

Bird: Opens next week for Nickel Creek

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But Bird has finally grabbed the attention of his compatriots. During the last stretch of his North American tour, Bird played to sold-out crowds. Now he heads into a national tour with bluegrass band Nickel Creek.

His live shows prove to be as compelling as his studio work. The live set allows him to experiment on stage with sounds and syncopation in ways that he never could in his earlier Bowl of Fire days.

"I could change the arrangements, try something new and I wouldn't get any dirty looks for it," Bird said.

Now Bird gets looks of admiration. The relationship between musician and audience is close at his live shows. The experimentation of rhythms and his playful vocals, which stray and wander from the original melodies, bring the audience close to the creative process.

"Anything could happen stumbling around, sort of cooking something up on stage," Bird said. "I really enjoy sort of discovering things on stage in front of the audience."

But don't get used to it. At the heart of Bird's experimentation lies an impetus to move forward. Bird worked closely with electronic musician Martin Dosh during the last leg of his tour, and hopes to collaborate in the future. Bird said he hopes to record a more minimalist album next.

"I want to make something very spare, but still engaging," Bird said.

Bird is opening for Nickel Creek at the McDonald Theatre, located at 1010 Willamette St., on December 9th at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$22 for advanced sales, \$25 at the door.

Behrendt: Comic's self-deprecation is the heart of his set

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O'Brien," "Larry King Live," "The Tonight Show" and even "Oprah," but the dating guru isn't done dishing out knowledge yet. On Nov. 15, he released his first solo comedy project, "Greg Behrendt is Uncool," a 128-minute DVD of a stand-up performance at the San Jose Improv.

Long story short: Behrendt's routine is hilarious. His subject matter is fresh and current, his humor is wonderfully self-deprecating and smart, and his fast-paced and poignant delivery is reminiscent of other contemporary comic idols like Brian Regan and Dane Cook, though he's a bit dirtier than Regan and a bit more in touch with his feminine side than Cook.

The majority of his jokes are based on personal experience. Now that he is inching into his 40s with purportedly great difficulty, the comic is convinced he is no longer cool (thus the title) and he demonstrates the manifold reasons he believes this to be true.

"You have to understand the journey," he said during his routine. "I

came to Los Angeles in 1993 to be a rock star. I am now a contributor for Cosmo Girl. I have a chain wallet way past my prime. I have to wear glasses to watch porn. I hurt from sleeping, but I love my life."

To Behrendt, "your 20s are subversive and unquestionably cool." Certainly, he must have learned a little something about that right here in Eugene. Attending the University of Oregon in the '80s, he started out as a business major but eventually ended up in the theater department. When you reach your 30s, Behrendt says, "you've hit your stride," but when your 40s come to call, you're suddenly "blind-sided by a wave of uncoolness."

This premise, however, is fairly deceptive. Even though he publicly airs out fears that he is "too old to rock" and that he's become "the creepy old guy" at concerts, Behrendt is far from uncool. At least the women in the audience of his performance seem to think he's cool, and it's easy to understand why. His book and much of his

stand-up empowers women. He is both sensitive and masculine, not to mention sexy—the dream guy combination of the "Sex and the City" set.

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GREG BEHRENDT | Comedian and author

Indeed, the comic is not afraid to show his knowledge of fashion. During a bit on why "adult rock shows"—a 25-and-older concert with no opening act that starts at 7 p.m.—would be a good idea, he warns a young concert-goer who is drunk off "gin and guava juice or whatever he stole from his parent's liquor cabinet" to "back it up" because he's wearing cashmere.

But this ease with his feminine

side does not mean Behrendt is out of touch with other men. In fact, he likely reaches many with a joke about his wife and a fellow mom from their children's play group dropping their pants and discussing grooming tips when the second mother announces she will be posing for Playboy.

Also, despite his fixation on age, Behrendt's jokes are appreciated by many generations or at least those who are old enough to hear the f-word. From tips on trick-or-treating, to the proper way to rock an air guitar, to the challenges of playing Pictionary with his wife on married-couple game night, Behrendt touches on experiences almost everyone can understand or recall.

Overall, this DVD is well-worth \$15 and two hours of your time. And those who enjoy it may want to look into Behrendt's stand-up tour, which is scheduled to begin in January 2006.

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