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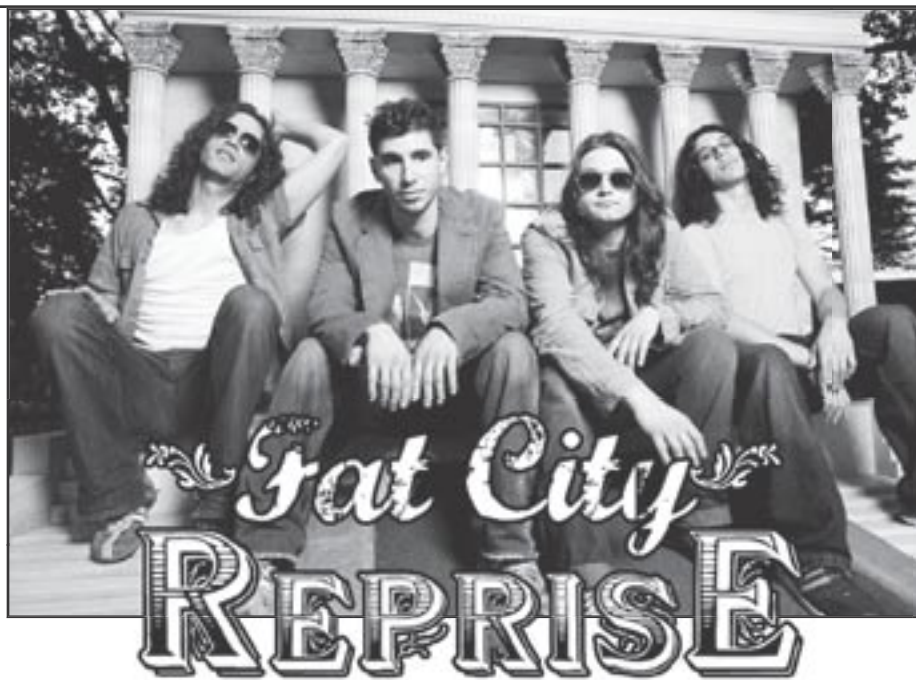
## Getting To Know Fat City

### Reprise:

by Markus

Born and raised in “The Real South Philly,” the guys of Fat City Reprise have known each other for years. They grew up right near where Bruce Springsteen blew up the chicken man. They are self-proclaimed geeks, whose young “geekness” has actually worked out to their advantage. Their band is doing well in the Philadelphia area, one of their songs has received airplay on WMMR, they just released a CD and are looking to get out on the road; the real road. The band members are: Frank Pedano – lead vocals, keyboards, guitars; Nick Anastasi – guitars; Mike Vivas – bass, vocals; Jay Miraglia – drums. Jay is the only member of the band who actually has a job. He pays for the beer and diner food. This is a band who likes to have fun, enjoys life and likes to jam their music. One of the many things that makes Fat City so much fun is they laugh, goof off while at the same time take their music very seriously without coming across as anal and uptight. Just a bunch of down to earth, laid back guys.

For quite a while they have been hosting an acoustic night on Tuesday’s at the Grape St. It is a great night to get out and get a feel for the talent in the Philly music scene. Members of bands from all genres of music play on that Tuesday night. Some of the many bands and musicians that have



played this Tuesday Night show include, Soraia, Diet Kong, Stillicide, Naemah, Head, Even The Resolution, John Faye, Mikey Potato, Nikki from Nouveau Riche, and more. Stillicide has just taken over the host spot on Tuesdays so Fat City can hit the road and support their CD.

The current four member incarnation of Fat City Reprise has been together for about a year and a half. Frank and Nick started playing together in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Frankie wasn’t even the original singer of Fat City Reprise. He was forced into it by Nick. The other person wasn’t doing what Nick and Frank needed him to do, and couldn’t sing “Cowgirl” the way they wanted the song to be sung. So, Frankie sang the song.

Mike and Jay joined the band later on, and until about a year and a half ago they had a second guitarist. They are very glad to now have only one guitar because it allowed Nick to really step out, find himself and define his guitar style. They also auditioned

some guitar players and no could get what they were doing. There was no chemistry. I asked Nick if he wanted a second guitarist.

**Nick:** My argument against a second guitarist is that there are lots of bands that are considered guitar rock bands that have only one guitarist: Led Zeppelin, Rush, The Who, Pink Floyd. You don’t get more guitar rock than that list, plus I have the benefit of having Frank as my 2nd guitarist and he can tickle two keyboards at once.

### **How did you come up with your name?**

**Frankie:** We’re big Hunter S. Thompson fans. When he was mayor of Aspen, he tried to get the name changed to Fat City, so people couldn’t commercially profit from it.

### **What’s your favorite Hunter S. book?**

**Frankie:** I’d say Better than Sex.

**Nick:** Hell’s Angels.

### **When you first started playing together were you a covers or originals band?**

**Nick:** We were always writing songs. When we first started our goal was to

write songs that would get played on the radio. We thought that we could write music that would get played on the radio.

### How do you write your music?

**Nick:** One of us will bring in a piece, then everyone else comes in and if anyone has a piece that will fit, we throw it in. It's a collaboration, completely and utterly a collaboration. Everyone helps write everything. So, no one brings in a completed song.

### Did you grow up playing musical instruments? Were you band geeks? Did your parents play music?

**Nick:** We are definitely geeks.

**Frank:** I was in Jazz Band, high school band; I played the chimes, baritone tuba, and glockenspiel. Vivas went to music school for a while too. He's a guitar player.

### When did you switch to bass?

Vivas: When I joined Fat City.

### When you started jamming four years ago, was your sound similar to what we hear on your CD and when you play live?

**Nick:** No not at all. Our sound is nowhere near what you hear now. It was more Dave Matthews-y, Blues Travellers-y...slower and folksier. It ended up that we wanted to get into the funky side. We watched Funky Monks' documentary, the special about the Red Hot Chili Peppers making of Blood, Sugar, Sex Magik. After that we started working on "Mexico" [and] after we showed everyone that song, we realized people were dancing. We wanted to make people dance all the time.

**Frank:** We saw that people were wanting to jam out with us. So we picked it up and made the sound faster.

### Who are some of your influences?

**Jay:** Zeppelin, as cliché as it sounds, Bonham definitely is huge, Dave Grohl is big, I like Mitch Mitchell. Anything with fast hands. I was never really big into

the heavier drummers, the metal drummers, and the double bass thing. I like really cool grooves and really great stick work. The groove and feel drummers appeal to me more.

**Mike:** First of all Paul [yelling in the background]. McCartney. The Paul. A lot of Nirvana, the Foo Fighters. As far as bass players, the bass player from Dr. Dog is just so on top of it. I agree with Jay; with the guys who are more feel-involved than technically advanced. The guy from Dr. Dog does that better than anybody around today in my opinion.

**Nick:** Hendrix, number one. If God had a guitar it would sound like Hendrix. Dave Gilmore is huge for me because he is huge with the whole less is more thing and a lot of people forget about that. As Jay said, Zeppelin is huge for me. It's OK to make mistakes. I like Cream. I don't like Clapton after Cream, but I love Cream so much. My dad plays Jazz and my big thing when I was little was trying to be better than my dad and that's been a big motivator for me. I like sloppy old guitars like The Kinks. Raw, gritty, smashing guitar with your hands Pete Townsend kind of stuff.

**Frankie:** My mom was a big 70's funk person. My dad was born in 1938 so I got a lot of 50's influence growing up; like the golden era of Philly, like the doo wop. My mom was playing a lot of Funk and I was always asking her 'what is this stuff?' I'm listening to a lot of Joe Jackson right now.

### How did word get out about Fat City?

**Frankie:** At first we were gonna worry about making money to put together a demo. So we went to the bodegas that served underagers like us and they let us fill their bar with kids and they made money. So

Originality 3 ½ Stars  
Musicianship 3 ½ Stars  
Songwriting 3 Stars  
Overall 3 ½ Stars

### Fat City Reprise – Fat City Reprise

Right from the get go, your feet start tapping. The first song "Take Me Dancin'" will get you moving. Throughout the CD the guitars, bass, drums, keys and vocals all compliment each other very well. There is a groove about this CD that makes it easy to listen to all the way through. You hear the elements of funk, jazz and rock. "Cowgirl!" is also on WMMR's Jaxon's Local Shots Vol. 2 CD and it received airplay on WMMR as well. Nick's guitar work and his solo in "You're Fired" is fantastic. They are one of the few bands of today that get's what a guitar solo is and how it should be played. Plus, after listening to the CD a few times you will probably want to check them out live. If you like jamming dancy rock that has balls, check out Fat City's CD.



[when] we would play these shows we worked on the girls because we knew that where the ladies went, the guys would follow.

**What is your favorite song on your newly released CD?**

**Nick:** I would have to say “People Like You.” It’s the most rockin’. Jay plays Timbales on there...I like the drumming breakdown...I really like what everybody did.

**Jay:** My favorite is a tie between “Sheepskin” and “Long Gone.” [With] “Sheepskin,” the groove of it is what catches me the most...I think it’s amazing. [In] “Long Gone” I like the 6 to 8 feel. The bridge has that groove in it and the lyrics...It’s probably the most moving I think, for me.

**Vivas:** I’d say either “Sheepskin” because of all the stuff Jay said and “Cool Cat” because that song fuckin’ grooves. I really love the way it came out. I love all the background vocals we threw on it.

**Frankie:** “You’re Fired.” The whole way the guitar comes in. Through the whole song once it picks up, Mike’s bass is driving and Nick’s guitar is rocking.

More info about Fat City Reprise is available at either their MySpace page, [www.myspace.com/fatcityreprise](http://www.myspace.com/fatcityreprise) or their website, [www.fatcityreprise.com](http://www.fatcityreprise.com). You can purchase their CD or download their songs at both the website and myspace page. I recommend you go see these guys live. If you aren’t a dancer you will still move.

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