

Musical Mix-Up

Mash notes bring Subtle harmony

Combining rap and rock music is a volatile endeavor. Over the past few years this fusion has produced a mixed bag of results, ranging from the very enjoyable to the painfully absurd. Now, I'm not going to name names, but let's just say that past efforts which have failed to marry the two genres successfully became an open invitation for Yankee-capped meatheads and their anger-suppressed opuses of chin music alongside fellow juggalos. But flaccid baked goods and circus acts aside, bands like Rage Against the Machine and the classic collabo of Run-DMC and Aerosmith have proven that the rap/rock mash-up doesn't have to end up in disaster. Enter **Subtle** — the Oakland-bred sextet which manages to bring both rap and rock influences into harmony with an eclectic array of instrumentation. Adam Drucker, Jeffrey Logan, Jordan Dalrymple, Dax Pierson, Alexander Kort and Marton Dowers make up the ranks of Subtle along with their stripe-faced mascot, Hour Hero Yes. Yes — an aspiring rapper — is a recurring conceptual character who is mentioned in Subtle's current albums and often embodied as a bust onstage at shows. The group's latest, *Yell and Ice*, is a collection of remakes looking to re-approach the original lyrics and music from their last album, *For Hero: For Fool*. The new album features collaborations with Why?, Chris Adams of Hood, Markus Acher of the Notwist, Wolf Parade's Dan Boeckner and Tunde Adebimpe of TV On the Radio.

From the other coast, **Black Moth Super Rainbow** emerges from the woods

of Western Pennsylvania armed with a Rhodes piano, bass, drums, monosynth and an Atari. Their most recent effort, *Dandelion Gum* — an escape into psyche/pop and folky electronica — is said to be loosely based on witches who make candy in the forest. Tobacco, Power Pill Fist, Father Hummingbird, The Seven Fields of Aphelion and Iffernaut are the artists behind BMSR's unique sound, described by Music-News.com as a "soothing, exhilarating and mysterious, 'tranquilizer meets energy drink' universe." Joining BMSR and Subtle is Eugenean-turned-Portlander **DoublePlusGood**, aka electro-pop singer-songwriter Erik Carlson. **EW**



Subtle, Black Moth Super Rainbow (pictured), DoublePlusGood

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