



The Swallows

Don't Judge an Album by Its Cover

Walking through rows upon rows of CD racks, you stop at the letter S. S is a good letter; lots of bands in that category. Toward the back is an album with the band's name placed discreetly in the lower left corner. It's an earthy album cover, full of rich sunlight, overgrown foliage and tall, slender trees. But before you pass the band off as another indie-folk duo, consider what's happening on the inside.

Me With Trees Towering is **The Swallows'** first full-length album, released on Cherchez La Femme Projects. On it the Portland-based duo melds a little of every type of rock: indie, surf, riot grrrl, punk and even in places some pop punk. Em Brownlowe (vocals, guitar, keys) and Jon Miller's (drums, melodic) 12 track album begins with a slow but steady drum beat that compels your head to nod along with it. By mid-album the tempo has changed and the mood has changed. Miller, who got his first drum set in the 6th grade, picks up the pace to stay in time with the surf-rock organ. As Miller screams in the background mid-song, The Swallows recall the ska-rock band The Gadgets. By the last track, "The Lonesome Cowboy," the duo is fusing blues and indie rock. While the song begins moody with help from a slide guitar, halfway through the band uses thumping kick drums and heavy electric guitar to create the kind of suspense-building found in so many emo songs. Fortunately, there are no whiny prepubescent vocals here. The Swallows play with The OI' Howl and Smash and others at 8 pm Saturday, March 10 at Shady Pines, 552 W. Broadway. — *Amanda Burhop*

Spaced Out

Psychedelia never died — it just went global and high-tech. Bands like Sound Tribe Sector 9 have taken the colorful, trippy mid-'60s vibe and enhanced it with modern influences, particularly electronica and music from other cultures. This Friday, one of the most far-ranging neo-psychedelic ensembles, Boston-based **Enuma Elish** (Enuma Elish is a Sumerian creation myth), plays the UO, supplying a live soundtrack to the 1973 animated cult film *Fantastic Planet*. It should be a visual and aural trip.

In college, the band's woodwind wizard, Warren Jones, studied jazz and then ethnomusicology, and he traveled and recorded musicians in Morocco, India, Egypt, China, Spain and others. His co-conspirator, percussionist Yuri Zbitnoff, played in various rock and improv bands. They bring all those influences to bear in Enuma Elish, Zbitnoff using the drums to trigger loops from their field recordings and other electronic and acoustic sources while Jones blows freely on various wind instruments. The sound evokes fusion jazz like Weather Report and Miles Davis' *Bitches Brew* period or prog rockers like Can and Soft Machine but with a percussive, Eastern tinge — Sun Ra meets Aphex Twin, in Casablanca.

The music, drawn from their two CDs and new work, should provide an apt score for a movie with a plot that involves the liberation of far future humans from alien enslavement via direct transmission of knowledge into the renegades' brains. Fans of progressive jazz, world music and trippy sounds and visions should find liberation from musical boundaries. Enuma Elish plays at 7 pm Friday, March 9 in 100 Willamette, UO. Free. — *Brett Campbell*

Operation Good Times

Have you ever been to a show and thought the lineup didn't make any sense? Or maybe you were just so eager to see the headlining band that the others seemed bothersome. There's no denying that some shows (not to name names, but the Maria Taylor show; what was going on, seriously?) are better than others. That said, Luckey's offers Eugene a solid night Saturday, lining up one hell of an indie rock show that's guaranteed to induce perfectly timed claps.

Seattle-based **Smile Brigade** is the result of two years' devotion to song writing and rehearsals. Geared towards pop tendencies, the band ranges from cutesy acoustic songs to full-force dis-

torted rock. The one thing consistent in each of their songs is J. Hiram Bogg's grizzly-yet-quiet vocals. According to the band bio, "They gave in to early influences and pop song tendencies for a sound that's catchy and melodic with dark undertones and has more hooks than a fisherman's tackle box."

Pat Kearns of **Blue Skies for Black Hearts** has a lot to write about. In the midst of writing songs for his first album, he was dealing with two sorts of breakups: one with his girlfriend and the other with a bandmate. The painful, albeit mysterious, breakups resulted in the Portland band's first album, *Love is Not Enough*, where Kearns throws out lines like "When your heart breaks it makes no sound." While I'd never

wish a breakup on anyone, I'm glad he used music as a cathartic vehicle.

And of course there's **The Fast Computers**. You know them, you love them. Well, I do, even though their songs sometimes remind me of that scene in *Silence of the Lambs* where the creepy dude dances for the camera. Gross. Smile Brigade, Blue Skies for Black Hearts and The Fast Computers play at 10 pm Saturday, March 10 at Luckey's. 21+ show. \$3-\$5. — *Amanda Burhop*



Smile Brigade



The Fast Computers



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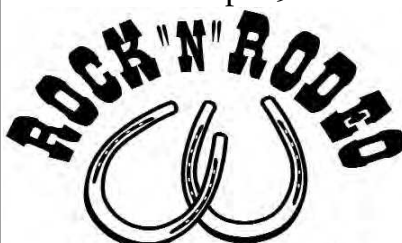
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