

MUSIC

Prick, Ass Ponys not too similar

In the battle of the mid-section anatomy lesson, Ass Ponys takes the prize hands down. These days, a band is only as good as its name. Tasteless names either lend themselves to allowing the band to be dismissed as a bunch of freaks and wanna-bes or opens the door for a greater sense of recognition, based on the band's name alone (see Dead Kennedys).

A light, yet moody pop band that probably has smoked too much dope (how else do you come up with Ass Ponys as the name of your band), the Ponys are pretty damn good.

What originally would be assumed to be a bitchin' heavy-metal band by name, Ass Ponys' music defies established boundaries, thus the name "Electric Rock Music," named by lead vocalist Chuck Cleaver's 11-year-old daughter, "because that's what it is," she stated flatly.

With decided folksy, simple tendencies, it's hard not to liken them to a band like XTC (especially on "Little Bastard") that can effectively teeter the borders of cheesy pop and solid hipness.

Prick, on the other hand, not only crosses into the city limits of Cheeseville, but they've taken up permanent residence with their K-Tel version of industrial drivel.

With the genuinely interesting musical moments happening far too few times and plenty far between, Prick gives the listener nothing that they couldn't produce in their own living room by melting their Ministry CDs with a touch of Bauhaus and a Norelco razor for effects.

Electric Rock Music is Ass Ponys' major label debut and when asked how the band might change to stay within the mold of the major label



Electric Rock Music
Ass Ponys

★★★



Prick
Prick

★

with Cleaver's wallowing, made-for-the-shower voice hits its peak on "Earth to Grandma" a humorous account of the strange collectibles that only a grandma can collect. "It's a plaque that says, 'I Heart My Home/It's toothpicks, felt and Styrofoam/Earth to grandma/What the hell is that?'"

As for Prick, they have some words in their songs.

requirements of today. Cleaver gives his two cents.

"As long as we stay somewhere between Captain Beefheart and Captain and Tenille, I think we'll do O.K.," Cleaver said.

A product of Cincinnati, Ass Ponys admit that their reason for putting a band together is simple.

"There was nothing else for us to do," Cleaver claimed. It's this "Midwestness," if you will, that makes the music on *Electric Rock Music* so honest. Tales of sitting around in their underwear and throwing pumpkins off bridges are things that true, god-fearing Midwesterners hold near and dear to their hearts and it comes through in the way of a successful debut for Ass Ponys.

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—Chris Metz
Oregon Daily Emerald

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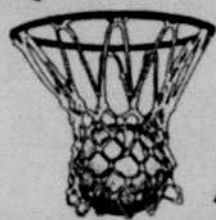
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Blacks and Jews in American History

Julius Lester is an African American, Jewish author and professor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He has written 19 books since 1968 as well as publishing in *New York Times Book Review*, *The Village Voice* and *The Nation*. As a professor of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, he has been awarded all three of the university's most prestigious faculty awards. As a veteran of the Civil Rights Movement, he has had his photographs of that movement included in an exhibition at the Smithsonian. A graduate of Fisk University, Dr. Lester has been a National Book Award Finalist, received the Newberry Honor Medal and the New York Times Outstanding Book Award.

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