

# Shapiro EP Review Reveals: "You Are Alone"

By Patrick Kennel  
Staff Writer

Tomorrow at 8 p.m. in the Common Grounds the band Shapiro, a Harrisonburg favorite, releases its latest EP *You Are Alone* with a free-for-all concert.

Although Shapiro recorded most of the tracks in auditoriums, bedrooms, dorm rooms and a closet, the sound quality is ridiculously good and attention to detail masterful. Though not as energetic as a live show, faithful fans will agree that Shapiro and mix technician Joel Lehman distilled the band's signature driving and moving concert sound into a smoothly blended CD like a couple of professional moonshiners.

Shapiro's blatant not-your-average-rock-band sound comes from three of the members' training

in jazz and music theory. This, combined with a drive to push the threshold of experimental rock while maintaining a balance of "poppy" songs for bringing boys and girls together, creates a product which stands one head above the rest.

For a peek into the influences behind Shapiro, lead singer,

pianist and songwriter Jeremy Teter describes the CDs he would keep in his imaginary five-disc changer: Radiohead's *Kid A*; The Beatles' *Abbey Road*; jazz-pianist Brad Mehldau; the trendy, dance, pop group Ratatat; and Gwen Stefani's *Love, Angel, Music, Baby*. Teter's defense of his final choice... "it's really

produced, but I like the CD."

Teter stays true to his

minimalist yet ironically intricate style during the band's recent transition from the guitar-lead songs on Shapiro's previous demo to the piano-lead songs of *You Are Alone*.

"Prelude," the intro track, has an euphoric affect which seductively draws the listener close to the speakers just in time to bash him in the head with a final melodic two-by-four.

The second song and title track "Jesse's Song" showcases its infamously upbeat yet downmood chorus which actually says "you are alone" but somehow manages to make the listener feel good about that.

The experimental gem of the album is the third track, "I Do." Teter's creative use of "sporadic snaps and pops" for an intro rhythm gives an electronic feel to the jazz-roots, post-modern, pop-rock style Shapiro has refined and owned.

"If I'd Known" is a remastered version of an already recorded song most Shapiro fans will be familiar with. Newbies to the world of Teter should make sure to catch this song to hear a jazz-floyd-rock poster child. Staying true to his belief that a



Matt Styer

**Shapiro (Nathan Granfosky, John Granfosky, Jeremy Teter, Carl Shapiro) will be performing Friday evening at 8 p.m. in Common Grounds.**

piece of music should build over its entirety, Teter saves the most driven song for last, "You Can't Talk to Me." The album caps off with this poppy highway-music anthem birthed for all those Harrisonburg indie-pop kids.

Also listen for inflective lyrics such as "it's astonishing how we fake ourselves out" and "when push comes to shove, all we ever

want is love." Teter, taking notes from one of his Herm Weaver classes says, "The world would be a better place if people just had more friends."

Opening acts for the release include campus band Highways and Ocean Shores and local artist Nathaniel Baker. Albums will sell for five dollars.