

Musical Highlights at the OCF

BY JEFF WINICOUR

Ah ... the Oregon Country Fair. The sights. The sounds. The smells! Just don't forget the music.

After navigating the maze that is the figure eight of the fair, eating overpriced Saturday Market food and averting your gaze from those heathen breast barers, 'tis time for the tunes. Here's a quick look into this year's top musical offerings.

Multi-instrumentalist **David Lindley** is, in a word, nuts. He is also one of the world's finest musicians. His long list of cynical musical collaborators include Ry Cooder, Jackson Browne, Bob Dylan and Warren Zevon. Hailing from the quaint little burg known as "La La Land," Lindley has an easy, laid-back feel to his music. That is not to say he doesn't lay into his wide array of stringed instruments with a passion. His combination of storytelling, musicianship and downright awful choice of shirts is the perfect fit for the Fair. Don't miss this special opportunity to see dementia at its musical best.

Chuck Prophet is a bit of a revelation for the OCF. More bluesy than folksy, more intense than chill, he brings a more modern voice to the proceedings. But anyone with Dylan listed as their main influence (every-

body?!) has a shot at fairgoers' ears. His latest album *Age of Miracles* is, quite simply, a masterpiece. He takes the old sound of folk and is not afraid to electronicize it, wrapping his songs in a timeless duality. Lucinda Williams thought enough of his work that he opened up for her on her summer tour. I am curious of the marriage of Chuck Prophet, the OCF and the people who will be drawn to his shows. Will it lead the way for more modern future entertainment for the Fair? Will it bring frowns to the traditional folks? Or, perhaps most importantly, how far can a monkey with a wooden leg kick a pickle?

Wow! **Joe Craven** at the Fair. A very special treat, indeed. Long time member of the David Grisman Quintet, among many other accomplishments, Craven is a walking percussion instrument. He's even cooler than that guy from the *Police Academy* movies! His skills on fiddle, rhythm and his own body parts are beyond human normalcy-probably a lot like Craven himself. He describes himself as "a bit like Indiana Jones; a musical archaeologist going on wild adventures with his finds." Bring the kids to this one. Last time I saw him, he sang a song directly to my then 3-year-old son. My kid has absolutely zero recollec-

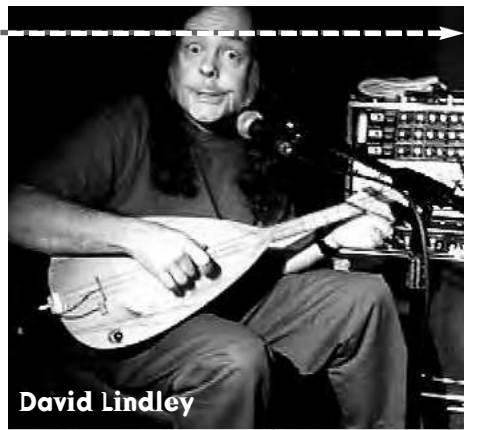
tion of the incident, but it's a real warm fuzzy for me. Don't miss this one!

CrazyGrass makes its Oregon debut with two-time California flatpicking guitar champion and banjo player Sid Lewis leading the pack. Think smoldering hot, lyrical rock ala Santana or Trey from Phish. Should be quite a show. If you can't wait until the Fair to hear their amazing jams, check them out this Thursday, July 7, at Cozmic Pizza. Show starts at 9 pm with a sliding scale cover.

The modern day equivalent of a multi-cultural pow-wow, **Alma Melodiosa** will take you far and wide. This sextet from Northern California has enchanted fair goers for years now. Combining belly dancing, Spanish and English vocals, classical guitar and percussion with electric guitar and keyboard, Alma Melodiosa is here with a purpose. Decidedly Old World with a fresh twist, they brew up tribal grooves that set booties shaking. For those staying the night at the Fair, the group's magic is especially potent in the darker hours. If you're looking for the new age of psychedelia, forget the Dead cover bands. Check out Alma Melodiosa.

I can't let any overview of Fair music go without including a jamband. **The Moret** sticks its neck out way above that label, delivering the real deal in improvisatory sounds (see story p. 30).

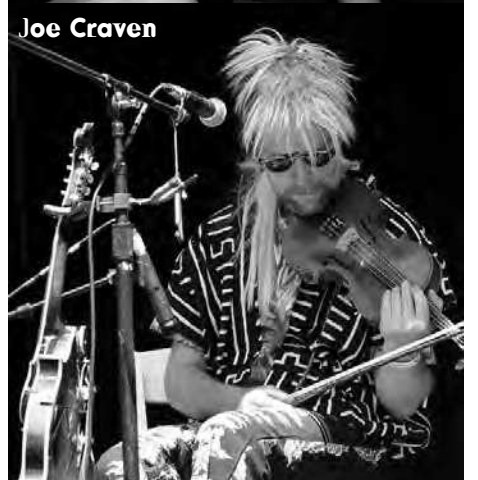
So, that's it. Don't forget to drink plenty of water, protect yourself from the sun and enjoy the music! ★



David Lindley



Alma Melodiosa



Joe Craven

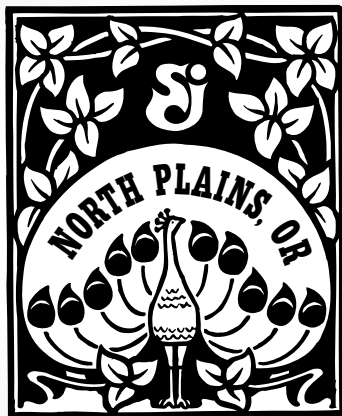
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