

Pocket Face

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formed Pocket Face. Horota, the former drummer for the Japanese ska band, P Up Area, heard his friend Mastrogiovanni was forming a new band in America, so he decided to quit his jobs in accounting, merchandising and Web design and fly to the United States to live in a storage closet in Mastrogiovanni's house.

"This band was worth it," he said.

He said he is moving into a real room next month.

Horota and Mastrogiovanni's previous experiences in the Japanese music scene has helped them maintain contacts with their Japanese label, "All in One Record," that helped make the Japan tour possible.

Ska hit the Japanese clubs in the mid-1990s, inciting a surge of copycat ska bands that reached their peak popularity about two years ago, according to Horota. Although America experienced a similar phenomenon, he said ska was more popular in Japan than in America.

Mastrogiovanni said one major

difference between the two countries is that Japanese audiences want to be involved in the shows.

"They want to participate," he said. "If you raise your hand up, everyone raises their hands up. Japanese kids are very active, and they jump whenever you do."

"We're not pop. Pop is like Britney Spears; we're not Britney Spears."

Taylor Morden
trumpeter

And Pocket Face does a lot of jumping.

Although Pocket Face's music does not fit any current rages in Japan, Mastrogiovanni said he hopes they will start a new ska-funk trend with what they call "a new international horn-blasted, power-pop, funky-punky style." When music crosses international and cultural borders, the dash becomes a band's best friend.

Once Pocket Face formed, Horota said they realized they had less genre limits, which allowed them to branch out from the tradi-

tional ska beat. He said they were then introduced to the new genre of "power pop."

"That's not a genre," Morden interrupted.

Classifying a band invariably leads to a debate on what genre best fits the band's style of music, and each band member has a slightly different opinion on that point.

"It's a feeling — a power-pop feeling," Mastrogiovanni compromised.

"We're not pop," Morden insisted. "Pop is like Britney Spears; we're not Britney Spears."

"We're like power-Britney Spears," Mastrogiovanni said.

Though Morden still looked doubtful, Horota settled the debate by informing the others that the term "power pop" is used in Japan.

As a send-off for the Japanese tour, Pocket Face will perform at a show called "Icky-Ma-Show, Vol. 2" June 20 at the Wild Duck with four or five other bands to be announced nearer the performance date. Tickets for the show will be \$2 at the door. Their CD, "Many Faces," is set for release in the United States in September.

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Lang

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Catchy? Yes. Original? Hardly. Mr. Lang knows that every band sounds like a previous band, but, to steal from fellow sarcasm-ite David Spade: I liked the Strokes better the first time, when they were called **The Velvet Underground and Nico**. So what do the Strokesters do on SNL in a stab at another five minutes of fame? The drummer wears the Andy Warhol banana cover from "The Velvet Underground and Nico" album. And it was hot pink. Mr. Lang almost fainted. Please, Strokes, New York, midwest, Eng-

land, I don't care where you're from. Just go back there.

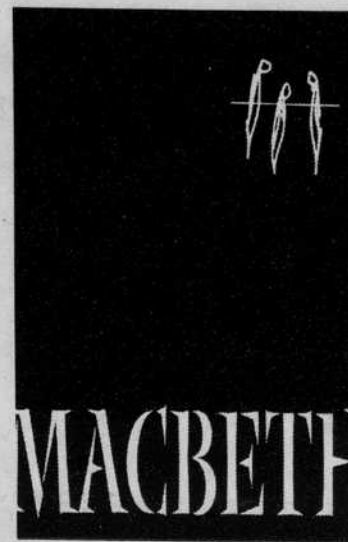
Industry item: A group of labels and publishers have filed suit against file-sharing service Audiogalaxy, the No. 3 music site according to Nielsen/NetRatings. The complaint accuses the Texas-based company of being worse than Napster because it allows people to download cover art and entire albums straight.

During Mr. Lang's summer opine session, **Weezer** showed up frequently. So, back to basics. Former bassist **Matt Sharp** contends he owns a quarter interest in all but one of the songs on "Pinkerton" and a third interest in "The Sweater

Song." In the California suit, a letter written by frontman **Rivers Cuomo**: "Looks like we're gonna start making money again so we (you and I) had better get this thing squared away sooner rather than later so the money flows to all the right places without getting hitched up."

An abrupt farewell to you, dear readers. Mr. Lang, a media darling in his own right, is up to Portland on Friday for the show by media darlings the **White Stripes**. Next week, **Dandy Warhols**. Ol' **Merle Haggard** will be in Springfield in no time. Huzzah.

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