



Christian Kiefer

is his voice, an intoxicating blend of Will Oldham's woozy shamble and Mark Linkous' (Sparklehorse) slightly unstable whisper. Contributions from Wilco guitarist Nels Cline, who asphyxiates his ax in some unexpected places, and the legendary Garth Hudson of the Band, who tickles the keys and the accordion on two songs, make the album stronger and shade in the understated parts.



PHOTO BY PISTOL'S PHOTOGRAPHY

Nice Monster

A Cozy Cool

A warm glacier sounds like Al Gore's worst nightmare (or just his personality in general), but it seems like an apt description of **Christian Kiefer's** music. The Sacramento-based singer-songwriter crafts songs that move at a glacial pace, yet aren't as icy as that might suggest. There's a warmth that wraps itself around Kiefer's downtempo soundscapes like a shabby house sweater. Acoustic guitar and piano provide the backdrop for his flights of fancy where accordions, cellos, banjos and field recordings of birds and brooks float as contentedly as dust specks in the midday sun. At times, the music evokes the austerity of slowcore bands like Low, Ida or Galaxie 500, and bit parts from Alan Sparhawk and Mimi Parker of Low on Kiefer's latest album, *Dogs and Donkeys*, only strengthen those similarities. But what sets Kiefer apart from those delicate minimalists

Unfortunately, we won't see any of those cameos live, but Kiefer will be backed by his friends and opening act, **Nice Monster**. A five-piece that also hails from Sacramento, Nice Monster and their dense and noisy take on folk is more like a tree falling down than an iceberg idling by. And as long as we're speaking in metaphors, no one should get upset. Christian Kiefer and Nice Monster play at 9:30 pm Saturday, Oct. 20, at Sam Bond's Garage. 21+ show. \$5. — *Jeremy Ohmes*



Galactic



Boots Riley



Chali 2na



Lifesavas

Universal Language of Funk

If music is the universal language, then **Galactic** must be its international ambassadors. The popular band is celebrating the release of their sixth album, *From the Corner to the Block*, and they've taken their funk to the farthest reaches of urban sprawl with a hand-picked guest list of some of hip hop's most dynamic lyricists — Juvenile, Gift of Gab (Blackalicious), Lyrics Born, Ladybug Mecca (Digable Planets), Mr. Lif, Chali 2na (Jurassic 5), Vursatyl (Lifesavas) and Boots Riley (The Coup).

The five men of Galactic — drummer Stanton Moore, bassist Robert Mercurio, saxophonist/harmonica player Ben Ellman, keyboardist Richard Vogel and guitarist Jeff Raines — began more than 10 years ago as an instrumental act in the tradition of fellow New Orleans acts the Meters. The band has frequently toured with hip hop acts such as the Roots and Jurassic 5. Over time, that urban grit invaded their homegrown funk, and came to fruition on this new CD.

While the hip hop vibes lend a modern sensibility to Galactic's music, there are still plenty of old-school New Orleans echoes throughout the album. "Bounce Baby" and "Tuff Love" offer a taste of New Orleans' brassiest horn talents. "Second and Dryades" is a perfect parade anthem, with strong percussion and narration by well-known Mardi Gras Indian Big Chief Monk Boudreau about being an Indian on Fat Tuesday. The album is funky through and through, and despite the many guest vocalists, Galactic's signature style is never diluted. Galactic will be joined by Chali 2na, Lifesavas and Boots Riley at 9 pm Saturday, Oct. 20, at the McDonald Theatre. \$20 adv., \$22 door. — *Vanessa Salvia*

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