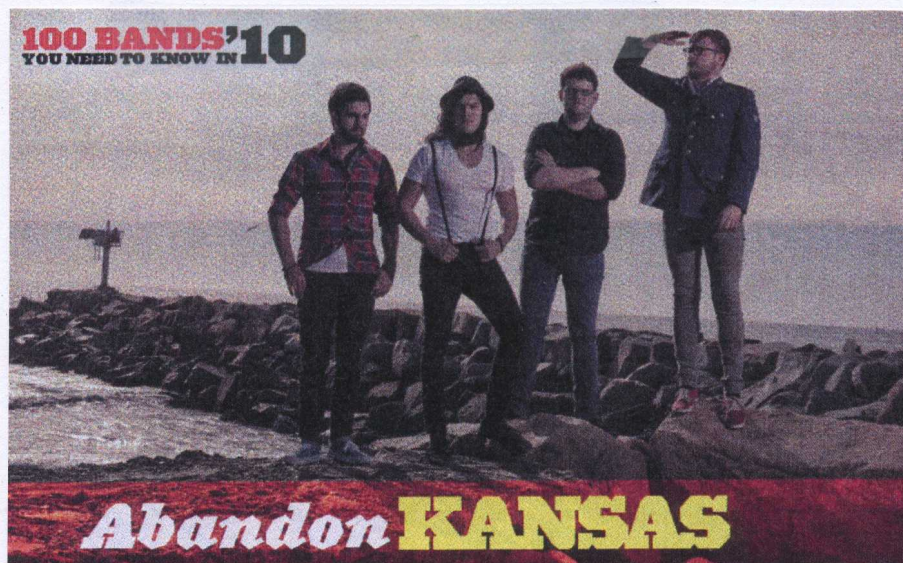


APRIL 2010

## "100 BANDS YOU NEED TO KNOW IN 2010"



**HQ:** Wichita, KS

**CHECK OUT:** *We're All Going Somewhere* EP (GOTEE: gotee.com)

**ROCKS LIKE:** Muse, the Killers, Kings Of Leon

There are some sweet sounds in life, from purring cats, solidly hit baseballs or the noise a splitting maul makes when going through the head of a corrupt politician. Abandon Kansas vocalist/guitarist Jeremy Spring's personal list of sonic candy would include casters on road cases going across a club floor and the initial buzz of a guitar plugged into a big-assed amp stack. "We love the road," says Spring, proudly. "There is no better feeling in the world than pulling up, loading in and plugging in." With an admirable touring campaign slated for 2010 totaling up to over 200-plus shows, Abandon Kansas won't be happy until every last one of you witness the monstrous rock riffs and killer melodies they're plying on *We're All Going Somewhere*. As the name of the band and the title of their record suggests, the quartet have big plans. "The name of the band is really prophetic," Spring says, "because we were looking for a way to get beyond Wichita and play the music that moves us." [JM]

# ABSOLUTE PUNK.NET

NOVEMBER 2009



## Abandon Kansas - We're All Going Somewhere EP

Reviewed by: Gregory Robson (11/05/09)

### Abandon Kansas - *We're All Going Somewhere EP*

Record Label: Gotee Records

Release Date: Sept. 8, 2009

#### Who?

Abandon Kansas is a Wichita quartet signed to Gotee Records. The six-song EP *We're All Going Somewhere* is their sixth release, their debut offering on Gotee and was produced by Mark Lee Townsend (Deas Vail, Relient K, House of Heroes). To date the band has logged 300+ tour dates per year and has won over fans with an energetic live show. They have shared the stage with The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus, As Cities Burn and The Classic Crime, to name but a few.

#### How is it?

Absolutely terrific. Bristling with poise, polish and passion, the six-song treat is bursting with radio-ready hooks and chart-topping cheekiness. Album opener "The Harder They Fall," is a snappy, full-throttle rocker that leaps from the speakers. Mid-tempo second track, "I Wonder If Its Me" remarks on traveling the country and the rigors of touring, anchored by the lines, "*Country kids want the city, city kids want the trees.*" The EP's fourth song and title track "We're All Going Somewhere" just might be its best. Punchy, passionate and bombastic, "We're All Going Somewhere," is an absolute knockout and the kind of song A and R reps dream about. From there the album continues in much the same formula, kicking with fiery drums, urgent guitars and vocalist Spring's near perfect crooning. Of the album's last two offerings, the more memorable is closer "Close Your Eyes," whose horribly boring title is actually a misnomer for a rather engaging song.

#### Author's Rating




Vocals	9
Musicianship	8
Lyrics	7
Production	9
Creativity	7.75
Lasting Value	8.5
Reviewer Tilt	8.5

Final Verdict: 83%

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STAFF MEMBER



Lyricaly the band isn't exactly treading new ground. On "Make Believe," Spring sings, "*I could use two lives/think of the things that we could get done/having two lives would be so much better than one/one for the things I have to do, one for the things I really want to,*" and while it's a nice concept it isn't exactly the stuff of legends. Being that the group is a Christian outfit, the lyrics at times do give way to mentions of Christ, God and You, but the group seem to do so in a way that isn't alienating, preachy or effusive.

If the band has a strength it is most definitely the vocals of Jeremy Spring, who sounds like an undeniable mix of Jonathan Foreman and Isaac Slade. Ripe with maturity, presence and swagger, Spring sings with conviction, clarity and crystalline efficiency. That this is the band's strength is also why the EP is also somewhat disappointing. Never once does the album slow down or yield to a ballad. Never once does Abandon Kansas display their diversity, show off their range or better yet let Spring's vocals use their lower register or showcase its tenderness. While there are a few moments during various verses where Spring has a few moments of deviation, there's never a prolonged sense of placidity or calm.

That being said, *We're All Going Somewhere* is a tremendous release from a band that seems almost certain to have their songs played on radio stations. *We're All Going Somewhere* is a truly terrific effort from a truly terrific band.

# **HIM** MAGAZINE

**JANUARY 2010**

**Abandon Kansas  
We're All Going Somewhere EP**

Solomon was, of course, right in saying that there's nothing new under the sun. But sometimes a band combines familiar elements in such a way as to bring something original out of the familiar. So it is with the major label CD EP debut by Abandon Kansas. Though it sounds like these four fellows may have taken in copious amounts of Switchfoot's sunkissed anthemics, Franz Ferdinand's disco-punk and an array of proggy/poppy recombinants from The Fixx to MuteMath, with some pop-punk thrown in for good measure, the results bristle with freshness. Their lyrical diversity should put them in good stead with both church youth group kids and commercial alt-rock radio's prime demographic alike. Instrumental interplay is fluidly tight, and Jeremy Spring's clarion baritone already sounds classic. Don't let me down, guys; your six songs here have primed me for more goodness to come. [Gotee] Jamie Lee Rake

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SEPTEMBER 2009

STORY BY: JEREMY SEICK & JAMESON KETCHUM  
PHOTO BY: KATIE JAYNE BENTON



## ABANDON KANSAS

If you're looking for the next band to follow, to get in on the ground floor with, I have something for you. If you're looking for the band to love so you can one day say to your friends "I listened to 'em



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first!" Then the following interview will be some ammo in your arsenal. Ready? Abandon Kansas! If you haven't already heard of these guys (or let them sleep on your floor), then here's your chance to get an inside look on the five guys that are ready to dance your socks off and then hang out for some tea. Recently signed to Gotee Records after a long awaited decision, vocalist Jeremy Spring sat down to tell us about the new record filled with their signature dance tunes and a few surprises as well.

**You guys have done national tours unsigned for many years, is this a challenge? What tips would you give to smaller bands trying to DIY?**

**Jeremy Spring:** Of course it's a challenge. "Livin' the dream" ain't so dreamy, ya know? Don't get me wrong, we have SUCH a radical job, I love it. But I'd be lying if I said it wasn't challenging. Young bands have to keep perspective. Blowing up over night is rare and isn't anything to count on. Having a successful career in ANY of the arts takes pure dedication in the face of all opposition, bumps, and change of plans along the way. Your vision has to be broad and you can't get lost in the roller coaster of victory and defeat that you're dealing with on the road. Here's my advice in nice easy to swallow chunks: Offer bands show trades, go play for free in towns close by, talk to everyone, give away merch, stay with people, write good songs, don't stay in hotels, eat cheap, write good songs, drive slow, route smart, put on a memorable show, stay single, write good songs, and don't suck. Enjoy the ride, this band thing will probably never become what you want it to become, so don't forget to enjoy it while you have it.

**After extensive traveling around the U.S., what do you think are some of the best markets and what do you feel makes them that way?**

**JS:** The Northwest is a gorgeous part of the country, not to mention the awesome fans we have in Olympia, Seattle, Portland, and Boise. Some other states that are good to us are Michigan, Florida, California, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and of course Kansas. Good people and good food make them good markets.

**Since you guys were that band for so long, touring with little money and doing the DIY thing, can you give us a story or example where you really saw God move?**

**JS:** After Cornerstone last summer we had an overnight drive to a show in Kentucky. About an hour from the show we blew a trailer tire causing the whole rig to fishtail and crash into a guard rail at 60mph. A driver behind us said we nearly rolled. God moved. We were towed to the repair center and after seemingly despairing news we were back on the road within an hour. The mechanic waved the labor fees and all we owed was \$175. God moved. We finally made it to the show and the other bands and people were waiting outside only to tell us the show had been cancelled. I ended up playing an acoustic set at a petting zoo in the country that night to ten people. We slept in a Wal-Mart parking lot that night and used all but \$38 of our money on gas getting to the show in Virginia the next day. That night we did over \$800 in merch and were able to continue on the tour because of it. God moved. This is just one of the many stories of God moving in OUR lives not to mention the hundreds of emails we get and all the stories we'll never hear from listeners that God has spoken to through our music.

**So you've made the major label leap. How does it feel?**


**JS:** It's really hard to find ways to spend all of this money we are making now, but seriously, so far so good. Gotee is more of a family than a label. We know the entire staff, they know us. They really get what we are trying to do musically and in ministry and they've been very supportive of all of our ideas. It's been such a blessing to have a team of people behind what we're doing, working just as hard as we are, to get Abandon Kansas songs out there.

**What are some future plans now that you're on Gotee Records?**

**JS:** A lot of the tours we have done in the past have been with other hardworking unsigned bands, which has been great. Now

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with Gotee behind us, we're trying to team up with a few bigger bands so we can gain some new fans and play in front of more people. The idea behind signing with this label is to get the music in more hands than we could on our own, so that's the plan. Gotee is also opening doors for us to get our songs on the radio, make music videos, and work with talented producers. We would love to tour internationally within the next year as well.

**One thing that continues to impress me about Abandon Kansas is your strong connection with your fans. Has this always been a priority or did it just kind of happen organically?**

**JS:** I can't imagine spending five hours in a room jam packed full of people and not meeting anyone face to face. I mean, I guess people do it every day at the mall, or at church, but I can't see myself doing that. I love people, I love communicating, and that's why I want to play music. Playing on stage takes up very little time on tour, the rest of the time we're hanging out with each other or people that come out to the shows. I really don't think we have many fans, but we have a couple thousand friends, which is such an humbling thing to have. I really think our friends would go out of there way to do just about anything for us, even if we weren't in Abandon Kansas. That's a priceless connection that goes way beyond music. It makes the tough days a little easier and the good days that much sweeter.

**Tell us about this new record.**

**JS:** It's called "We're All Going Somewhere". We couldn't be happier with the way this new record turned out. To have Mark Townsend produce our first label effort was incredible, and then when we actually sat down to work with him we were just blown away with the final product. He produced bands we grew up listening to like Relient K and has been making new records that we love like Deas Vail.

The new record has six songs that cover a wide range of subject matter. We were on the road when we

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“ I THINK YOU’LL HEAR  
HOW WE’VE GROWN AS  
MUSICIANS  
AND MEN SINCE  
OUR LAST RECORD ”

were writing these songs so the lyrics are very inspired by life on tour dealing with pride, desperation, direction, and love. There aren't any cheesy breakup songs on this record, which is fine by me! I hope people will get into the lyrics of this EP, I put a lot of work into them.

Musically this record is pretty much all fast paced with some groovy dance jams and some straight up indie rock tunes. There are some really radical gang vocal parts and some beautiful breakdowns with live strings. We kept the production pretty simple, and there isn't a ton of extra instrumentation on any of the songs. JR McNeely did an incredible job mixing this record and it's our first release that we feel like really sounds like us.

**Did you feel any kind of new pressure knowing it was going to be getting out there more than your previous releases?**

**JS:** No one has put any pressure on us to do anything, at least not as far as I can tell. I think we all understood that by bringing Go-

tee, Mark, and the rest of the team on board that we needed to make something good, but once we hit the studio we just let the creative juices flow. We have always been ourselves when it comes to writing, performing, and hanging with people. Everything we did on this EP was very natural for us, and I think you'll hear how we've grown as musicians and men since our last record.

**What can you tell us about your recently shot music video?**

**JS:** This week we shot a music video in Atlanta with Nathan Corrona for a new song called "Close Your Eyes". We shot the bulk of the video in a really old apartment building from the 1800's with no air conditioning in August. It was a long sweaty day but I think the final product is going to be sick. There were also a couple scenes with me on the public transit in Atlanta. Seeing a white kid on a train full of black people lip syncing to a song no one else could hear had to be a funny sight. 🐶

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SEPTEMBER 2009

**Abandon Kansas** (Gotee Records)  
*We're All Going Somewhere EP*  
Releases - September 8th

Just recently signing to Gotee Records Abandon Kansas' previous DIY efforts are shadowed by the enormous sound of their *We're All Going Somewhere EP*. And since, other than iTunes, the only place to find this EP will be after one of their shows, AK was sure to produce an EP that would hold up to their raw, energetic live performances. You can definitely expect more dance riffs and gang vocals from this sophomore release. Frontman Jeremy Spring's lyrics are once again honest but a little more upbeat than that of the first album. Most of the EP reflects this new tempo set by Spring's lyrics while still keeping the feeling and sincere emotion that made us fall in love with them in the first place. *We're All Going Somewhere* gets me stoked for what the indie quartet has in store for us in the future. JS