

Pabst Blue Ribbon BEER

TUNES ON TAP

MICHAEL KAY
A bright new star is rising in the Pacific Northwest. A new voice of hip-hop culture is Michael Kay. Calling Eugene his home, he has been at it since the age of 7, dancing, writing, performing and producing. 2004 brings us his debut solo CD *Thought Music* and DVD *Mastermind of His Time*. Soul, charisma, stage presence, a positive message and talent make him a man to watch. Don't miss him this Saturday night! Check out www.michaelkaymusic.com and EW's clubs page for details.
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Jonathan Wolf & Andrew Broder, *Hymie's Basement*, LEX RECORDS 2003. By Jef Stout

Real crossover is rare in music. Usually, attempted multi-genre albums are the result of inept co-option of a hot sound with the artist's usual style (think Madonna's *Ray of Light*). Even more unusual in pop music is the sound of play (Remember when music was unabashed fun?). *Hymie's Basement* solves both of these quandaries with the biggest and best musical playground recorded. Starting with the "21st Century Pop Song," a dark and monotonous rap about Mutually Assured Destruction and suburban boredom, Broder and Wolf perform feats of genius with the tools found in the basement of Hymie's, a south Minneapolis record store. Wolf and Broder bury short stories of self-destructive pretty boys, the death of the tall dude, and a man with a moon-head deep under reverberating piano and mutated drum machine. The album has the distinctive flavor of hip hop, with so many elements that are certainly neither hip nor hop, and without the shine of professionalism so much rap has today. They're creating in a stream-of-consciousness flow, letting the mistakes become the basis for the song. Step into the basement and witness the best damn amateur hour available. Or are they professionals acting amateurish? The world may never know.



The Anxieties, *Demos from the Black Hole*, SELF-RELEASED 2004. By Robert Jacobs

Driving. Aggressive. Sneering. Irreverent. These are terms that typify the halcyon days of British punk circa 1977. They also aptly describe the debut CD from The Anxieties. Hard driving drums propel buzzsaw guitars against the hard, jagged vocals of Scott Van Wrocket. The musicianship is tight where it needs to be, loose and shambling when called for. Everyone in this band gets into the vocal, whether it's call and response or the shouted choruses. High energy. Great motivating music for the morning, if you are a type-A personality. Fans of The Undertones, The Boys and The Buzzcocks will be very pleased with this release. A terrific cover of the Boys' "Terminal Love" is also included. The eight tracks are over before you know it.

The only drawback to this record is that it tends to be a tad too derivative from its influences. In a way, that's admirable, as my favorite era of punk is the beginning.

It has been said that punk hasn't evolved since its invention. I take issue with that statement, as would millions of fans who love the third wave that is occurring right now with bands like Thursday, Glassjaw and locally with AlterEgo and 2 Bucks Short. Still, it's refreshing to hear bands like The Anxieties carrying the "classic" punk standard into the 21st Century.

The Lazy Cowgirls, *I'm Going Out and Get Hurt Tonight*, RESERVATION RECORDS. By Amelia Kimball

The Lazy Cowgirls play rock 'n' roll. No, not "rocknroll" in the over-hyped, "my-band-name-starts-with-a-'The'-so-I'm-ultra-hip" sense. It's not like that at all. They deliver rock 'n' roll, circa 1964 - Sun Records, acoustic guitars, whiskey and hot girls. Combine this with a little bit of punk for good measure and some country songwriting sensibilities, and you have this record. The title track may very well be the best.

The Locust, *Plague Soundscapes*, ANTI RECORDS 2004. By Aaron Maltz

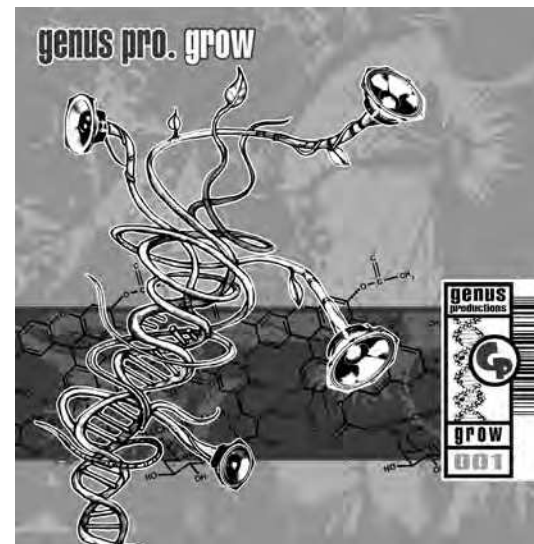
Spazzing out 23 tracks in just more than 21 minutes sounds conceptually easier than The Locust tweaks it on *Plague Soundscapes*. Somewhere between the animation of Melt Banana and the eccentricity of Fantoms, The Locust redefines traditional grindcore by adding a keyboard as the focal point of the rhythm section; no pun intended, but this does give the music an incessant buzzing quality. The furious precision and technicality continually impresses the listener throughout the album's duration.



A layer of vocals matching the pitch of a NASCAR peel-out and drums pantomiming grandma falling down the stairs with an armful of dishes soon blend themselves into one long song, the most effective listening method in approaching *Plague Soundscapes*. Equally as unique as the sound are the song titles themselves; most noteworthy are "Your Mantel Disguised as a Psychic Squash" and "The Half-Eaten Sausage Would Like to See You in His Office," not to dismiss the album's musical highlights, "Live from the Russian Compound" and "Anything Jesus Can Do I Can Do Better." Definitely not for the faint of heart, The Locust proffers a collection of tracks with *Plague Soundscapes* demanding the attention of anyone appreciative of chaotic and technical compositions.

Genus Pro, *Grow*, 2004 GENUS PRODUCTIONS. By Todd Cooper

"Oh, did you say Genus Pro? . . . Naw, I said Gee's Pizza Panino." West siiiiiiiiiide (of 11th) represent! Looks like local cats Genus Pro are going to be the ones to put Eugene on the map for hip hop. Fresh out of shows opening for KRS-One and Living Legends, the guys just celebrated the release of their debut cd, *Grow*. The disc is quality, positive, independent hip hop music. The three very distinct emcees (Marv Ellis, Metric and Elea'zar) gel well, passing the mic with ease while DJ Billy holds it down on the wheels of steel. Lyrics are well thought-out. The interludes work and production from GP and the Corbin Brothers (Raging Family) is skin-tight. "Day to Day" flows with strings and beautiful background vocals lended by Stephanie Ponso. "Flip & Unfold" will definitely get the heads bobbing, although it might be a little too tricked-out with vocal effects. "B.O.K." is kinda ballsy, using Annie's "Hard Knock Life" after it was so huge for Jay-Z, but it comes off hella clever. Other tracks that "straight bump" are "Can't Fake the Funk," "Higher," "Three Course Meal" and "I Am." Think hip hop don't live in Eugene? Pick up *Grow* and let 'em learn ya. Available at genuspro.com and local music shops throughout Oregon.



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