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**music**

BY VANESSA SALVIA

Justin King (second from right) and bandmates



## King of the Road

Justin King and bandmates declare their freedom

It took me a few days to reach Justin King. When we finally spoke he apologized, saying he'd been in Chicago, "on a rampage with a couple of buddies." King's celebratory mood is understandable considering he's an independent artist again and promoting a new EP he's calling a "declaration of freedom." After a protracted legal battle with Sony/Epic, King retained the rights to music he and his band made while on the label, something most artists find very difficult to achieve. "There's been so many hirings and firings and tumultuousness over there that we weren't getting the kind of at-

within the next few months.

Musically, King finds himself moving toward minimalism as he "grows up." "I'm becoming less interested in fancy guitar stuff," he says. "I've been more focused on the song." While guitar playing is still definitely an element in King's music, it's not at the forefront as it used to be. "I don't like to live in one world, one genre, too long," he explains.

If you know King's previous solo work, especially the mostly instrumental *Le Bleu*, his work with bandmates Drew Dresman, Ehren Ebbage and Nadir

### JUSTIN KING EP RELEASE

8:30 pm Sun., Jan. 28  
Sam Bond's Garage  
\$3 • 21+ show

**'I don't like to live in one world, one genre, too long,'**  
Justin King explains.

tention that we needed," King says. "We just care too much about the music we're making."

The new five-song EP, *Fall/Rise*, features material the band didn't record with Sony. "We did it as a way to tide over folks who know our music until we get the record done," King says, "which actually looks like it'll be a lot sooner than we thought." The band has enough material for "more than a full-length," which they hope to wrap up

Jeevanjee might surprise you. King's a talented songwriter, able to match a catchy phrase with a catchy riff whether for a slow ballad or a Wallflowers-like rocker. After cruising solo, being in a band fits King like a glove. "I had these songs that felt like they wanted drums, and they wanted bass, and they wanted to be more layered," he explains. "Being in a band is something that cements you all together, and that's something cool to be a part of."

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