

The Kid Espi



Made In Oregon Homeboy

The Kid Espi, otherwise known as Jacob Espinoza, sounds like he's outgrowing the "Kid" moniker and becoming a man. Espi tells the world what kind of man he is on the track "Fresh": He's a "straight-forward, straight shooting" kind of guy, "a hometown kid with the world in his eyes." And though he would like to sell some records, he won't be blinding his fans with bling anytime soon. "I'll just raise the bar and remain modest," he says.

Espinoza is 25 years old. Married in August, he graduated from the UO School of Journalism in 2006. Since graduating, he's been slowly working to build his own music career while helping to generate a hip hop scene in his hometown of Salem.

"My music is just a perception of who I am, my morals and values and what I'm about," which right now is figuring out how to be a good husband and contemplating the notion of adding children to his family. Espi's hoping his new solo CD, *True Love + High Adventure*, will benefit from some of the buzz he's been creating among Salem area hip hop lovers. The CD was primarily paid for from sales of his t-shirt, "Made In Oregon Homeboy," inspired by his song of the same name.

Living Proof, a duo of former UO student James Allred and Anthony Anderson, will be teaming up with The Kid Espi for a week of dual album release parties; they land in Eugene at 8 pm Saturday, Dec. 1, at Latitude 21. 21+ show. \$5. — *Vanessa Salvia*

Return of Raygunomics

When **Naked Raygun** broke up in 1991, there was a Bush in the White House and a U.S.-led war in the Middle East. The Chicago band had spent the previous 10 years playing some of the most aggressively melodic music ever and railing against everything from the arms race to domestic violence to, of course, social conservatism. Instead of sporting

studs and Mohawks and shoving hackneyed slogans down people's throats, though, Naked Raygun sported buzz-cuts, worked as plumbers and performed anthemic, anti-idol songs set to subtly vindictive lyrics and oblique and ironic critiques. Musically, they fused the hacksaw guitars and pummeling rhythms of the Buzzcocks with the no-BS, martial chants of the Misfits. They expanded the boundaries of punk and sharpened it with a smart, melodic edge, bringing it back toward the mainstream and also creating what would later be dubbed the "Chicago Sound," which included bands like Big Black and the Effigies. They made music that academics and rednecks could mosh to, and their blue collar Midwestern take on punk was a forceful and intelligent reply to the

'80s Cold War mindset. Seeing how not that much has changed (replace "Cold" with "Terror") in the decade and a half since they broke up, Naked Raygun's reunion couldn't have come at a better time.

Their tourmates, **Swingin' Utters**, also formed in the '80s, and they've been kicking out punk and pub sing-alongs for 20 years. Though maybe not as forward-thinking as Naked Raygun in their heyday, the San Francisco band has always practiced a more old-school, street-smart style of punk with an allegiance to booze and oi. In other words, the pogoing and fist-pumping should segue smoothly into the sweaty slam-dancing. Naked Raygun play with Swingin' Utters, Shot Baker and PB Army at 8:30 pm Monday, Dec. 3, at John Henry's. \$10 door. — *Jeremy Ohmes*

Let Them Entertain You

I had grand intentions, this week, about writing a little bit about all the bands on the WOW Hall's Saturday night bill. I was going to get over my initial disinterest in **Port O'Brien**, who opened for Bright Eyes at the McDonald a few months ago with a fair if unimpressive set that squished together a few current and recent indie trends; I was going to make room for frequent Eugene visitors **Hillstomp** and **Vagabond Opera**, whose different styles — "junkbox blues duo" and "new wave of opera," respectively, to borrow a few words from various press releases — nonetheless seem perfectly suited to share one stage. But I just keep coming back to Seattle's **Cave Singers** (pictured), who came through town back in June but at the time hadn't even an album to their name.

The Cave Singers shouldn't, if we're drawing straight lines through the band members' pasts, sound like they do; the three men in the band come from post-punk and rock and most definitely not this strange, spare old-timey music that though it feels timeless also feels unabashedly time/y somehow. It's Pete Quirk's voice, somewhere between Bob Dylan and the Violent Femmes' Gordon Gano in its reedy lack of polish, that lends the most age to the band's sound, but this eerie, backwoods tone is supported by music that sounds as if it were recorded in a cabin bare of furnishings, heat, plumbing — anything that makes life comfortable. It's not comfortable music, really. It's raw, but not the way raw is often used, to describe distorted, driving, rough sounds. This is raw in the sense that nothing is held back, yet nothing is poured forth: Restraint and simplicity lay the songs' bones bare. It's insidiously inviting, the music on *Invitation Songs*, The Cave Singers' debut album. Let it draw you in. Vagabond Opera, Hillstomp, Port O'Brien and The Cave Singers play at 7 pm Saturday, Dec. 1, at the WOW Hall. \$10 adv., \$12 door. — *Molly Templeton*



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