

Label promotes local musicians

Schapendoes Records aims to expose Eugene musicians that the public may not otherwise hear

By Helen Schumacher
Pulse Columnist

About two years ago, three friends — Halle Williams, Jevon Cutler and Adam Newton — founded Schapendoes Records as a means to release music by local artists they felt deserved more attention.

Everything began when members of the label were watching a show at basement venue The Alamo. They were inspired to release an album featuring two local bands playing that night — Chevron, which Cutler is part of, and Mine Thirty Seven.

"A label seemed like the best way to do that," Newton said.

All were avid fans of the local music scene and wanted to help expose themselves and others to the music they liked so much.

"We thought our friends were making a lot of good music that we wanted to put out," Williams said. "There's a lot of good bands in Eugene that would get more coverage in a bigger city where

there is a more established music scene and a bigger chance of a label being interested and wanting to help out a band. But in a small city like Eugene, there is not the same opportunity."

Most recently, the label has been working on a compilation album entitled "The Last Thing We Ever Did," featuring tracks from 20 different bands in Eugene, Portland and Chicago. Among the bands included are: Intima, The Planet The, Chin Up Chin Up, Black Darts, Mood Area 52, Little Twos, The Love of Everything, Dutch Flat and Kickball.

"We don't have a lot of money," Williams said. "So we can't put out an album by every band we like. This compilation was a way to release stuff by all those bands."

The album will cover a wide spectrum of musical genres, from singer-songwriter to electronic and tango. However, on the whole, listeners can expect an earnest post-rock sound brimming with precocious harmonies and complex rhythms.

Both Williams and Cutler described much of the album as "subtle, awkward pop."

"I think there's some of the best bands from the Northwest on the compilation," Williams said. "It's

a lot of underexposed stuff that's more original and authentic."

On Saturday, seven of the bands from the compilation will be performing for an album release show at Indigo District, located on the corner of Oak Street and East 13th Avenue. The night's lineup will include Mine Thirty Seven, Chevron, Wet Confetti, Dutch Flat, Animal Beard, Testface and Mikah Sykes of the Little Twos.

"It should be a crazy show with lots of music and good bands," Cutler said. "There will be some rare stuff too because Mikah and Testface rarely play shows."

According to show posters, the event will "start early and end late," but organizers say that people can expect bands to begin playing at 7 p.m. and not finish until well past midnight. The cover is \$2 or free with the purchase of "The Last Thing We Ever Did."

The album will cost \$10 and can be purchased at Face the Music, House of Records, the Museum of Unfine Art and Record Store, or on the label's Web site, www.schapendoesrecords.com.

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artists who don't have much money or a record label to perform.

"I'm more interested in what my neighbor has to say than what Sony Pictures Classics has to say," he said.

Orange, whose stage name is Thanksgiving, played in Moscato's basement during the "My House" days. He said independent artists deserve just as much attention as big label artists.

"Musicians with more money aren't necessarily better," he said. "Musicians should be able to play if they want to and if they're good at it."

Orange, who will be opening Thursday's show, has performed solo and with bands since he was 11 years old. He has released two albums under the name Thanksgiving — "We Could Be Each Other's Evidence" and "Nothing" — which are both for sale in Portland record stores and at Orange's shows. He said he incorporates spontaneity into every show.

"Sometimes I bring people from the audience on stage if they play an instrument," he said.

UO Cultural Forum Regional Music Coordinator Timothy Cooke said he is happy to sponsor "Not My House" because it is a good part of

the Eugene community.

"There are plenty of mainstream bands who play in bars in Eugene and shows that the University puts together, but "Not My House" is different," Cooke said.

Moscato, who has also created his own art and film projects, organized independent art shows for five years before founding "My House." He hosted a total of 45 "My House" events, including an art show against the war in Iraq inside a Eugene art gallery. The event drew about 500 people. The closing event for "My House" was July's "A Super Happy Fun Day in the Park," a 25-act film and music show in the Washington-Jefferson Park.

Included in other plans for "Not

My House" is a show called "The Secret History of Eugene," which will tell stories about lost people and places in Eugene through multimedia exhibits. Moscato plans to create a Web site where people can submit material for the show. He said he hopes to take "Not My House" to other cities and to continue organizing shows that are free from institutional support.

"I love the spirit of do-it-yourself culture," he said. "It's self-empowering."

Thursday's show is open to all ages with a \$3-5 suggested donation. Free soup will be provided.

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"Two Nuns Laughing" is a photo that will be displayed at photographer Brian Harris's "Himalayan Visions and Tibetan Voices" show. "If you look at the pictures I take, you get this impression of the cultural traditions, but it's very hard to get those images today," Harris said.

Brian Harris
Courtesy

TIBET

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organization for many years."

Harris said his goals for the traveling show are to increase awareness about Tibetan culture and give people a different level of interaction than a gallery showing could provide.

"There's a certain kind of level of personal interaction that you get in the show that you don't get from just photographs," he said. After two years off to raise funds and develop concepts, Harris took the show on the road.

He said Tibet has garnered a lot of media attention in recent years, and he noted the unremitting push of modernity into the lives of the Tibetans. According to Harris, it was culture that existed for hundreds of years without very little external influence, and as a result of exposure to other cultures, most of that society's traditions are now vanishing.

"In some ways, it's a kind of cultural death. Every year I go back, it gets harder to document that culture because it's disappearing, but you can't be negative about it," he said. "People in this part of the world are just like the people in our part of the world — they change.

But I'm not a romantic; I don't think that we should try to stop it, and I don't think that we could stop it."

The oral tradition, once an integral part of the Tibetan culture, is also disappearing, leaving many stories lost forever. Although photography takes center stage, Harris said he enjoys working to preserve these oral histories.

"Just working on the collecting of memoirs, getting to travel around and collect the stories of these men and women who are in their 60s and 70s, who were farmers and nomads, that is really fulfilling to me," he said.

Harris didn't credit any particular photographer as influencing him, but rather a school of writers he called "the traditionalists," including American author Houston Smith and Marco Parris.

"If you look at the pictures I take, you get this impression of the cultural traditions, but it's very hard to get those images today," he said.

Tickets for the show are \$10, and available at the McDonald Theatre box office and REI, located at 306 Lawrence St. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the show begins at 7:30 p.m.

Steven Neuman is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

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