



Perry's Poppin'

Daddy's leadman looks to revive better vintage rock.

Steve Perry is ready to take on the world with his new party rock band White Hot Odyssey (WHO). The Cherry Poppin' Daddies' leadman is penning provocatively-titled tunes for WHO like "Good Head," "Ride the Snake" and "Lick the Pole," with equally lusty lyrics and music that harkens back to the good ol' days of '70s glitter rock. I spoke with this agent provocateur to find out more. Perry says he has grown dismayed by what passes as rock in today's world, thanks to nu-metalers and pop stars in rocker clothing. "There's a lot of rock but not a lot of roll. I see rock as needing someone to come back and say, 'This is what rock is,'" says Perry.

Speaking of the glam rock scene of decades past, Perry says, "Certain bands of the '80s were OK, but I really preferred the bands they were trying to copy from the '70s a lot more, so [for WHO] I just went along with the music that I liked."

Now, about those lyrics. Perry insists that the lyrics are meant to be fun and doesn't care if you get it or not, because he's not making this music to appeal to anyone but

himself. Although he hopes people will dig the sexy swagger. He's aware that some will love his music for the same reasons that others will loathe it, and that's OK. "A lot of the '80s glam stuff was sexual and stupid. Look at the '70s. The '70s were way more open sexually and I grew up in that time. I don't hide the fact that I'm sexual and I don't feel I should have to."

Perry points out that overtly sexual lyrics are tolerated and even unquestioned in rap culture and music made by women (Christina Aguilera and Madonna, just to name two) but if you're a white man in today's music world you're only allowed to sing about how misunderstood you are. "If you're white and you're male you're supposed to be a wallflower or else you're disgusting and evil. I can't live that way. People are going to hate me no matter what."

When Perry began the Cherry Poppin' Daddies he wasn't making music for commercial success and the band's name alone offended some Eugeneans who didn't bother to understand the name's historical significance as a jazz term. When the Daddies real-

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ized commercial success, past unpleasantness was forgotten, and Perry perceives that the assumed offensiveness of WHO will likewise fade. He asserts that swing music, in the day, was considered unacceptable because it was too sexy and scary to people. "I'm not out there to challenge anybody. I'm having fun with it. Like when you put on a costume and dance in front of the mirror," he explains. To those people who refuse to take it at face value Perry calls it "willful misunderstanding" and doubts they would ever understand the freedom of self-expression. "That's what it's about to me, freedom. And that's what [today's rock music] doesn't sound like to me," he muses.

WHO's new CD will be released in the fall, and after that, the band (guitarists Jason Moss and Mark Rogers, bassist Ed Cole and drummer Jivan Valpey) will tour to support it. White Hot Odyssey will appear Saturday, Aug. 28 at the McDonald Theater along with Cherry Poppin' Daddies. Get a double dose of Perry's swiveling pelvis for only \$5.

Sam Bond's has great shows almost every night, and this week is no exception. Witness **Zazou** on Thursday, Aug. 26. With a CD entitled *Djangolotry*, you'd expect Gypsy-influenced jazz guitar and swinging rhythm. Zazou delivers exactly that with a fun, sophisticated blend of original and cover songs sung in English and French.

The next night head over for some honky-tonk, Americana and rootsy music from **Virgil Shaw, Sony Smith and Saltlick**. Shaw's resumé boasts time in Diesel while Smith started playing blues piano in mountain towns in Colorado when he was just a teenager. After living in Central America he relocated to San Francisco and began singing original songs accompanying himself on guitar. What developed is "intimate perform-

ance incorporating folk, a little jazz and long-winded storytelling with improvisational lyrics."

Chris McFarland will perform at Sam Bond's on the 30th. Based in Austin, Texas, McFarland has a unique ability to combine hook-laden melodies with a melancholy feel and well-crafted songs which appeal to fans of indie, folk and pop equally. He's a singer-songwriter who has toured with the likes of Bright Eyes, Rebecca Gates, Rainier Maria, and The Dirty Three just to name a few. McFarland's style is west of Bright Eyes and north of Dashboard Confessional, combining elements of both the "tortured poet" approach of the former with the pop-ier feel of the latter. His songwriting is emotive and his care-worn voice appeals with a things-have-got-to-get-better, down on luck but up on hope atmosphere to it.

It sounds like McFarland's been listening to his prime influences enough that he is able to extract the best of them all while ignoring the cheesy melodrama so rampant in the singer-songwriter camp. Rather than murder a song with histrionics he restrains his emotions, choosing instead to punctuate with aggressive guitar strumming.

The WOW Hall hosts **Xiu Xiu** on the last night of August. Pronounced "Shoe Shoe," the band has released three records on the 5 Rue Christine label. Lyrically, the CD, entitled *Fabulous Muscles*, is a journey through the hell of child sexual abuse, betrayal, love, rage, and a father's suicide. Musically, it's a little bit indie, a little bit electronic and a little bit dance-oriented. *Fabulous Muscles* is the most poppy Xiu Xiu release so far and the most experimental. There's an intense vulnerability displayed in the lyrics which make it strangely hypnotic despite the underlying currents of spiritual pain. **EW**

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