



**Trippy Techno**

It took long enough but the people with the power finally figured out that **Sound Tribe Sector 9** (STS9) is not a jam band. For years STS9 was booked as the opening act for bands who spend most of their shows noodling away on their instruments, lost in a haze as the patchouli-scented crowd sways and does that flowy hand dance.

But they've graduated to more appropriate pairings – Tortoise, Mr. Lips, the Perceptionists and Blackalicious to name just a few more recent shows. And while publications such as Jambase still take an interest in STS9, possibly because they sometimes have a floating, ethereal feel, the word is finally out that this is a genre-bending, magical melting pot of sound.

It's 2 pm somewhere in Texas and guitarist Hunter Brown is just rolling out of bed after staying up until 5 in the morning working loops and mixing beats on his laptop in the back of the tour bus. He's remixing songs off the band's most recent release, *Artifact*, and working on his own side projects.

Back when Brown, keyboardist David Phipps, bassist David Murphy and percussionist Jeffree Lerner first started out, STS9 spent about 200 days a year on the road playing their vibey, free form, jazz-meets-electronic-meets-drum and bass-meets-hip hop to anyone who would listen. Now that they're established, they have a more sane touring schedule.

But that hasn't changed their strange take on music, like someone never told them what it's supposed to sound like or how you're supposed to make it. Take *Artifact* for example – you can download one song, "Tokyo," off their website ([www.sts9music.com](http://www.sts9music.com)). Check out the spooky loop at the beginning and the hip hop-inspired scratch-infused end. The full CD is packed with more amazing stuff. Listen carefully to "8 and a Extra" and "People's Part II." Hear anything that sounds like five guys "going completely ape shit on anything we could find," in an empty 8,000-square-foot warehouse with 10 microphones?

Boxes of glass for recycling smashing against the wall. Cell phones feeding back. The whirl of a vacuum cleaner. Metal striking metal. Crazy energy released then sampled

and morphed into rhythmic music that moves. STS9 play 8 pm at the McDonald Theatre at Saturday, 4/23, \$18 dos/adv. – *Melissa Bearn*s

**On the Yellow Brick Road to Hip Hop Holy Land**

The **Living Legends'** rise to stardom is nothing short of inspirational. It is a testament to the hip hop "dream," where a hip hop holy land promises success along with continued underground credibility. All you must do to get there is work hard and stay true to your craft and crew.

Their tale is as follows: Between Oakland and LA, a group of small-time, like-minded MCs found each other and formed a crew. They debuted their live routine at loft parties, collecting other like-minded members along the way, steadying their roster at eight strong. Eventually the group released an album together, toured the country (then Europe), released solo albums (as well as inner-group collaborations – different Legends' MCs performing together), and got back together to release several more collaborative albums. Soon the group found themselves blowing up all over the world.

Somewhere, somehow, the Living Legends have found that balance between fame and craft. Their new album *Classic* proves that it is possible to attain notoriety while still maintaining one's artistic integrity. The album blossoms with bouncy, straight-ahead hip hop beats that feature all the solid bumps and soulful samples that make up classic rap tracks. On "Brand New," the group tears through staccato rhymes and a wonderfully harmonized chorus all over an old school Slum Village-styled groove. "Blast Your Radio" features the man with the Midas touch, Madlib, on production duties.

While hip hop offers an infinite space in which to grow and develop, from hustling mix tapes on the streets to playing at Eugene's McDonald Theatre, the Legends really have come a long way. Jedi Mind Tricks and Pigeon John are supporting the Legends for their highly anticipated return to Eugene. Living Legends, Jedi Mind Tricks and Pigeon John play 8 pm, Sunday, April 24 at the McDonald Theatre. \$15 adv.

– *Steven Sawada*

**Chamber Pop Confessions**

The weakest moment on **Over the**

**Rhine's** new album, *Drunkard's Prayer*, is easily pinpointed: the damn saxophone solo on "Little Did I Know." It's jarring, a strange switch to a sort of pop-jazz that seems to scribble all over an otherwise lovely tune.

Up to that point, the album glides along sleepily, Karin Bergquist's breathy, unaffected voice resting lightly atop a simple piano or guitar line, the occasional harmony breaking in. There's an old-timey beauty to the first half-dozen songs, a set of classic-sounding melodies that smartly leave plenty of aural white space around Bergquist's voice. "Hush Now (Stella's Tarantella)" begins with a charming Tom Waits-ian piano bit, a hint of vaudeville. But two songs later, following the unfortunate sax solo, *Drunkard's Prayer* begins to take on a decidedly *Dawson's Creek* tone, relying too heavily on a back-and-forth between bland mid-tempo cheeriness and overwrought melancholy that brings to mind a montage from a teenage heartbreak.

The good songs, though, make you want to give Over the Rhine a chance. They certainly do a decent piano ballad tinged with strings – probably the reason the band's been described as "confessional chamber pop." Over the Rhine has opened for Bob Dylan and been honorary members of the Cowboy Junkies. Their musicianship and the economy of sound on their better tracks, proves that they really do know what they're doing.

Over the Rhine plays at 8:30 pm, Saturday, April 23 at the WOW Hall. \$15. – *Molly Templeton*

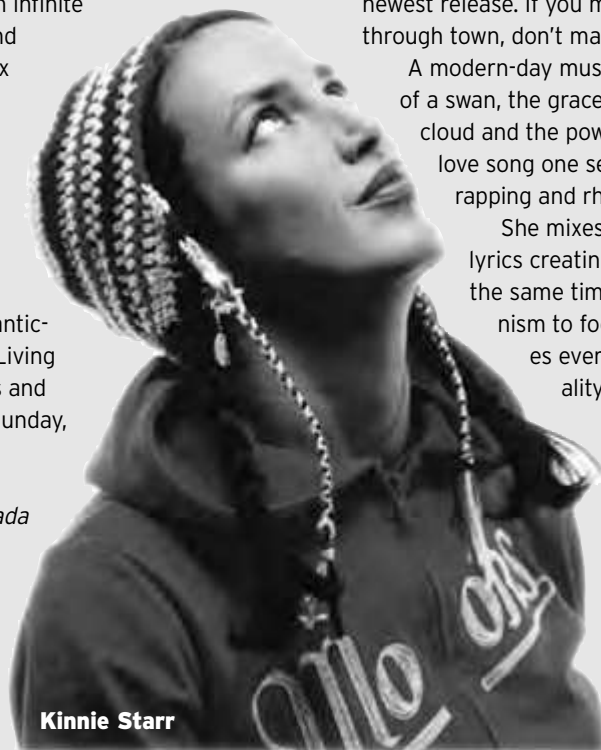
**Divine Kinnie Starr**

Canadian diva **Kinnie Starr** returns to Eugene wrapping up her most recent tour in support of *Sun Again*, her newest release. If you missed her last time she breezed through town, don't make that same mistake again.

A modern-day musical goddess, Starr has the poise of a swan, the grace of a panther, the gentleness of a cloud and the power of hurricane. She'll croon a love song one second then get up in your face, rapping and rhyming the next.

She mixes gritty urban beats with sensual lyrics creating songs that bump and glide at the same time. Her themes range from feminism to food to earth worship and she infuses every song with an element of spirituality that's all about heart and staying real.

The way she rampages across musical genres with blithe disregard makes her one of the most innovative and fresh voices to grace our fair city in months. Kinnie Starr plays with the Ovulators at 9 pm Friday, April 27 at Sam Bond's Garage. \$5. – *Melissa Bearn*s



Kinnie Starr

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