

The It*Men



From Left to Right:
Dave Molnar: Bass
Ben Gmetro: Guitars
Matt Cassidy: Guitars
Charles Druessedow:
Drums
Ken Janssen: Vocals



Band Biography:

The It*Men are a throwback to the glory days of rock, when egomaniacal excess was celebrated and often encouraged. Primarily started as a joke side-project for a tight-knit group of friends and musicians from Cleveland, Ohio, the band provided the soundtrack to many a beer-soaked night before imploding shortly after the release of their debut CD *Greatest Its* in 2004.

Their parting gift to the world was a tribute to dulled senses that also served as a faux career retrospective. Sprawling liner notes told a fabricated band history that had them starting out at the same time as The Beatles and singlehandedly inventing “punk rock” numerous times during their career.

In reality, The It*Men were a great live band whose chaotic live shows veered from musical brilliance to self-parody and back again, often within the same performance. Some nights, the band bravely held their own while lead singer Ken Janssen pulled laughs from the crowd. At other times, they staggered drunkenly into incoherence. Whatever the case, fans loved it - until the joke got old, and the group dissolved much like the fictional alter egos they had created and embraced.

Janssen was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease) in fall of 2012. Ken had earned plenty of goodwill over the years as a long-time supporter of the Cleveland music scene and booker for the Beachland Ballroom and Tavern. Friends, family, and fellow musicians offered financial support, but Janssen didn’t want handouts. He wanted to raise money while creating something that would stand the test of time and serve as his musical legacy.

In early 2013, The It*Men heeded the call and returned to the studio for the first time in almost a decade. An online campaign was launched to sell the vinyl reissue of *Greatest Its*, now boasting an extra side of new material. Contributors could also purchase tickets to a benefit concert featuring The It*Men performing with the help of guest vocalists from various Cleveland bands. The resulting show was successful both as a fundraiser and as a form of group catharsis for those in attendance.

Energized by the response to the benefit, the group partnered with Stow House Records to bring the single-minded vision of The It*Men to a larger audience. On these discs, you will hear the blood, sweat, and beers that went into making the album a reality. From the opening anthem “Tell You The Truth” to the side-long bad trip of “Death Machine,” Ken screams and bellows while the band extinguishes classic rock clichés like cigarette butts into crushed beer cans. New songs like “Screw The Pooch,” “Modified Cobra Position,” and “Bowie Dick Test” unload the sexual puns while reimagining Devo as performed by The Stooges or the MC5.

What may have started as a joke and morphed into a fundraiser clearly exploded into a full-on exorcism. Luckily, the entire ritual was recorded and pressed onto wax for unsuspecting rock fans to stumble upon. *Greatest Its* may not be high art, but it is a feat of musical endurance that produced some wild and goddamn glorious memories for those involved. We hope this record may transcend its humble origins and become the soundtrack to a whole new set of blurry memories.

Band: The It*Men
Album Title: Greatest Its
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- Disc One
- 1- Tell You the Truth*
 - 2- Come and Get Some
 - 3- Baby I'm Your Man*
 - 4- That's Not the Way I Heard It
 - 5- W.I.P.G.A.S.
 - 6- Doing Drugs for You
 - 7- Altamonster
 - 8- (You Gotta) Pay the Man
 - 9- What's Up, Action
 - 10- Death Machine

- Disc Two
- 1- Screw the Pooch*
 - 2- Bowie Dick Test*
 - 3- (Lily the) Deepthroat Killer
 - 4- Modified Cobra Position
 - 5- Space Dancer
 - 6- It*Men Stomp
- * suggested songs