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## JOHN HENRY'S

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on a dumpster-saved sofa stolen straight from the 70s, ripped right off the set of *Three's Company*.

It's a shrine to sparseness. Co-owner Bruce Hartnell's design motivation here seems to mirror the idea behind those propliss, one-act stages in the theater department, which, through lack of set, drive emphasis on the performers. John Henry's is bigger and better than both Taylor's (severely small) and Good Times (severely blues).

Music makes the place. It's diverse and experimental, offering this city's most varied bar-band calendar. The Kurtz Project's performance was an obnoxiously glorious presentation of kamikaze musical theater. It is an increasingly popular Portland-based band mixing classical violin with a 70s cover play list. The high stage was harshly fitting, built to suit the band's rock 'n' roll, KISS-like gymnastics. Stage antics like this are unacceptable in any other Oregon band (especially the now ultra-hip, ultra-pretentious bar-band princes, The Daddies.) Stage jumping and floor humping better compliment a cover of Journey's "Huggin' Touchin', Squeezin'" than a cover of some long-dead-but-revived blues tune or anything by The Daddies, whatever it is they do.

The Kurtz Project call themselves "David Bowie-esque-circa-Glass-Spider-Tour." But that's an oversimplified understatement and needlessly trivializes and ties their talent to an overrated,

over-the-hill cross-dresser. The Kurtz Project are really quite neat. Light a candle for their return.

Meanwhile, drink. And for this purpose, I offer John Henry's. I propose this place because it has its barfeet firmly planted in unpretentious earth. It's where to track ground movement. It's where to go instead of, say, snooty Steelhead's, where they don't even sell pitchers.

At John Henry's, people drink beer; at Steelhead's, people just sip. At John Henry's, you will hear the comforting clatter of a shattered beer bottle or three; at Steelhead's, you'll be annoyed by the tinny, effeminate tinkling of little, sippable, beer glasses. People yell at John Henry's. At Steelhead's, customers indulge in that frighteningly sphincter-locking yuppie activity known as "chatting." (In a recent pee-break at Steelhead's, I officially christened the place as the Bar King for Eugene's irritating 3M'ers: the married, the mainstream and the moneyed. The Rubenstein's, The Romania's and Jerry Green have been seen at Steelhead's, thus earning it the second title of Eugene's Biggest Weenie Bar.)

A final note: as far as I know, there is no real Mr. or Ms. Steelhead; no Mr. or Ms. Sixth Street Grill; no Mr. or Ms. Confetti's Lounge at the Shilo Inn; and no real Coconut Joe. There is, however, a real-live, flesh-and-blood-and-Budweiser John Henry, who sets up your suds, changes your ashtray and can, for a fair tip, pass your phone number to the blond violinist on stage who'd look even more incredibly hot and cool in a big red hat.

## WORLD

Continued from Page 7

klezmer supergroup." Brave Old World brings together four leading American klezmer musicians with combined experiences as performers, researchers and teachers of Yiddish music and culture. With close family and community ties to the East European Jewish heritage, the group is dedicated to tradition and

innovation, both of which are distinct in their repertoire of time-honored and original compositions.

Their concerts have taken them to New York's Lincoln Center, the World Music Institute, the Philadelphia Folk Festival, the International Klezmer Festival in Safed, Israel, and through Europe. The ensemble was also the focus of a CNN-International news seg-

ment early last year, and their release *Klezmer Music* was selected Outstanding Folk Recording of 1991 by the U.S. Library of Congress.

This Sunday, April 25, the School of Music's World Music Series presents Brave Old World at Beall Concert Hall at 7:30 p.m. Tickets, \$8 for students and \$10 general admission, are available at the EMU Main Desk.

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