a Glance

	Bobbo	Tracy	Mike	Chuck
What's your current favorite album?	Bryan Adams <i>Cuts Like a Knife</i>	Peter Wolf <i>Sleepless</i>	Coffee Creek bootleg from <i>Cicero's</i>	Bruce Springsteen <i>The Rising</i>
What's the first album you ever purchased?	Pat Benatar <i>Crimes of Passion</i>	Heart <i>Heart</i>	John Cougar <i>American Fool</i>	Kiss <i>Destroyer</i>
Who is your biggest musical influence?	Paul Westerberg	Bruce Springsteen	Danny Whitten	Bruce Springsteen
What are your main instruments?	Telecaster Custom & Rickenbacker guitars	Fender P-Bass & Ampeg tube amp	Gretsch & Les Paul guitars	4-piece Ludwig drum kit

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