



Local Boy Does Good

Jon Itkin's new album, *Big Gold Guitar in the Sky*, showcases the songwriting skill and raw musicianship Itkin revealed in his debut, *Oregon*, and blows the lid off a few other hidden talents as well. Formerly a cornerstone of the Eugene alt-rock/Americana scene, Itkin recently relocated to Portland after a stint of recording on the East Coast. That trip began a process of cross-country recording collaboration; with a little help from some professional studio musicians from the Eastman School of Music, Itkin laid down half the tracks for *Gold Guitar* before returning to the West Coast, where he completed his sophomore effort with the none-too-shabby help of Chet Lyster of Eels and Paul Brainard and Rich Lander of Richmond Fontaine.

"It was an adventure making it," Itkin says, laughing. "I was flying by the seat of my pants, operating dollar to dollar. Every single track, none of it was recorded entirely live."

Digitally crafting a roots rock album is an endeavor that could have gone stylistically awry, but luckily Itkin's musical integrity didn't allow the power of remastering to go to his head. Every rockin' track on *Gold Guitar* really is pure gold; soulfully executed, lyrically stunning and punctuated with just the right amount of instrumental flair. While he doesn't stray too far from his bread-and-butter-sound, Itkin is no one-trick pony. He takes a few delightful risks, most notably on the slinky, sexy "Another Man's Hell" and steel guitar haunted "Factory Moon."

Itkin bids farewell to Eugene in the boot-stomper "Emerald Valley," which he describes as a "love letter to Eugene."

"I get watery eyes every time I come back," he admits. "I wrote it as a blessing to express how much I loved my time there."

Welcome Jon Itkin (and backing band Some Like Minded Souls) back to Eugene when he plays with Two Timin' Three at 9 pm Friday, March 30 at Sam Bond's Garage. 21+ show. \$6. — *Adrienne van der Valk*

Support Your Local Punks

Saxon Wood, founding bassist of Eugene's preeminent female-fronted punk band Happy Bastards, wants you to know about his new band, **Lunacy**. Wood left Happy Bastards in October of 2006, and by December Lunacy was already on its feet.

"I realized the writing was on the wall for me with Happy Bastards," he says. "I'd been talking to other people about starting another female-fronted punk band, and I kept running into these people at shows and everybody kept saying, 'Yeah, it'd be great if we were in a band.'"

Lunacy is Wood on bass, Samantha Smith singing, Alex on guitar and Gabriela on drums. When pressed for last names, Wood jokes, "I can't pronounce Gabriela's whole last name, it's such a huge name no one knows what she's really called, and punks don't have last names anyway!" Smith and Gabriela are still in high school.

Though Wood helped start Happy Bastards, they parted on good terms. "They no longer needed me," says Wood. "Different directions and all that. These people all have energy and they're optimistic. I remembered why I started playing music in the first place with this band."

Lunacy has already played a number of shows, and this one is free, although the band plans to pass the hat for donations to help replace stolen equipment. A brand new Marshall stack and speaker, along with a guitar borrowed from the Happy Bastards, were stolen two weeks ago. "We only had [the stack] for six hours," laments Wood.

Lunacy and Internal Chaos play at 9 pm Sunday, April 1 at Tiny Tavern. 21+ show. — *Vanessa Salvia*

Lunchbox Heroes

When I was small, I had a couple of kids' records, most notably *Spin*, *Spider, Spin*, which a quick Google reveals is actually an educational record meant to make kids feel "empathy toward animal life." Which explains a few things, at least. ("I Like Lizards"? Why, yes, I do.) It's safe to say the **Asylum Street Spankers'** new kid-centric record, *Mommy Says NO!*, has no such subversive qualities — apart, perhaps, from encouraging good times for the musically interested of all ages. The talented Austin band turns its focus to all things childish and childlike; "Boogers," a ditty that wouldn't be out of place on "Prairie Home Companion" (and one that

comes complete with laugh track), is a particularly endearing take on a kid fascination. Elsewhere on the record, "You Only Love Me For My Lunchbox" namechecks a roster of Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon stars, and a rollicking version of Nirvana's "Sliver" — a ready-made punk rock kid song if ever there was one — is a delight. Though it would take a real curmudgeon to begrudge a group a kids' record this charming and cheery, the six members of ASS do better than cute with their tightly played yet juicebox-friendly slices of all-acoustic Americana-blues-novelty-lounge-swing-folk-old-time fun (all that and they release their own records, too). Of course, the music isn't all for the kiddies, and neither is ASS's show at Sam Bond's. But with six other full-length records and a fat handful of other releases to mine, the Spankers will doubtless have you pulling from your pints and tapping your toes when you're not digging in your nose. In solidarity with the booger song, I mean. Asylum Street Spankers play at 9 pm Wednesday, April 4 at Sam Bond's Garage. 21+ show. \$15. — *Molly Templeton*

Wonder Wall

Seattle's **Blue Light Curtain** are working an interesting lineup: There just aren't that many bands I can think of off the top of my head that include a baritone guitar. The two-girls-and-a-boy trio also uses synths, drums and a drum machine that they playfully (and understandably) refer to on their MySpace page as their fourth member. With a clear line of influence from My Bloody Valentine, The Cure and other droning/distorting bands of the late '80s and early '90s, Blue Light Curtain goes for the wall of sound approach, offering shimmering guitars, dense percussion and reverb-drenched vocals singing vague, repetitive lyrics. Musically, it works beautifully,



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