

Mary And Mars plays Sam Bond's Friday.



Old-Fashioned Rock

Riffbrokers rock, Zadok rasta hops, Bop Kings bop.

Seattle-based trio the **Riffbrokers** will show Samurai Duck-goers just why old-fashioned rock will never go out of style. Saturday night, the Riffbrokers will showcase tunes from first album *Your Superhero In That Bar*, songs that offer a gritty testament to the power of heartland rock and pop.

Guitarist and songwriter Nick Millward and bassist Heather Burnett have been together, musically and romantically, since their Boise days in 1999. They first performed under the moniker "Unsmashable Riffbrokers," but dropped the cumbersome "Unsmashable" — only retaining it as their label name — when they relocated to Seattle in 2000 and joined forces with drummer Dustin Miller. (Unsmashable Records also handles affairs for two other Seattle-based acts: Vegas In Flames and The Small Change.)

Superhero kicks off with a classic theme, a song of wounded love called "Hatched Heart," which propels itself along with a catchy beat you'll be tapping your toes to. "Eighty-sixed" is a fine power pop number, and Millward's throaty voice gives it just the right amount of snarling attitude. The band keeps the energy up all the way through to the CD's closer, "Attractive Nuisance," about a girl who's irresistible but troublesome. The band also shines on a cover of 10,000 Maniacs' "Stockton Gala Days."

Superhero is a short EP (eight songs in 30 minutes), but shows a lot of potential for the future, and Millward promises a new full-length CD in a more timely manner later this year.

While *Superhero* is spiced with meaty guitar riffs, none of it is heavy-handed, and the Riffbrokers are not an "alt-country" band — no nasal twang, no affected honkey-tonkin' personas. It's just great, straight-ahead rock music with a touch of Americana roots that'll make you feel like dancing.

Also shaking around town: Luckey's continues its foray into eclectic booking with San Antonio's the **Bop Kings**. In a Saturday

night show at the pool hall, the Texas trio will show Eugene why Las Vegas voted it the Best New Rockabilly Band of 2002.

Casey Miller sings and plays acoustic guitar, Mike Nesloney plays electric guitar and Chris Darrell goes wild on the stand up bass. What's missing from this line-up? That's right, no drums. But you won't miss a thing when you hear their astonishingly authentic rockabilly sound as they perform songs from their debut record *Rock It To the Moon*.

Miller has played in several other rockabilly acts, notably The Texas Thundertones, K.C. Miller and the Kozmik Kowboys and the Hectic Hepcats. Darrell honed his chops in Corpus Christie's The Hellbillies. The Bop Kings tear through 16 songs on the self-titled CD, all the way from "Cryin' Alone" to "Hepcat Jive." These guys are the most authentic-sounding and talented outfit I've come across in a long time. Fans of rockabilly and hillbilly boogie will not be disappointed!

Calling all Rastas! Calling all hip-hoppers! It's Rasta Hip-Hop by Canada's **Sons of Zadok**, appearing Saturday night at Cozmic Pizza. Presenting teachings from the bible of the Essene Church of Christ, Sons of Zadok performs songs from the CD *Nazarene Vow*, offering "conscious, radical, revolutionary rasta rap" that seeks to "confront the false powers of Babylon" and promote spiritual transformation.

Lastly, former Dixie Chick (albeit more than 10 years ago) Sharon Gilchrist is now part of "progressive bluegrass" trio **Mary And Mars**. Each member of this acoustic trio from Santa Fe, N.M. is a songwriter and multi-instrumentalist; they trade vocal duties as well as instruments during their energetic sets. Together since 2002, Mary And Mars presents mostly original takes on modern bluegrass while remaining true to the roots of the genre. Since the band's inception, the accomplished musicians have played clubs and festivals to critical acclaim hundreds of times, and now perform at Sam Bond's Friday, opening for Eugene's **Jack Straw**. *ew*

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