

The Opposite of Erosion

Northwest Royale's tour kickoff

Northwest Royale has kicked out enough members to make up a whole new band. It's not because they're assholes. It's because they're really serious about loud, in your face, energy over-load metal.

"Back in 2000 when me and Colt started this, we decided we weren't going to take any shit," said drummer Chris Phillips. "If you slack, you're gone. We went through so many people because they didn't have the same goals as we do. But everyone here now is serious."

At that point, Colt Williams, lead singer and guitarist, jumped in, as he often does both literally and figuratively. "You should probably also mention that we're still friends with all those guys."

Which may be true, but "those guys" are still out of one of Eugene's hardest working, hardest touring bands — a band that, because of their work ethic, has a good chance of clawing their way to the top. They've had the same line-up since 2003 with Phillips, Williams, Blake Owens (percussion and keyboards) and Kenny Nestor

(bass) and have logged thousands of miles, hundreds of shows and built their steadily growing fan base. In fact, they're leaving for a three-week tour in early May and kicking it off with a show at the Wetlands.

"It's the opposite of erosion," said their roadie, Ethan Haskell.

Their music is an angry, relentless, growling assault with so much energy that it zings through the room like lightening. It attracts a core audience that turns every floor into a roiling mosh pit of teens and 20-somethings, screaming the words to every song at the top of their lungs, bouncing up and down and pumping their fists in the air.

"We've had bar shows where [underage] kids set up lawn chairs outside the show on the sidewalk," Owens said. "Or where they'll try to sneak into the show." Even on the sidewalk, their fans could probably hear the music just fine. These shows are the ones where you feel the beat because it's rocking the building.

**Northwest Royale,
Miss Anne Thrope,
Kill On Sight, Severed**
9pm, The Wetlands
Saturday, April 30 • \$5



Officially sponsored by Jägermeister, Rockstar, Randall amps and Benavente Guitars ("Please mention our sponsors in the story," band manager Brian Smith requested) NWR recently finished recording their second CD, *The Nosebleed Section*, with producer Chris Hansen on the same soundboard used for Pink Floyd's *The Wall*.

But all these guys really care about is that it sounds good. "Drinkin' Again" is particularly notable for its contagious refrain and

hint of a melody. And energy. Lots and lots of energy.

Because when NWR starts playing, it doesn't seem to matter if they're in a garage under fluorescent lights surrounded by broken cars or under the spotlight on a stage in front of 1,000 people. It's the music that feeds them, their oxygen.

"We don't want to be millionaires," Phillips said. "We want to live music, breathe music and eat music." **EW**



Magnolia's Melancholy

Haunting and memorable mood music

Jason Molina, the main force behind Magnolia Electric Co., is a familiar name to a certain sort of music fan: He recorded seven albums in seven years under the

Songs: Ohia name, which has since been retired. Molina traded in Songs: Ohia's constantly rotating cast of players for a set band that includes Jennie Benford, who's perfected her reedy, timeless vocal style in her years with Jim and Jennie and the Pinetops. After a limited edition live album, *Trials and Errors*, Magnolia Electric Co. has just released *What Comes After the Blues*, a polished, graceful collection of heartbreak tales and melancholic ballads.

"The Dark Don't Hide It," the album's first song, seems like a declaration of influence: There's a lot of Neil Young going on here, especially in the rolling, singalong chorus. But the album's tone immediately shifts as Benford takes the lead on "The Night Shift Lullaby," a slightly sinister ballad that alternates Benford's tremulous voice with a sweeping steel guitar. Throughout *What Comes After the Blues*, Benford is often the bright note, a light in the gray dusk that settles over much of the album.

There's a resignation to many of Molina's songs, a worn-out, wound-down tone that sometimes seems to mute his more delicate melodies. But there's also an appealing immediacy to the record, the likely result of recording live, catching the songs as they were played. While Magnolia Electric Co. shares some common ground with Uncle Tupelo and Whiskeytown, these songs are a little less jovial about their sadness, a little less likely to tuck a musical wink alongside forlorn lyrics. As Benford and Molina wind their voices in "Northstar Blues," singing "How can I be the only one/ Whose life can't live up to the lie?" the sweet, sad simplicity of the album's prettiest song stands completely on its own. — Molly Templeton

**Magnolia Electric Co.,
The Court and Spark,
Deke Falcon**
9pm, Sam Bond's Garage
Monday, May 2 • \$5

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