



JONAS & THE MASSIVE ATTRACTION

BIG SLICE
PRESS KIT
2011

Going over the top With new album, Jonas Tomalty prepares to break into wider market

By Lynn Saxberg, The Ottawa Citizen

September 16, 2010

Jonas and the Massive Attraction

When and where: 9 p.m. today, Zaphod Beeblebrox, 27 York St.

Tickets: \$20 advance, www.ticketweb.ca or 1-888-222-6608.

If you've been waiting for a return to over-the-top rock that's brimming with screaming guitars and soaring vocals, Jonas Tomalty and his band the Massive Attraction will fit the bill.

The 31-year-old Montreal native has sold thousands of albums, earned a pair of 2005 Juno nominations and been a star on the rise in his home province for years. But now, with a new album and the support of a new manager, Ottawa's Todd Littlefield, the anglo rocker appears poised to break out of Quebec.

Tomalty's third album, released Tuesday, is called *Big Slice*, and it's a hard-to-resist blend of guitar-laden rock and over-emoted ballads delivered with the kind of swagger we haven't seen the days of Spandex and perms. According to the frontman, it's the album he and longtime guitarist Corey Diabo have always wanted to make, although it's more than two years behind schedule.

The delay stemmed from a deal that went sour, and the legal wrangling it took to get out of it. Once they were finally free, the singer and guitarist, who have been playing together since they were teenagers, joined forces with industry songwriter Simon Wilcox and producer Thomas "Tawgs" Salter. There was no stopping the creative streak.

"We didn't have anyone looking over our shoulder and directing us," Tomalty said in a phone interview. "It gave us a freedom we haven't had before. Between the four of us, we really wrote the album that I've always wanted to make."

Along with bassist J.S. Baci, drummer Francis Fillion and keyboardist Henri Fortier, they came up with a band name to convey the fact that it's a group project.

"One of the first decisions we made was to give this band a name," says Tomalty, whose past recordings have been released under his first name. "It's never been a solo project. It was time for the boys to get their due."

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Going over the top *continued...*

The new name, Massive Attraction, is a not-so-subtle hint at the energy the band projects on stage. "We don't do anything halfway," Tomalty says. "We didn't want a name that was beating around the bush. We're a rock project and that name reflects it."

It also alludes to the on-stage charisma of Tomalty, who bears a resemblance to Jim Morrison and performs with an intensity that makes female fans squeal. Contrary to many expectations, however, he no longer has a habit of tearing his shirt off on stage. Although he only did it a couple of times, years ago, it was one of those things that fans kept talking about.

"I always laugh because everybody talks about how I take my shirt off," Tomalty says. "Back when I was 18 years old, I did it a couple of times on stage and I did it once at the Bell Centre for, like, half a song because I didn't have time for a wardrobe change. It really is hilarious. It's one of those rock 'n' roll myths."

The new album contains more fodder for rock 'n' roll mythmaking, including songs like Addiction and What Type O' Ride Are You. On the topic of addiction, Tomalty says they've all struggled with the effects of the road, while Ride, believe it or not, was inspired by the circus.

"It's tongue-in-cheek," he says. "Every good rock album needs one of those Walk This Way-style tracks, at least one with overly obvious lyrics. That's what that is."

Other tracks, including Big Slice and Seize the Day, fit into the straightforward rock category, which Tomalty says is popular around the world. On a recent jaunt through Europe, he was blown away by the reaction of fans who had never heard of him.

"One of the biggest markets in music right now is being forged by Nickelback. We're not the same style as that but we do fit into that demographic. It's a big part of the market. Rock is definitely not dead."

The Gazette

Jonas and his band grab a bigger slice of the pie Writing sessions helped Montrealers reveal their heart and soul

By BERNARD PERUSSE, The Gazette September 23, 2010



Jonas -performing at the launch of his new album at Club Soda last Wednesday -has been playing with guitarist Corey Diabo since they were 16. "He's my brother -straight up," the singer said of his longtime creative foil.
Photograph by: PHIL CARPENTER THE GAZETTE, The Gazette

There's been a lot of upheaval in Jonas's life during the past year or two. He's changed his band, label and management, and the Montrealer's new album, *Big Slice*, shows a carefully crafted approach to rock that's markedly different in spots from his previous work.

But there's one thing that remains constant in the singer's world: his partnership with guitarist Corey Diabo. The two have been playing together since they were 16. In conversation, not surprisingly, they complete each other's sentences.

"He's my brother - straight up," Jonas, ne Jonas Tomalty, said when the two sat for a recent Gazette interview at the Cafe du Nouveau Monde.

"We've been family for 14 years," Diabo added.

And yet that's not quite enough to make it in the cutthroat rock 'n' roll business. "When you're with somebody that long, working together, going through life changes together, going through different band members, you need something stronger than just friendship to keep it together. There are a lot of ebbs and flows," Jonas said.

The crucial element is musical compatibility, he explained -a chemistry between the two that comes out in the studio and on stage.

"You do what I can't and I do what you can't," Diabo interjected, addressing his friend and collaborator. "When I started out with my own band, I realized I don't like singing or entertaining the audience. I'm not the guy running the party. And I ran into you at that point in my life."

(Continued on following page...)

The Gazette

Jonas and his band grab a bigger slice of the pie

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Their interests sometimes go in different directions, all to the benefit of the music, Jonas said. "We both understand that Robin Trower is a god and we work from there," he quipped.

While the two often namecheck the former Procol Harum guitarist, who also has a thriving cult for his later work, Jonas explained that Diabo's tastes can run to country while his might lean toward electronic and house.

Little of Big Slice, however, reveals such non-rock influences. The disc, on Jonas's own label, Big Slice Records, sounds more deliberately crafted and hit-oriented than anything he's done.

For that, he credits a trip last fall to Los Angeles, where he and Diabo hooked up with multi-platinum songwriting machine Simon Wilcox.

Jonas, who described the writing sessions as "the experience of a lifetime," said he learned a lot about songcraft from Wilcox, who contributed to almost every track on the new album. Thomas "Tawgs" Salter, who co-produced the new disc with Wilcox and Jonas, also pitched in on the composing, with other writers.

Diabo said the songs were road-tested on a recent tour of Europe and went over in a big way.

"Maybe some songs on our previous albums have been built on the bells and whistles, and the substance wasn't there as much as it could have been," Jonas said.

"(The idea was) he's a good-looking singer; they'll buy the record," Diabo said dryly.

"I'm 30 now," Jonas said. "The songs need to stand on their own. The integrity of the band needs to rely on way more than just the fact that we have youth and a poster-boy quality. This is a rock band and it has some substance."

The alt-rock school of writing Jonas grew up with, as exemplified by Stone Temple Pilots and Soundgarden, involved an approach to lyrics that was, he said, abstract and arty. Both he and Diabo praised Wilcox for teaching them that it was okay to write songs that had a familiar chord pattern and told a linear story. The originality, they agreed, was all in how they built on that simple foundation.

Nor is it wrong, they decided, to court the marketplace. "We started as a blues band and immediately became a rock band and gradually evolved," Diabo said. "If the majority of people are looking for Toyotas, you can't try to shove old Mercurys down their throat."

Jonas, however, was quick to point out that they never went against their instincts when they wrote the new album. "There's no way you want to write an album you'll tour with for two years that you don't feel on the stage," he said.

And indeed, tracks like the album's title song and Addiction show that the group hasn't abandoned loud riff rock descended from blues. "We just sat down and said, 'Let's write a solid album that will be, from beginning to end, songs that are both fun to play and come from our heart, that we can project well on stage,'" Jonas said. Bassist J.S. Baci, drummer Francis Fillion and keyboard player Henri "H" Fortier -who, with Diabo, make up the Massive Attraction -are poised to help take the new material international. Recently hired manager Todd Littlefield will be working behind the scenes.

(Continued on following page...)

The Gazette

Jonas and his band grab a bigger slice of the pie

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The success of the European tour, which included London, Berlin and Odense, gave the two a yen to go back more often. "We definitely have Europe in our sights," Jonas said. And the two are clearly delighted that the new disc is drawing Canadian interest outside Quebec. Branching out in the United States would seem to follow naturally when the album is released there within the next year, Jonas said.

"We're keeping our sights upward and our feet on the ground," Diabo said.

"And playing," Jonas shot back.

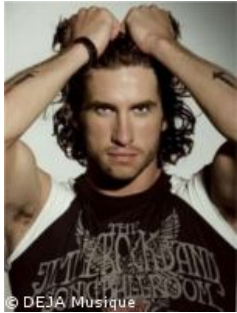
"Playing, playing, playing," Diabo agreed.

Jonas and the Massive Attraction perform Sept. 29 at Club Soda, 1225 St. Laurent Blvd. Tickets: \$27.50. 514-286-1010.

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Jonas Rocks and Rolls

October 15, 2010



(bum) - Love rock and roll? You MUST listen to Jonas' new record *Big Slice*. You will become addicted. Indeed, rock definitely flows through the Montreal native's blood. When you see him perform on stage, you can't deny it. But unlike many rockers, after spending his twenties abusing alcohol, drugs and sex, the 30-year-old artist now aims for a balanced life.

You have a cottage in Lake Megantic. Since your songs are very rock-oriented, it's hard to believe you could get inspired in that peaceful haven. Where do you find the inspiration for your songs?

We spend a lot of time touring, we spend a lot of time on the road. We're in the city all the time. At heart, I'm a city boy, too. I go to the country to escape, but I also write rock songs while I'm there. That being said, we wrote a lot of this album in California.

I think I pretty much find inspiration everywhere I go. I think it's not necessarily about where you're writing your songs, more about where the inspiration originally comes from. I think I was inspired by being in a new place, by being fully focused on music all the time, with no other distractions. We also went to Burlington, Ontario to record the album. That was a great experience for me as well. We got a chance to kind of walk it down. It's a small town. We stayed in my aunt and uncle's basement. That's where we lived every night. For six weeks non-stop, we just really worked between my uncle's basement and the studio, which was two minutes away. I ran off to the gym once a day just to get my head clear. It was a good way for us to really focus on music and nothing else.

Did you entitle your album "*Big Slice*" to seduce newcomers and thus have more female fans?

(Laughs). I don't think I've ever written a song for anybody other than myself—you have to. If you start writing for other people and you start writing for a certain demographic, people will see right through it very quickly. Certainly on this album, we wrote songs that were a little more for a bigger market. I think the songs just naturally kind of direct themselves to a more international market. But it didn't write any songs for any reason in particular nor to seduce anybody. It's rock n' roll. Sex and rock n' roll are synonymous. I don't try to be anything different than I ever was. I love rock and I'm a sensual person. I love performing those kinds of songs on stage because it definitely comes across. People get into it and it's fun getting out there projecting that sensuality.

This is your third album but it's the first time you produced your own record. Why did you make that decision?

Since my first album, I've always wanted to try production. The difference is that I always had a label record that kind of suppressed it in many ways. What I mean is, they had their ideas of what they wanted me to do. To be perfectly honest, I felt really held back by that in some way. I've always wanted to have control in the studio and be involved in the production. It's very important to me. I think I had a lot of ideas, that's why I wanted to do it. It just made sense that the second I decided to do it under my own record label and under my own production company, I would be involved in the production—something I've been waiting for.

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Jonas Rocks and Rolls *Continued...*

One of your new songs is called “Seize the Day”. What do you do to seize the day?

Finding balance in my life has been an incredible part of my self-discovery in the last couple of years. I had a great time with my first and second albums. I had a great time in my twenties. I certainly pushed the limits as far as excess in everything. I drank too much. I probably was a little all over the place with women. I probably used too many drugs. I was a party animal. I don't regret anything, and I never fully lost control, but I pushed the limits.

I had an instinct that my third album would be the most successful or a breakout. I kind of made sure in the last couple of years, I'd wrap my head around how to take better care of myself, how to find good balance in my day-to-day life. I make sure to go to yoga very regularly, I train regularly and I try to eat properly, and then I feel like I'm allowed to have that scotch or that extra glass of red wine every so often, and go out and maybe not sleep so well one night. For me, at 30 years old, I've decided that the only way that my career is going to continue and that we're going to have long-term success, is if I can settle down a little bit and learn what balance truly is.

Who's that Hayley girl you're taking about in the song?

Well, her name is not really Hayley, but she does exist. I don't really want to get into it, but as you can read in the lyrics, it's somebody very important in my life. I think when someone becomes important in your life, that no matter where life takes you, their presence remains in your heart. This was a person who had a huge impact on my life.

Jonas and his Massive Attraction band have recently launched their tour to support their new *Big Slice* record. A lot of shows are scheduled in Jonas' native Quebec province. They will also play a few gigs in western Canada and in Europe. Sign up The JMA Tour Bus sheet on Jonas and the Massive Attraction's website to receive an e-mail with all the tour dates.

Interview by Carolynne Marengo
(BUM interactif)



Jonas & The Massive Attraction – September 21st, 2010 at Lee’s Palace



*Review by Sarah Myers
Photos by Chris Heighington*

Last night, Montreal’s Jonas Tomalty had the ladies swooning with the help of his Massive Attraction. Standing beside a few 30-something women it became quite clear to me that just I might be in the presence of the older equivalent of Justin Bieber; the difference being that Tomalty has real talent, plays better music and has a way more suave coif. This was evidenced by a 10:1 ratio of screaming women, blowing kisses and flailing about wildly and screaming “We love you Jonas!” The only thing missing were self-made fan t-shirts.

The small stage at Lee’s is hardly big enough to contain Jonas’ high kicks and immense stage presence. He possesses an acute ability to connect with the audience on a familial level, which is difficult for a lot of people to do, especially since this only his second time playing Toronto.

The band blasts through tracks from their new record Big Slice while Tomalty channels an even more feral version of Axl Rose, for tunes like “Seize the Day”, “Not a Here” and title-track “Big Slice”. It’s these kinds of performances that make you wonder why bands like Nickelback and their coattail-riders are wildly popular, while indie gems such as this go unnoticed and undiscovered. Case in point: the band stood silent midway through a song as Tomalty bellowed the lyrics, filling every inch of the venue with his powerful voice. As the show progresses it’s apparent that there is something more to this band, something bigger than the humble walls of Lee’s Palace can accommodate.

For the moment Jonas & The Massive Attraction will continue to fly under the radar, gently grazing the tender barrier between underground and mainstream. And much like hot soup under a thick layer of skin, it’s only a matter of time before it breaks the surface and changes the consistency entirely.



Ottawa Xpress

Jonas & The Massive Attraction - (Big Slice Records)

Big Slice

Richard Burnett



Jonas is a terrific local-rocker-done-good story, even though his big and shameless commercial guitar-driven sound doesn't please most alt-rockers. But who cares? Jonas and long-time guitarist/bandleader Corey Diabo (Richie Sambora to Jonas's Jon Bon Jovi) have at long last (with the help of Simon Wilcox) uncovered their pop-rock leanings: The title track is ZZ Top-style fun and the mid-tempo closing ballad *The Deep End* also deserves to top the charts.

(3 STARS)

Write your review of the record!

Surprisingly good.

God help me, but I think that I have not only found newfound respect for Jonas but actually like his music and style. And that is something that I thought would never happen. I was, like a lot of my friends, dismissive of Jonas as a Jim Morrison or, rather Jeff Martin, type rocker. A little bombastic. A bit too much.

Then I started to open my mind to his over the top guitar and balls out...rock out with your **** out energy and showmanship. And, without looking, I somehow became a fan of the dude. This is the sort of rock that you just don't see nowadays.

Big Slice is easily his best work to date. It is an unapologetic rock album from the eighties or nineties with all the accoutrements like the inevitable power ballad. And there is nothing wrong with that nor is there reason to apologize for this sound style. The bottom line is that it works..and well.

Reuven De Souza

EDMONTON JOURNAL

By BERNARD PERUSSE, T'CHA DUNLEVY, JORDAN ZIVITZ, The Gazette

Jonas & the Massive Attraction

Big Slice

Big Slice Records/Select

Following a trip to L.A. last fall to pen some tunes with pro songwriter Simon Wilcox, Montreal's most likable bad-boy rocker and his new band sound highly energized on a disc filled with songs that already sound like hits. The disc is all metal-lite guitar crunch, stick-in-your-head hooks, power-ballad emotion and supersized choruses that wear their crafted inevitability with style. The few tracks that might not belong over the closing credits of a summer rom-com are the kind of amiable, nudge-nudge, wink-wink, riff-rockers that got the singer where he is. For both longtime fans and casual observers who have a soft spot for modern-day commercial radio, it's all pretty much win-win. With this one, Jonas will probably expand his empire.

Rating: 3.5 out of 5

Podworthy: Seize the Day

MELODIC.NET



Jonas and The Massive Attraction

"Big slice"

(Independent, 2010)

Producer: Thomas Salter

Genre: Modern Rock (Tough)

Format: Album

Website: www.myspace.com/jo...

Reviewed by: Kaj Roth

Review

Canadian Juno nominated rocker Jonas has already released 2 successful albums with several hit singles, this year he is thrilled to introduce his new band Jonas and The Massive Attraction. The new album "Big slice" has it all to make it big, hard hitting rockers and huge ballads that would please Chad Kroeger of Nickelback on any day of the week. I can't resist fat riffs and strong choruses so "Big slice" found its way in my heart pretty quickly, the title track opens the album and this one rock hard ladies and gentlemen. The following "Seize the day" is perfect for radio with a super melodic epic vibe, next out is "Not a hero" that is co-written by Ed Roland of Collective Soul - pure modern rock euphoria! This album is a must dear friends, definitely for fans of The Veer Union, Forty Foot Echo and Hinder.



CD Review

Artist: Jonas and the Massive Attraction

Title: Big Slice

Label: Big Slice Records

Band Members: Jonas Tomalty (lead vocals),
Corey Diabo (guitar), J.S. Baciú (Bass),
Francis Fillion (Drums), Henri "H" Fortier
(Keys)

Genre: Rock



Reviewed by: Tessa Perkins (Vancouver)

Yet another great band out of Montreal is gaining popularity and getting set to bring their rock to the rest of Canada and the world. Jonas Tomalty began his music career as a solo act performing in various bars in Montreal, then in 2004 he toured with Van Halen and in 2005 released his first album. After being nominated for two Juno awards ("Rock Album of The Year" and "New Artist of The Year") and releasing a second album in 2006, Jonas decided to create this new band to highlight the fact that his music has never been a solo endeavour.

The band cites influences such as Kings of Leon, Aerosmith, The Killers, AC/DC, and U2, and I would say they are more on the AC/DC or Aerosmith side of that list. This album is full of beautifully crafted songs with a strong, filled-out sound and lots of emotion that make a very solid debut for this group.

The title track "Big Slice" is the first single, and it's a hard-hitting rock song that shows what these guys are made of. Other great songs include the epic "Seize The Day" and "The Deep End," the more raunchy "What Type O' Ride Are You," the hard rock "Addiction," and the slower "World Fading."

Jonas took a much more personal approach on this release, co-writing nine of the eleven songs and co-producing the album. His goal was to write songs that were powerful even with just a guitar and a voice. "We wrote this album with the intention that the songs stand strong in their most simple state. Great songs have a raw emotion at their core. We then layered the instruments to build up an album that's big in sound and very much us in every way," says Jonas.

Jonas and the Massive Attraction are currently touring in Quebec until December with more Canadian dates to be announced soon. For more information, visit: www.myspace.com/jonaslive.

Montreal rocker finds the right formula

Jonas & The Massive Attraction appear Friday

By Ted Shaw, The Windsor Star March 24, 2011



Following a period of turmoil, Montreal rocker Jonas Tomalty is ready to take his career to the next level. "I think, for me, the whole thing is a question of timing," said the 31-year-old frontman of Jonas and The Massive Attraction, appearing Friday at Windsor's The Blind Dog, 671 Ouellette Ave.

A new band, a new record label, and a new manager have joined the Jonas fold in the last couple of years. Last fall, his third album, *Big Slice*, finally saw the light of day after a dispute with his former label. It has been more than two years in the making, but it promises to bring his brand of melodic rock the attention it deserves. Sometimes compared favourably with fellow Montrealer and friend, Sam Roberts, Tomalty is actually more akin to the chart-busting Nickelback, and that's no surprise. The big-hair, balls-to-the-wall music of the 1970s was what inspired him and longtime collaborator Corey Diabo, his lead guitarist, to abandon their blues roots and play contemporary rock. Throw in a dash of Bruce Springsteen-style blue collar songwriting, and you have the formula that produced the new album and its first two singles, *Big Slice* and *Seize the Day*.

"I have been playing with Corey for 14 years," Tomalty said. "We met on the Montreal blues circuit. But as much as our roots are in the blues, we are both big fans of rock and the music of the 1970s."

Tomalty, in fact, likes to relate the story of how he rewrote the lyrics of Neil Young's *Rockin' in the Free World* at the tender age of 10.

"Oh, I tried to sound so worldly, like I'd been everywhere and seen everything." But the song's simple chord structure, a quick shift to a minor key, and the passion of Young's performance left indelible marks on him. He also credits Montreal's Leonard Cohen with having an influence on his writing.

"Like any Canadian city," he said, "Montreal's change of seasons has an influence on its music and its musicians. We have very, very cold and snowy winters when we have to stay inside for four months a year. Then we have beautiful summers when we can go wild and spend most of the day outdoors."

Tomalty has been performing almost from the day he left high school. It led to experimentation with drugs and alcohol in his 20s. "I think I pushed the limit to some extent. I had the chance to stand at the edge and see where it might lead. But I don't regret it. Life evolves and you find different things to concentrate on and different inspirations."

Although his performance in Windsor will be his first, it's not his first visit to the city. He has relatives here and plans to do some family catching-up.

The concert at the Blind Dog is an all-ages show, doors open at 5: 30 p.m. Tickets \$10 and \$12 at the door.

tshaw@windsorstar.com

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Jonas and The Massive Attraction in Niagara

Barracuda Pretty show Thursday night



Posted March 23, 2011

ST. CATHARINES — A massive alt-rock extravaganza is on tap for Thursday night. Barracuda Pretty in St. Catharines plays host to the Canadian hard alt-rockers Jonas and The Massive Attraction.

Juno-nominated Montreal-native Jonas Tomalty has re-created his vision with his third album *Big Slice* with new band Jonas and The Massive Attraction featuring longtime guitarist/band leader Corey Diabo, J.S. Baciú (bass) and Martin Lavalée (drums).

"The inspiration for *Big Slice* came over a three-year period, but it was written in about six months," Tomalty says of his latest album. It was produced by Thomas "Tawgs" Salter (Josh Groban/Lights), mixed by Mike Fraser (AC/DC/Metallica) and mastered by Greg Calbi (U2/John Mayer/Deep Purple).

"I came from the school of alternative hard-rock where I really crafted my songwriting back when I was in a band called Rubberman in the early '90s. We were a modern-grunge kind of band; Soundgarden, Pearl Jam and Stone Temple Pilots kind of thing. (On this album) we're a little more throw-the-paint-on-the-canvas and very imaginative and free-stylish."

He says the album is a very outlandish and trippy journal of true events of his life.

Recently, Tomalty had the honour of taking the stage with Dan Aykroyd, Paul Shaffer and Colin James among others as he was involved in the filming of the Downchild Blues Band documentary *Flip Flop & Fly*, which premiered on The Movie Network and HBO last January.

"It was really cool to have that opportunity," he says. "For me to be asked to be a part of that was an absolute honour, man." The onstage experience was one thing, he says, but being backstage with those performers and engaging in their stories was another.

With the buzz surrounding *Big Slice*, and the band being in the midst of a cross-Canada tour, Tomalty is very busy, which he says can be exhausting. But the support of Canadian rock fans is keeping him going full steam. "The response is great. Thank God for the success of *Big Slice* as a single right across Canada because now we're able to get out of eastern Canada and able to start hitting Ontario and the mid-west," he says.

Next stop on the *Big Slice* Tour 2011 is tonight's Barracuda Pretty show in St. Catharines. Doors open at 9 p.m. for this 19+ show. Tickets can be purchased at ticketscene.ca at an early bird price of \$15 or a general admission of \$20.

Attracting Attention

By JIM BARBER, QMI AGENCY

Posted February 21, 2011

In the era of Justin Bieber fever and overly Auto-tuned pop schlock, it's nice to know an artist playing straightforward, melodic, hard-driving rock and roll can still find an audience.

And for Jonas and the Massive Attraction, that audience seems to be growing in leaps and bounds.

The band, fronted by talented singer/songwriter/musician Jonas Tomalty, is based out of Montreal, and recently released its "debut" album, Big Slice.

Debut is in quotation marks because Jonas released two other critically-acclaimed albums just under his first name: a self-titled debut in 2004, which featured the hit single Edge of Seventeen, and his 2007 album Suite Life, which featured the hits Bows and Arrows and Here She Comes, as well as a number of cross Canada tours, including a headlining show at the massive Bell Centre in Montreal -- the home of the NHL's Canadiens.

Record company troubles ensued, as has happened to a plethora of artists across all genres over the past few years, and when the dust settled, Jonas was left in control of his own music, via his own label, Big Slice Records, and also wanted his output to reflect the collaborative nature of the tunes, hence incorporating his backing band, The Massive Attraction, into the project's official name.

Already, the lead-off single and title track from Big Slice has received solid airplay across Canada.

Jonas told QMI Agency that while he has had tremendous success in his home province of Quebec and parts east, breaking into the Ontario market, as well as points west, has been a challenge at times.

"Our joke used to be that there's a million miles between Gatineau and Ottawa, because Quebec really has its own star system. But I think finally with this third album, there's a real recognition coming for artists that are kind of breaking through from Montreal. And luckily, Canada has turned its ear a little more toward us on this album. The response we have gotten from the rest of Canada is the best we've ever had," he said, and that's reflected in the fact that the band is getting more gigs in Ontario, including March 5, at the Merchant Tap House in Kingston, and March 11 at the Tattoo Rock Parlour in downtown Toronto, as part of Canadian Music Week festivities.

He said he was surprised to learn that one of the most intense markets for music from Big Slice is Alberta.

"Out in Calgary, Edmonton and all of Alberta is one of our biggest successes right now, and that's really great news, because that's where our biggest exports in recent years comes from -- Nickelback. Now, I don't compare our sound to theirs, but we're played on the same stations, and to know that's where they had their first explosion of popularity, is great for us," Jonas said.

Big Slice featured the production triumvirate of Jonas, expatriate Canadian songwriter Simon Wilcox (daughter of Canadian rocker David), and Thomas (Tawgs) Salter, also a veteran songwriter and producer.

The trio worked on many of the songs together, and Jonas said the collaboration was so rewarding that he decided to bring both into the studio to help with the actual recording and production of the record.

"Tawgs has been working with (indie-pop sensation) Lights, and he's also been working on the Midway State stuff. He's a great writer who has been involved in all sorts of projects. He's worked with (American singer-songwriter) Josh Groban and guys like that. I had a good feeling from day one that he would be a good guy to deal with," Jonas said.

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Attracting Attention *Continued...*

"And Simon Wilcox is an ex- Torontonion who has been living down in L.A., and writing all sorts of stuff. She's become a household name down there. I was lucky enough to team up with her, and we hit it off. So when you go into the studio, you want to surround yourself with people that you like being in a confined space for six to eight weeks with, and Simon and I hit it off so well in the writing sessions that I asked her to come into the studio and be a part of the coproduction."

Big Slice also received some production magic from industry heavyweight Mike Fraser, who has worked with the likes of AC/DC and Metallica to name but two of the huge artists to bear his unique stamp. Fraser mixed most of the album, as well as some songs from Suite Life. "He's got this glister that he has in his production that we were really looking for. He is a huge asset to also giving a radio sensibility to the sound of the songs in the mix. He is such a genius at being able to take a sound that's already quite full, and load it up."

Jonas has a varied musical background, but essentially comes at his music from two distinct sets of influences -- the blues, and 1990s alternative rock, a.k.a. grunge. But on all his records, the songwriting demonstrates a real knack for vocal and musical hooks, without coming across as contrived. This he attributes to listening to a lot of 1970s rock. In his youth, Jonas played in a blues band, and then with a popular punk rock band called Rubberman, while he was still in high school. "I always say that my roots lie in 1990s rock, and my soul lies back in the 1950s and 1960s. I didn't really listen to the radio as a kid. I was born in 1979 and it seems that I absorbed everything from the previous decade. One of the first things I remember being able to do was putting my parents' records on the record player without scratching them, and wearing the big headphones. I would listen to Procul Harem, Led Zeppelin, the Doors, Jimi Hendrix, even Carole King and songwriters like Leonard Cohen," he said. "By the time I hit high school, I started playing the blues, but then after a couple of years of the blues and 1970s vibe, I realized there was the other great music out there called grunge. So I got into bands like Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Stone Temple Pilots. That was my musical progression. So I took what I knew from the 1970s feel and started songwriting almost immediately on top of this Seattle grunge sound, and Rubberman was born." The band lasted a few years and Jonas went solo, continually honing his sound and songwriting chops, as well as his incendiary live shows.

Today, The Massive Attraction, which features lead guitarist Corey Diabo, bassist J.S. Baciou, and keyboardist Henri (H) Fortier, is an in-demand live act. The combination of great live performances and melodic 1990sinfluenced playing brings up comparisons to the popular American band Collective Soul, with whom Jonas toured a few years ago. Jonas admits to being an unabashed fan of the band's primary songwriter Ed Roland. "Ed is a monster songwriter and he is one of the nicest guys in rock and roll. He was an absolute pleasure to tour with. When he and I had a chance to talk, we often dropped into what our influences have been, and we have a lot in common." Roland, co-wrote the song Not A Hero for Big Slice.

Jonas said he is working to set up concert dates in Western Canada in the spring before heading back East. He also has plans to head over to Germany and other parts of Europe by the fall. His current tour actually started with dates in London, Berlin and Denmark.

The bad is expected to hit the stage at the Merchant Tap House on March 5 after 10 p.m.

Jim Barber is the editor of the Napanee Guide and a veteran music industry journalist.

EDMONTON JOURNAL

Jonas wants to put the fun back into music Montreal rocker plays free show Sunday in Edmonton

By Sandra Sperounes, edmontonjournal.com March 18, 2011



Jonas and the Massive Attraction are scheduled to play a **free concert at West Edmonton Mall on March 20, 2011.**

EDMONTON — He's a shaggy-haired rocker. He lives in Montreal. He was nominated for best new artist at the Juno Awards.

He's ... not Sam Roberts, but Jonas Tomalty. He's one of Quebec's biggest Anglo stars of the '00s, but unlike Roberts, he's had little luck in the rest of Canada. "Of the first album (Jonas), I sold 95,000 copies — and 97 per cent of them were in Quebec," says Tomalty. "Hey, I'm not complaining — we still got to sell a crazy amount of albums."

Seven years and a new name later — Jonas & The Massive Attraction — he's finally starting to sell albums outside of Quebec. The meaty title track from his band's latest effort, *Big Slice*, is Tomalty's first national hit, peaking at No. 7 on rock radio. A touching tribute to his parents, *Seize The Day*, is now making its way up the charts. "You hear the story over and over again — it's like a nine-year overnight success," says Corey Diabo, Tomalty's friend and guitarist since 1997. "It takes a lot of hard work."

Hard work, yes, but a little help from the scheduling gods doesn't hurt, either — and, for once, Tomalty's timing couldn't be better. With no new Nickelback album on the immediate horizon, Canadian radio stations are clamouring for alternatives — and not just pop-rock jokers Hedley, angst-filled Three Days Grace or bar-rockers The Trews.

Big Slice won't win any awards for originality, but Tomalty doesn't want to be the next musical visionary. He's more like the ringmaster of a sweaty, rock 'n' roll circus — complete with ballistic guitar riffs, sexual innuendoes (*Big Slice*), potentially offensive lyrics about women (*What Type O' Ride Are You?*), and a few sensitive ballads. Kind of like Nickelback.

"Music has kind of lost its fun," says 30-year-old Tomalty, who will swing by Edmonton on Sunday. "Some people take it to a freaky level, some people take it to a dirty level, but what about good ol' fashioned rock 'n' roll fun?"

Continued on following page...

EDMONTON JOURNAL

Jonas wants to put the fun back into music *continued...*

The Massive frontman — he's well over six feet, dwarfing Sam Roberts — is an unabashed fan of classic rock, citing The Doors, Led Zeppelin, The Who and Neil Young as some of his early inspirations. (When Tomalty was 10, he even wrote another verse to Ol' Shaky's hit, Rockin' In The Free World. "I know, eh?" he laughs. "Cocky as a kid.")

In his late teens, he fronted an alt-rock band, Rubberman, for a few years — until he met Diabo at a Montreal blues bar, and voila! They formed their own band and released *Jonas*, a blues-rock record, in 2004, then *Suite Life* in 2007. "In the second album, our blues roots were still slightly visible," says Tomalty. "Now, we're certainly not as blues-founded as we were in the past, but it's still in our blood. We still like to whip it out onstage ... and play some blues."

Tomalty's sweet life, however, started to curdle as he butted heads with his record label. The company wanted him to record covers — his first big hit was *Edge of Seventeen* by Stevie Nicks — and insisted on marketing him as a solo act. "We tried for years to call it a band and we were constantly getting into these head-to-heads with them," says Tomalty. "It was never a solo project, it was always a band. So as soon as we broke up with (the label) officially, the first thing on the docket was to name the band. *Jonas & The Massive Attraction* was one of the first we came up with and it took us about a year to go back and decide it was the best name out of all of them."

His next steps? He found a new manager; launched his own label, Big Slice Records; then collaborated with other songwriters. For Big Slice, Tomalty and Diabo worked with songstress Simon Wilcox, who has penned tunes with Edmonton's Ten Second Epic and Social Code, and producer/tunesmith Thomas (Tawgs) Salter, who has written hits for Josh Groban, Lights and Lenka.

"Some of the songs are heart-wrenching, like *Exit Wound* or *Haley*, but others are completely ridiculous — like *What Type O' Ride Are You*, comparing a woman to a circus. "We want people to come to our shows and not give a s*** about anything. There's too much going on in the world. You need escape for a little while. It's just rock 'n' roll, man."

Jonas & The Massive Attraction will also perform Friday, July 1 at Boonstock Music Festival near Gibbons.

Jonas knows Canadians like their rock straight-up hard

By [Lana Michelin - Red Deer Advocate](#)

Published: March 15, 2011 11:50 AM



One of the great mysteries, if you're in a rock band, is what makes a certain song sink or swim on radio. For instance, the tune Big Slice by Montreal's Jonas and the Massive Attraction "didn't float" for months after being released as a single last June.

Then suddenly in October, radio stations across the country began playing it, and Big Slice started rising until it peaked in January at No. 7 on the Canadian rock charts. "It's basically been in the Top 40 in radio since November," said the group's Juno-nominated frontman, Jonas Tomalty, who performs a St. Patrick's Day concert at The Vat on Thursday. "I don't know why . . . maybe they had a pocket and they were looking for that kind of rock song and they picked ours

"As Canadians, we like the big, shameless, rock 'n' roll, balls-to-the-wall song that's a real foot stomper — a real speeding ticket song," the singer added, with a chuckle.

Big Slice seems to be all of the above. Even its broad message jives with popular culture. "Everybody wants a big slice — of life, or whatever it means to you," Tomalty said.

Jonas and the Massive Attraction appears to have come out of nowhere for Western Canadians, but the band in its former incarnation, simply titled Jonas, has had a big fan following in Montreal for the past seven years. The group played to 7,000 fans at the Bell Centre, home of the Montreal Canadiens, and toured across North America in 2004 with Van Halen.

The debut near-platinum-selling album, Jonas, featured the hit single Edge of Seventeen, and was nominated as Rock Album of The Year at the 2005 Juno Awards. That same year, Tomalty was also nominated as New Artist of The Year. "We've had great success in Quebec and Montreal — we've always charted there," he said.

Now that the group has expanded its rhythm section and its name, and radio stations across the country are giving it airplay, Tomalty said, "the rest of Canada has been really good to us, too." The 31-year-old, who toured in Europe last summer, is really looking forward to coming West to play for Red Deer fans because "I hear Red Deer is a real rock 'n' roll town." Jonas and the Massive Attraction is even slated to make a return trip here to perform this summer at the Central Music Festival.

Tomalty springs from a musically supportive Anglo-Quebec family. His dad used to play the harmonica and banjo for the kids before bedtime, while his mom sang lullabies. The teenage Jonas met his bandmate and best friend, guitarist Corey Diabo, when both were musicians jamming around Montreal some 14 years ago. He calls Diabo, who shares his idolatry of Procol Harum guitarist Robin Trower, his musical "brother." Jonas and the Massive Attraction is also made up of J.S. Baciu on bass and Martin Lavallee on drums.

The next single being released on radio is Seize the Day — and Tomalty hopes it floats.

Tickets for the 8 p.m. concert are \$10 at the door.



Rock with Jonas & The Massive Attraction

By Mark Weber

Published: **March 09, 2011 8:35 AM**

Montreal-based singer Jonas Tomalty (just call him Jonas) is completely pumped about introducing his new band Jonas & The Massive Attraction. Riding high on the heels of last fall's release *Big Slice*, the guys play *The Vat* March 17. The show is also being presented by the Central Music Festival. The band is also booked for the 2011 Festival which takes place Aug. 12-14 north of Red Deer.

Rounding out the group are guitarist/band leader Corey Diabo, bassist J.S. Baciu and drummer Martin Lavallee. It's been a terrific season of connecting with fans over the past while as they've watched *Big Slice* hit the mark commercially and artistically. Shortly after its release last September it shot into the Top 15 on Soundscan. The title track (also the first single) also soared to the Top 10 nationwide this past December. Songs like *Seize The Day*, *Burn Bright* and *The Deep End* fit seamlessly alongside rockers *What Type O' Ride Are You* and *Addiction*.

Seize the Day has special meaning, as it harkens back to his early days. Ultimately the tune is about making the most of your days even when times aren't entirely agreeable. "I was brought up by two parents that worked hard every day to provide for my brother and I, and make sure that we had the chance to do whatever it was we set our minds to do in this life," he explains. "I witnessed what the daily grind can do to your spirits and what it takes to rise above -- to distribute the weight and pick each other up when in need."

Jonas has long been a natural onstage, and it's no surprise considering his upbringing. His dad insisted on a rock 'n roll education in the blues and would sneak his son into jams in Montreal bars. Jonas later gigged around Montreal himself in a number of bands, making his initial mark by snapping up the opening slot on Van Halen's North American tour back in 2004. The next year his debut self-titled disc was released, and notched nearly platinum status in sales. Jonas landed nominations for Rock Album of the Year and New Artist of the Year at the Junos. In 2006 Jonas released *Suite Life* which featured the singles *Here She Comes* and *Bows & Arrows*.

While most famous front men break away from bands and go solo, Jonas did the opposite. Jonas & The Massive Attraction was born, and *The Big Slice* reflects the powers of collaboration that have been sparked since that time as well.

"We wrote this album with the intention that the songs stand strong in their most simple state," he explains. "Great songs have a raw emotion at their core. We then layered the instruments to build up an album that's big in sound and very much us in every way."

Last spring, the band met with producer Thomas "Tawgs" Salter (Josh Groban/Lights) and the chemistry was instant. It was decided that "Tawgs" and Simon Wilcox would produce *Big Slice*. Mike Fraser (AC/DC/Metallica) was brought on board to mix the singles and mastering legend Greg Calbi (U2/John Mayer/Deep Purple) added the final touches. The disc is a testament to the power of merging the right creative forces – from bold, flat-out rock anthems to gentler material that would slide easily into pop radio. At the centre of it all like a driving force is Jonas' compelling, gravelly and emotive vocals.

"I wanted to make sure that every song that was written on this album was both strong in its rawest form and told the autobiographical story of the two years of my life and the life of this band," he says. "I wanted it to be a lyrical journey. If this album is anything, it is that."