



**Riding in Like a Valkyrie**

The immediate, defining aspect to **Jana Hunter's** music is its languid fluidity. Like a dose of opiates latching onto a bundle of brain receptors, Hunter's dusty, sultry voice locks in perfectly with her drowsy, bucolic melodies. With her new album, *There's No Home*, Hunter shakes off the lo-fidelity, ad hoc cocoon that encased her debut full length, *Blank Unstaring Heirs of Doom*, and springs forward with a collection of crisp, cohesive and thoughtful new songs.

Aided by the efforts and resources of neo-folk superstar Devendra Banhart, this native Texan first found critical acclaim with the Banhart-assembled *Golden Apples of the Sun* compilation and then the Banhart/Hunter split record on the Troublemaker Unlimited label. Early last year, Hunter's debut marked the inaugural release on the Gnomonsong record label, which was co-founded by Banhart and his songwriting partner Andy Cabic (also of Vetiver).

*There's No Home's* country-western aesthetic undoubtedly lends a wispy nostalgia to the overall mood of the whole album – track three, "Valkyries," sails along with a dulcet slide guitar melody, and the album's halfway point, "Bird," bounces by with multi-layered harmonies and wistful lyrics. But it is Hunter's unique, plaintive voice that distinguishes her music from that of her peers. Somewhere between Chan Marshall and Chrissie Hynde, Hunter's husky and nearly seductive croon can dip with the sassy moxie of The Detroit Cobras' Rachel Nagy or chill with a calming whisper reminiscent of Banhart himself.

Hunter's new record is brusque. But the tunes are concise, and they capture just enough mysterious prettiness to haunt your brain for days. Do not miss her intimate Eugene performance. Jana Hunter plays at 9 pm Tuesday, June 19, at Wandering Goat Coffee Company. Donations. – *Steven Sawada*



**Reggae Roots**

1979 was a good year – the Sony Walkman was launched, Margaret Thatcher became Britain's first female prime minister, Mother Teresa won the Nobel Peace Prize, my mother gave birth to me and reggae musician **Eek-A-Mouse** had his first big hit with "Once a Virgin."

Now, 28 years later and with more than 15 albums credited to his name, Eek-A-Mouse seeks to educate the public on the origins of reggae music and the exploitation of Jamaican artists.

Born Ripton Hilton on November 19, 1957, in Kingston, Jamaica, he began to make a name for himself in the 1970s when the popularity of Bob Marley and Rastafarian music was at a high. As the '70s came to an end, it

**Is That Your Real Name?**

Even though it's been 17 years (gawd, has it been that long?) since **John Doe** released his debut solo CD, *Meet John Doe*, I still have a really hard time separating him from the bohemian punk that was X. While you can see the genetic potential of punk in X, they couldn't be confined to that pigeonhole and couldn't care less; they were too artsy to be punk, too unbridled for the new wavers, and their collaboration with producer Ray Manzarek (The Doors' keyboardist) gave them surprising street cred at a time when punks and hippies were arch-enemies. When X morphed into the Knitters for 1985's *Critter on the Road*, fans glimpsed the future as Doe and crew tried their hands at folk and country. It's that path Doe has trod with his solo career.

His latest, *A Year In The Wilderness*,

starts out with the gritty roadhouse blues of "Hotel Ghost," with guitar gravitas provided by Knitters guitarist Dave Alvin. "The Golden State" shines, featuring the vocals of Canadian relative-newcomer Kathleen Edwards. Her sweet and slightly twangy vocals are the perfect foil for Doe's big-hearted honesty. He moves through rain-soaked ballads as easily as the several rugged rock numbers and strums acoustic on "A Little More Time," also with Alvin.

As usual, Doe pulls in his friends to help him out, this time featuring the voices of Jill Sobule and Aimee Mann, guitar by The Black Keys' Dan Auerbach and pedal steel by Greg Leisz.

John Doe and Dan Jones play at 9 pm Thursday, June 14, at Sam Bond's Garage. 21+ show. \$12 – *Vanessa Salvia*



John Doe

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