



From left, Hunter Holmes, Steven Acker, Michael Eleazer and Josh Carter perform for tips with the Mason Jar Drinkers

Mason Jar Drinkers bring traditional sound to a non-traditional stage

by Joseph Chilton
Editor in Chief

The only thing that won't have a traditional flavor when the Mason Jar Drinkers play Pescado's Burritos tonight is the venue.

"I think we're the only band who has ever played there," said Josh Carter, who plays mandolin for the band. "But we play a lot of non-traditional venues."

The band has also played the BANFF film festival, Halloween Fest, a whimsical art show at Mud Dobbers and got their start playing for tips at local organic grocery store Poppie's. Despite the unconventional nature of their musical mediums, the band's style is old-school to a T.

Outfitted in overalls and other garb of the '20s and '30s, the band plays strictly music from the early twentieth century.

"Whenever we play we officially dress up in the style of the times and perform a shtick from the medicine show tradition. It's a very big, showboating style," said bassist Steven Acker.

To make sure the music they play is authentic, the band scours antique stores for archaic vinyl albums and learns the songs

Who: Mason Jar Drinkers
What: String Band music and a medicine show style schtick from the '20s and '30s
When: Tonight at 6 p.m.
Where: Pescado's Burritos, across the street from campus in the College Plaza shopping center
Why: "They're the hottest band on campus," according to BC senior Sam Hawkins

they find by ear.

"(Guitarist) Hunter Holmes listens to all the records and types the lyrics on an old typewriter," Acker said.

"We also learn some by playing with people, which fits with the tradition of old-time music being oral."

The band's music is heavily influenced by the String Band genre- a blend of blues, ragtime and early jazz. The name Mason Jar Drinkers is a play on the name of a popular String Band group, Uncle Dave Macon and the Fruit Jar Drinkers.

"We got together for the Old Time Festival in 2007 and we kind of got put on the spot when they asked for our name. We

came up with Mason Jar Drinkers and it stuck," Carter said.

After the ensemble's original performance at the Old Time Festival they began playing regularly anywhere they could find work. After a year of refining their sound, they returned to the festival last October and took third place.

Now they continue to look for places to play, but realize that their style isn't for everyone.

"They hated us at Jordan Street because we brought in too many underage kids," Acker said.

"But we will play anywhere where they will pay us. We're trying to save up to finance an album."

That type of openness to performing anywhere and everywhere led to the group becoming a staple at Pescado's, a private business similar to Moe's Southwestern Grill that does not typically house musical performances.

The band will play from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. tonight and Pescado's usually offers beer and taco specials whenever the Mason Jar Drinkers play.

"It's usually packed when we play and it is always a good time," Carter said.