Oregon Daily Emerald's Weekly Music, Theater, Dance, Video and Nightlife Guide

Entertainment D. Lee Williams

Photo by Angi Gass

For musical variety and affordable fun, John

s half after eleven Thursday night and The Kurtz Project - Oregon's best band - has just taken the tall stage at John Henry's. Two of my friends get up, hand me their beer and take off, driven out by a no-name, low-talent opening band, and I'm thinking that the rest of our beer-thirsty, live-music-hungry group should probably be home studying, sleeping or else in rehab.

April 23, 1993

A fast flashback (sponsored by Henry's Dark) knifes all thinking: Marnie — the band's only girl, the band's lone blond slides into a violin solo then sings, loud, low and gravely, sounding and looking a whole lot like a blond chick named Kelly or Kristie or Melissa Daniels that I met with this same group of club groupies, at this same club location, two summers ago when John Henry's was the underage danceclub nightmare, Club Hollywood.

Beer-buddy Kevin — trapped in twin flashback — says, "Whoa ... is that the blond chick we chased around Club Ho' a long time ago, the one who thought we were cheesin' on her, but really we were hard on X and just wanted to touch that huge red hat she was wearing?"

The first song ends, and I answer, "I don't know, maybe so." But by the second set, by the sixth beer, it doesn't really matter because the flashback's been peed way away, and our whole table's pretty much ready to propose to Marnie's violin.

Thursday nights are for John Henry's. The music is live, the crowd is small, the beer list is extensive and the cost inexpensive. Don't dress up. Don't comb your hair. Don't be worried about making smart small-talk because you won't need it. John Henry nights are made for music and Michelob, not condoms and come-on lines. It's where to get loaded. not laid.

Inside is a vaulted, elephantine, cathedral-like ceiling, and the ceiling and walls are black-brown and smoky. The whole design is hauntingly uterine. The small entrance on 136 East 11th Ave. belies the vast and dark interior. During a pee-break in the band's show. I officially baptized John Henry's Eugene's Biggest Rock 'n' Roll confessional booth. And it is big. It's Max's on steroids.

Patrons saddle up to a corner bar, shoot stick in a back pool room, dance on a checkerboard floor or sit at picnic tables or

Turn to JOHN HENRY'S, Page 8

Drunk at Abi's/ Compost/ Nixon Flat (rock) at John John Cage Celebration (dance and spoken word performances) at the WOW Hall. Daylong beginning at 1 p.m. Includes 5:30 performance in the Dougherty Dance Theatre



at Gerlinger Annex. \$7/5

10

Negativland with Palapa B2 (electronic, mixed media) at the WOW Hall. 8:30 p.m. \$7/8 Brave Old World (Jewish klezmer music) at Beall

Concert Hall. 7:30 p.m. \$8/10

Tough Mama at the EMU Beer Gardens. 4-7 p.m. Free

Savoy Brown and Terry Robb

(blues) at Good Times. 9:30

The Strangers/ Tough Mama (rock) at John

Onomatopoeia/ Oswald 5-0/ Adickdid

(rock) at the WOW Hall. 9:30 p.m. \$5/6

University Singers and Eugene Vocal Arts

Ensemble (contemporary choral music) at

Unshakable Race and

Times. 9:30 p.m. \$5

Henry's. 10 p.m. \$4

Jumbalassy (reggae) at Good

p.m. \$7

Beall Concert Hall. 8 p.m. \$2/4

Henry's. 10 p.m. \$5

Rooster's Blues Jam at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$1 Supernova/ The Betmars/ Her Number 13 at John Henry's.

University Symphony at Beall Concert Hall 8 p.m. \$2/4

10 p.m. \$2



Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$2 Giant Sand/ Marshal Plan at John Henry's. 10 p.m. \$3 **Oregon Composer's Forum**

High Street (acoustic rock) at

(new student works) at Beall Concert Hall. 8 p.m. Free Walker T. Ryan's Blues Workshop in the EMU Ben

Linder Room, 7-10 p.m. Free **Dangerous Household Objects**







sounds, adds a touch of rock 'n' roll

at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$3 Buckhorn/ Ro-Sham-Bo/ Rhythm Breaker at John Henry's. 10 p.m. \$2

Lafayette String Quartet (chamber music) at Beall Concert Hall. 8 p.m.

Blues Club Project (blues) at Good Times. 9:30 p.m. \$3 Oswald 5-0/ Gravel/ The Crabs at John Henry's. 10 p.m. \$3

Orian Crawford presents "100 Cups of Coffee" (folk, jazz and coffee) in the WOW Hall's newly remodeled basement performance space/coffeehouse. Crawford describes it as a "no frills coffeehouse." 8-10 p.m. \$3 (includes coffee or tea)



BIG MOUNTAIN Wake Up on Quality Records

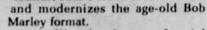
RATING: ****

Frisbee material # # nothing special * * * worth a listen * * * * quality music * * * * steal it if you have to name.

Big Mountain should not be confused with Big Country, one of those obnoxious early-eighties bands Review by Pat A that cranked out meaningless drivel that lulled to sleep an entire generation and allowed Ronald Reagan to serve two terms in the White House.

Personally, I only know Big Mountain as great ski resort in Whitefish, Mont. But college is a place to expand your horizons, and true to form, Big Mountain can now be stored away in the memory banks as a reggae band. Big Mountain's solid sound is worth the gray matter used to remember the band - good news for those whose short-term memory has been whittled away by THC.

On Wake Up, the band takes traditional island



Lyrically, the themes of racial equality, justice and struggle are played out in typical reggae fashion. Revolution plays a big part in the album, most notably on "Peaceful Revolution," a song about the lack of representation most people have in their supposedly representative governments. It's a power-to-the-people message Bob Mar-

ley would be proud to sing. "Light'n Up," the album's first track, tells us things are never as bad as they may seem.

"Rastaman," which comes later on the album, is an inspirational song giving praise to Jah, the Rastafarian deity.

Wake Up is a solid effort by Big Mountain. Check it out for yourself.

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