

RED COLLAR

Jason Kutchma – Lead Vocals/Guitar

Michael Jackson – Guitar/Vocals

Beth Kutchma – Bass/Vocals

Jonathan Truesdale - Drums

There's a feeling in the room when Red Collar is playing that is hard to describe. It is as though the club or room has been lifted from its foundations and pulled straight up--that we've been taken out of time, and transported to a time before ironic posturing became the norm. A time before we used terms like post-anything. I'm not talking about false nostalgia for a better time. Just a different time. When this band plays it is ALRIGHT to yell along and to clap your hands."

-Evan Rowe, Maple Stave, Des_Ark

In the fall of 2005, western Pennsylvania expatriates Jason and Beth Kutchma were looking to add a second guitarist to their nascent Durham, NC-based rock band. At the same time, Mike Jackson moved to Durham from Chicago and posted an ad on Craigslist in the hopes of meeting some Triangle area musicians who embraced "energy and almost danceable rhythms". Beth's response to Mike's post was simple, "You have almost exactly the same influences as our other guitarist. You should come by and play with us some time." So with a friend and Duke graduate student on drums, Red Collar was born. Not wasting any time, the band played often and everywhere, acquiring a strong legion of sweaty, clap-happy local fans, and racking up a few hundred broken guitar strings in the process. Ultimately, the commitment required became too much for a full-time student and Red Collar began to look for a new drummer, specifically one who hit hard and played with the same enthusiasm and sense of purpose as they did. They found that person right under their noses: a fan of the band since the day he arrived from Clemson, SC, aspiring photographer Jonathan Truesdale had become a fixture in the first row of Red Collar shows, shouting along and snapping pictures of the mayhem.

"Beth came up to us and said Jon was a drummer and was interested in playing with us. We all knew even before we played with him that he was our guy. It's funny how things work sometimes," says Jason Kutchman. "We all came together from different parts of the country, all thinking that maybe we had missed our chance...it's just been amazing. Everything we do, every practice, every show, the record, it's all a gift to us. We don't take any of it for granted. It's a privilege."

Red Collar plays rock and roll. Of course that can mean a lot of things but at its core that's what Red Collar's music is, period. It's the effrontery of early 90's Dischord bands. It's straightforward, working-class lyrics with the earnest delivery of Springsteen. It's the shout-along choruses of The Replacements and the buoyant, danceable rhythms of The Clash. Taken together, it's a bold, energetic wall of sound that dares the audience to come a little closer and join in the fun.

"It's always hard to say what you sound like, because someone will always disagree. No you don't sound like band X, you sound like band Y. The thing we love about this band is that it combines all the different elements that we love about rock music into one band. Maybe that makes us hard to put into one category, but that's fine with us. This is the music we have always wanted to make."

Let's be honest: the live show is becoming a lost art. In this modern world - where bands are made from clever marketing campaigns, where it's shtick over substance and what's hot today is all but forgotten tomorrow - live music seems more about who's at the show and who's not, rather than about what's happening onstage. The bands themselves frequently seem bored or tired; or even worse, cynical. This is not a Red Collar show. Whether they are playing for a packed house at the Cat's Cradle or for ten wide-eyed teenagers in someone's living room in Greenville, NC, they only know how to play one way: like it's the last show they'll ever play.

"For us it's about the live show. Yes, we record, but the recording is more a flyer for the show. When we play live the goal is always to be able to break down the barriers between the band and the audience. When we can get past the 'we're up here playing and you're all down there watching' and get to a place where we're all participating in the same thing, where there is no us and them, that's when we feel like we've succeeded as band, and, in the end, isn't that what rock and roll is about?"

Red Collar self-released their first full-length, **Pilgrim** in March 2009. Recorded and produced by Brian Paulson (Beck, Superchunk, Wilco, Archers of Loaf), the album seeks to capture the spirit and energy of the band's lauded live show while also bringing to the forefront the hooks and intricate songwriting that can sometimes be lost when surrounded by a hundred rowdy, shouting fans. The release is an exciting and much-anticipated milestone for the band but even more, the album provides the band with the opportunity to take their live show across the country.