

first band, The Couch Potatoes, while in college. Since then he's been a part of several different bands and has shared the stage with a variety of well-known artists including Bob Dylan, The Cherry Poppin' Daddies and Cake.

The group blends genres from folk to hip hop and has poetic lyrics ranging from social commentaries to mythological references. The band's sound is funky, original and always entertaining. — *Ursula Evans-Heritage*

LaunchPad

MEMBERS: lelusaserlight (will play anything and everything), Mr. Random (anything and everything), Orbital Dave (anything and everything)

GENRE: Science fiction

TO THE BEAT OF THEIR OWN DRUMMER

SINCE: 2004

Sorry, Zen masters. Being in the moment is out. Take me to the future, baby! Enter LaunchPad, Eugene's only science fiction trio. This band of freaks strive to improvise the very pants right off ya. Willing to play any damn thing they can get their hands on (and some they can't too!), LaunchPad says, "When you are playing the music of the future, plans cannot be made." Well, alright!

Evoking Sun Ra, early Pink Floyd and other cosmos dwellers, LaunchPad is ready to crack our earthly little heads wide open. They do a pretty good job of it too. With yelps and maniacal laughter filtering in and out of keyboard filled swooshes and swirls, it's important to stay alert. Otherwise, one very well might float away.

Vibrating onto the scene just last year, LaunchPad is already building quite a little following. Their live shows are like scenes from the very robot films they seem to worship like a golden god of circuitry. Beeps, whistles and other unworldly noises emanate from the stage, but there is a sense of a grassroots sound as well. Sometimes the members of LaunchPad pick up an actual instrument to play!

Not to worry, though. LaunchPad refuses to stay in one place too long. All the more reason to catch them sooner than later. Happy landings! — *Jeff Winicour*

The Ovulators

MEMBERS: Dori Prange (bass and vocals), Kelani Larson (guitar and vocals), Tina Sarno (guitar and vocals), Kayla Tabb (drums and vocals)

GENRE: Glam rock

GETTING THE CROWD HOT

SINCE: 2002

Welcome to the weird, wild world of The Ovulators. This fearsome foursome have been driving otherwise normal people giddy with their live performances. After honing their skills on-stage these past few years, the Ovulators have a new CD, a new drummer and, gosh darn it, a new attitude for their future.

As a live act, these ladies are the undisputed champions of the world. Their initial take on the grrrl glam rock thang was refreshing.

The only knock was that as a band, some felt they lacked certain musical chops. Not that they aren't talented. All have been playing music for 10 or more years now. It was just

that they were learning the intricacies of playing together by doing gigs, not in the practice room. And their gigs were joyous occasions. Never failing to pack a Sam Bond's or a Luckey's, the Ovulators screeched and wailed their way into our hearts.

Then, cosmic intervention took over. They were cast as the house band for the local production of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. This was the very play that helped shape the band's direction in the beginning. Having to learn and perform someone else's work was both a challenge and a breakthrough. The result is a much tighter sound that they hope carries over to their new CD, *Alien Abduction Singles*, being recorded locally at Dogwood Studios. The Ovulators are touring this summer. See them live ... if you dare. — *Jeff Winicour*

People and Machines

MEMBERS: Cooper Bombadil, April Dawn, Alex Geddes, Andrew Harmon, Niko Kwiatkowski, Brendan Newell, Adam Purcinger, Ryan Reeves, Eliza Sohn, Nathaniel Talbot and Kriya Townshend

GENRE: Experimental

PLAYING SINCE: 2004

Bobby "Dangerous" Smith describes People and Machines as "neo-Luddite freakout music." For Smith, the project is just as much an intellectual experiment as it is a band. People and

Machines is a foray into the



JOHN SHIPE & THE BLUE REBEKAHS

relationship between technology and humanity, which is reflected both in the music and the robot costumes the band members usually wear at their shows.

"We're the ones that are creating this communication between man and machine," Smith said. "In a way, we're taming technology." Many of the band members met through the Freebased Art Collective, so People and Machines is just another of their artistic collaborations. The music itself is half improv, half composition, which results in a loosely structured electronic noisefest that comes out a little different every time. And even though there are 12 members, it's not necessary to have all or even most of them present to put on a good show. The band members are all multi-instrumentalists who often trade instruments and synth/sampling duties between songs.

"There are certain parts that are composed, but a lot of stuff we've done have been performance pieces, so those are integrated into improv work," Smith said. "It's a vessel experience. We think of a lot of our jamming of getting in the vessel of sound." — *Sara Brickner*

YOB

MEMBERS: Mike Scheidt (guitar, vocals), Isamu Sato (bass), Travis Foster (drums)

GENRE: Doom metal

SCARING PEOPLE SINCE: 1996

I started elementary school when Metallica released *Kill 'Em All*. Heavy metal scared the shit out of me. Twenty-two years later I've finally overcome my fear. If a scaredy-cat can grow up to have a healthy appreciation of heavy metal, it's not that far-fetched that in a city known world wide for blissed out hippies, a native can turn to the dark side of rock and become YOB.

Vocalist and guitarist Mike Scheidt said he had no problem tuning out the lighter music associated with Eugene. "I grew up with the punk scene and metal. I guess my attention was just somewhere else," he said.

By concentrating on the heavy music scene, Scheidt, with Isamu Sato and Travis Foster, developed a traditional doom sound with progressive touches. But while its stated mission is to bring true doom to the masses, YOB goes above and beyond, especially with lyrics that separate from the usual gloom of doom metal. "Our music may be dark, but when you read the lyrics, they aren't really that dark. Maybe from a perspective of spiritual process they are," Scheidt said. Buddhist and Eastern philosophy lends to the content, even influencing the music. "When we play in the low tuned frequencies, it's more about playing the mantra frequencies," he said.

YOB's 2004 album, *The Illusion of Motion*, made best of lists by fans and critics alike, and the epic *The Unreal Never Lived* is out on Metal Blade Records August 23. — *Jef Stout*



THE OVULATORS