



Based Boys Pack in Bay Beats

Over the past few years, Northern California has become a hyphy hotbed for hip hop talent. Bay Area natives like Keak Da Sneak, E-40, Mistah F.A.B. and the late Mac Dre have been able to find mainstream success in the clubs and on the charts with their unique sound and culture. Now, with their full length debut *Based Boys*, **The Pack** are looking to make a name for themselves among other Nor-Cal artists and hip hop elite.

It was 2004 when Young L, Lil Uno, Stunnaman and Lil B first met while attending high school in their hometown of Berkeley, Calif. One year after forming The Pack, the group released “Vans,” a skate park anthem championing B-Town braggadocio and their favorite punk rock shoe with the logo on the back. "One day everybody was in the studio, and I was trying to get this beat out of my head. I ended up making 'Vans' in about 20 minutes," says Young L. After the song

was heard by KMEL's music director, “Vans” started playing on heavy rotation, gaining widespread popularity and eventually taking the fifth spot on Rolling Stone's “Best Songs of 2006” list. But today, after having established themselves as more than just Northern Califoolya's newest four-piece footwear endorsement, The Pack's members strive to keep their heads above water. "People do pay attention to the Bay's movement," says Young L. "But people aren't going to pay attention to your music if you're not good. We've worked for our recognition. It doesn't come with the territory in the Bay Area. It really boils down to good music and how well we perform at our live shows." With tracks produced by Young L, Mr. Collipark, Pit, The Replacement Killers and Traxamillion, *Based Boys* provides sparse yet bold beats that will have you doin' the bird in no time. The Pack play with Pittsburg Slim, Tyga and 3 Blind Mics at 9 pm Thursday, Jan. 17, at the Wow Hall. \$10 adv., \$12 door. – *Zach Klassen*

Tangled Up in a Twist of Fate

Some musicians have a knack of transporting us to dark and desperate places – the kind of places we try to avoid but never forget. Tom Waits is one; his songs bring out the sinister in all of us. Mark Linkous of Sparklehorse is another, with his gently unsettling ballads and spooky sonic experiments. Add to that list Ray Raposa of **Castanets**. Supported by an ever-revolving cast that has included Jana Hunter, Sufjan Stevens and Annie Clark (St. Vincent), Raposa shuffles through gothic Americana and eerie, off-kilter folk with the haunting

hopelessness of an out-of-work ghost. His percussive guitar and seen-too-much voice lead you down dark alleyways and dead-end streets with odd instruments and bad-trip electronics blinking at you like cartoon eyes in the pitch black. The music is shrouded in a fatalism that is frightening but makes some sense once you read Raposa's backstory.

After finishing his sophomore record, *First Light's Freeze*, Raposa descended into a year-long stint of severe depression, which culminated when three men mugged him at gunpoint outside of his Brooklyn apartment. A few weeks after the mugging, Raposa finished his third and most disconcerting record, *In the Vines*.

The album is based on a Hindu fable about being entangled in an inescapable fate, with mortality staring you in the face. From the first song on, Raposa makes this fate perfectly clear. “Rain Will Come” introduces the inevitable with an elegiac ballad that lulls you into a trance. Raposa laments, “So it's going to be sad and it's going to be long / And we already know the end of this song.” He follows this with an anguished wash of electronic noise that's meant to jolt you out of your troubled and twitching sleep. The sound is like that scraping, screeching moment before a 10-car pileup when you can hear the uncontrollable skidding headlong into the unavoidable. Castanets play with Heavenly

Oceans and Dan Jones and the Squids at 9:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 18, at Sam Bond's Garage. 21+ show. \$5. – *Jeremy Ohmes*

Hoping These Days Don't Disappear

Andrew Heringer wants Molly to analyze his passion, give him advice and put everything in perspective. At least that's what his song “Molly” asks. He claims to have “more friends named Molly than anyone else on MySpace.” After hearing this song, it's easily conceivable that droves of girls may change their display names to Molly.

At 23 years old, Heringer has released three albums independent of any label. His credits suggest he possesses more musical talent in his pinky than most of us ever hope to have in our whole bodies. Singer, songwriter, guitarist and composer of music for theater are just a few titles on his resume. Heringer trained in jazz guitar and vocal/stage performance, and each member of his backing band has a degree in jazz performance.

Heringer looks good on paper, but how does he sound? Does he pull through with something worth listening to? With influences ranging from Dave Matthews to Mozart to Tool, Heringer is an indie folk rocker with genuine lyrics and head-nodding melodies.

On his latest album, *It Seems So Long Since Yesterday*, “Summer Roof” captures hopes, fears and inner thoughts. “So we sit on the roof, we talk about our fears and we hope these days don't disappear,” Heringer sings, reminiscing about those warm summer days with nothing but time, the breeze and your hopes and dreams.

Heringer's tunes embody a youthful spirit. “We need a nice road trip to remind us we're alive,” Heringer sings on “Fort Bragg.” “Love to See You Smile” captures love at any age and reminds listeners there are good guys out there. “Don't you cry, it'll go by, remember



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