

Marcy Playground Biography

Although the members of Marcy Playground met in New York City during the mid-'90s, both singer/songwriter and guitarist John Wozniak and bassist Dylan Keefe originally

hail from Minneapolis, while drummer Dan Rieser is a former resident of Ohio. The group took their name from an experimental elementary school that Wozniak attended in the late '70s (called the Marcy Open School), a time that saw Wozniak intimidated by a few other students, which led to the youngster's refusal to join his peers on the school's playground during recess. Subsequently, Wozniak claims that this tough period of his life served as "a foundation for a future self" (in an early bio for Marcy Playground, Wozniak described the origins of the group's name as follows -- "The strange way in which I see the world today can be directly traced back to the time when, as a little boy, I sat paralyzed by the unfortunate realities of life as I looked out of a school window and down onto the Marcy Playground").

Keefe attended another nearby school (a sister school, of sorts, to the one that Wozniak attended), but it wouldn't be until both Keefe and Wozniak grew up and moved to N.Y.C. that they would first meet (introduced via acclaimed jazz guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel), resulting in the duo joining together to form a band. Keefe recommended an old college friend, Rieser, to man the drum kit, which led to the official birth of Marcy Playground.

The group eventually signed a recording contract with Capitol Records, which led to the release of the trio's self-titled debut in February of 1997. Several months after the album's original release, rock radio picked up on the group's single "Sex and Candy" (comparable to Nirvana's more tranquil moments), which pushed the album up the U.S. charts and, eventually, platinum certification. The trio began work on their second full-length, trying to avoid the dreaded sophomore jinx that so many other rock bands have fallen prey to after scoring an inaugural hit. Marcy Playground proved ultimately susceptible to the aforementioned "curse," as the resulting album, 1999's *Shapeshifter*, was widely panned by critics and sunk from sight shortly after its release. *MP3* arrived in 2004, followed by *Leaving Wonderland... In a Fit of Rage* in 2009.