



Getting Her Voice Back

I thought the raspy, almost strained voices of female artists like Tracy Chapman and Bonnie Raitt had retired themselves – until I heard Portland's **Anne Weiss**. Her revival of the strong, don't-give-a-damn singer-songwriter strain is refreshing.

Weiss belts out the last verses of her song "Write Me a Few of Your Lines," off her latest album *Concrete World and the Lover's Dream*, accompanied only by a harmonica that has just enough country to bring the song soul, but not so much as to put it in the category of over the top twang.

This week she celebrates at a dual CD release concert along with pal David Jacobs-Strain and his new *Liar's Day*. The deep, soulful voice and intricate guitar intros and interludes of Eugene's own Jacobs-Strain are the perfect complement to Weiss' music. After all, they did work together on both of their CDs. Jacobs-Strain lends his vocals to a few songs on Weiss' album, while she co-wrote the title track on his disc.

Catch Anne Weiss and David Jacobs-Strain at 7 pm Sunday, April 27, at Axe and Fiddle, Cottage Grove. 21+ show. \$6-\$12. – Megan Udow

Genre Overload

Portland's **Stephen Malkmus and the Jicks** are difficult to classify – and I think they like it that way. Sometimes they have a pop and jazz sensibility; other times their

lo-fi sound recalls the alternative rock scene of the '90s. And even beyond the music, it's this genre-bending that makes the band so intriguing.

Here's what one MySpace friend of the band has to say: "In an era where indie is only fashion, every day Stephen Malkmus changes my life." I can only assume that he's referring to the way the band defies classification and strives to be more indie in spirit than in sound. But while some indie bands are too contrived, too polished and meant for mass consumption, sometimes, professionalism isn't a bad thing.

On their latest album, *Real Emotional Trash*, the band strives to be unpredictable. In many cases, it's hard to tell where they're going with a song. This genre-bending trick is obvious in "Dragonfly Pie," which begins with a very Seattle, grunge-tinged sound reminiscent of Nirvana's *Unplugged* album. But then the song changes direction and lightens up with a Ben Folds Five pop sound. Malkmus is at his best when his songs have a pop sensibility.

The loose, muddy sound of some songs gets redundant, as you can almost always predict a three-minute rock odyssey on the way. "Cold Son" is a likeable song though, recalling the pop sounds of The Lemonheads. The difference between a

song like this and a lo-fi one is how tight and polished the song feels. Improvisation has its place, but timing, rhythm and song structure do too. When the band follows a specific formula, they get it right and do it well. But too many genre-specific styles in one song is too much for one listener to handle. Stephen Malkmus and the Jicks play with The Joggers at 9 pm Wednesday, April 30, at the WOW Hall. \$15 adv., \$17 door. – Amanda Burhop

Kimya is Your Friend

If you've seen the movie *Juno*, you know **Kimya Dawson**. Six of her songs appear on the film's soundtrack, along with one from her side project Antsy Pants and one from The Moldy Peaches, the band in which Dawson got her start.

Though The Moldy Peaches went on hiatus in 2004, Dawson has released five solo albums in the last five years. She's known for her cutesy, anti-folk, lo-fi acoustic songs that brighten up the gloomiest of days. According to her website, "[Dawson] is one of those rare birds that make you feel like she needs you as much as you need her." On her most recent album, *Remember That I Love You*, the smiling songstress reiterates this point time and time again. In the song "Loose Lips," Dawson croons, "And if you wanna kill yourself remember that I LOVE



YOU / Call me up before you're dead, we can make some plans instead / Send me an IM, I'll be your friend." The great thing about those lines is their sincerity. Dawson strives to befriend people everywhere she goes.

The Washingtonian was dubbed a "road warrior" by peers for her constant touring. Though she can afford a hotel, her website says Dawson would rather sleep on someone's couch. And though she has toured with big name acts such as They Might Be Giants, Third Eye Blind and Regina Spektor, she gets just as much joy from playing in basements.

Dawson's life has changed tremendously in the past few years, not least due to her marriage (to fellow musician Angelo Spencer) and the birth of her daughter, Panda. The happy-go-lucky girl with "LAFF LOUD" tattooed on her knuckles laid low for a few months after Panda was born, but now touring is a family affair. Dawson and Spencer are currently touring together, and Panda Delilah can always be found in the audience.

As far as her newfound fame from *Juno* goes, Dawson's mind is still on making friends. "On Monday 3rd December there is the Hollywood premiere of *Juno*," she writes on her blog, "so I will be trying my hardest to find, meet, and befriend Danny Devito." Kimya Dawson plays with Angelo Spencer and L'Orchidee D'Hawaii at 8 pm Tuesday, April 29, at the Indigo District. All ages. \$12 adv., \$14 door. – Katrina Nattress



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