



Love It or Leave It

Art is what Andy Friedman makes it.

Caustic, funny and as unstoppable as an avalanche roaring down a mountain, Andy Friedman digs in his heels and goes off on everything from modern day media to the art world in a torrent of words that passes as fast as a New York minute.

ANDY FRIEDMAN
Fri. 9:30 pm
Sam Bond's, \$4

If his performances are anything like his phone conversations, expect one hell of a show Friday night at Sam Bond's when Friedman performs with one of Eugene's own, Ty Connor.

When there's love, it's true love, but Friedman doesn't work in shades of gray. And neither will you. You'll either think this 29-year-old, Brooklyn-born, "Don't you dare call me a spoken word artist" rocks the house or that he sucks. Friedman said he loves Eugene because Eugene loves him. Maybe that's because he's pushing the envelope, doing something different. We like that.

Friedman performs songs — except that he doesn't sing; he speaks his lyrics. And instead of instruments, he uses pictures, mostly photographs. At least that's how it started out. Now he's actually got some musicians playing with him. He couldn't bring the band on this tour so instead, local musicians will accompany him Friday.

"People will describe what I do and they'll say 'He shows pictures and reads poems,'" Friedman said. "But literally, my pictures have lyrics. It's not multimedia. It's not a poetry reading. It's not spoken word. That term just makes me seethe. I'm a painter, an artist, a performer. I don't need any other monikers. I want to just crush that pretentious clove cigarette that seems to burn in the art world."

Three years ago he quit his day job as assistant to the cartoon editor of *The New Yorker* to go on tour and do his thing full time. Ever since then he's been amping crowds, who either boo him off stage or stand mesmerized in awe, with his performances. He uses his own life as fodder for his pieces but said his favorite subjects are "energy and spirit and wanderlust, loneliness and rejection."

Across the country alternative rags have dubbed him the next big thing. See for yourself.

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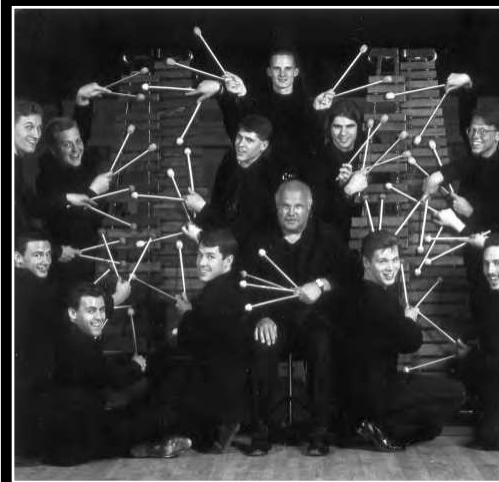
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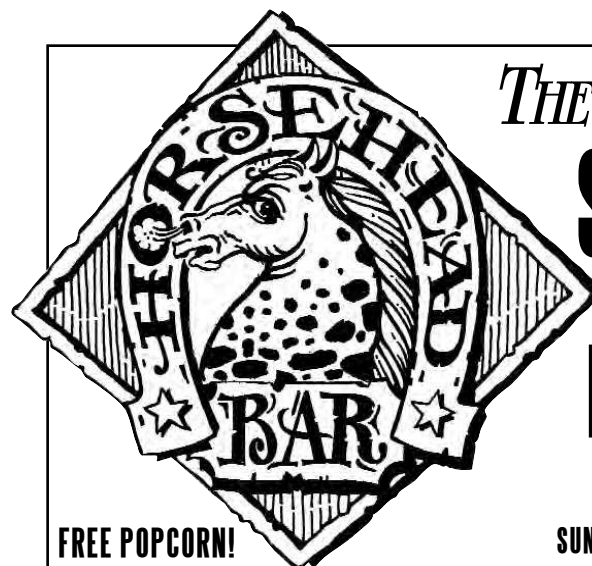
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