



Welcome to the Jungle

After the recent breakup of Seattle's spastic Blood Brothers, Johnny Whitney and Cody Votolato are back in the scene. The former Blood Brothers have joined forces with J Clark, who played guitar for the also recently split Pretty Girls Make Graves, to create the eccentric, key-driven dance-punk project **Jaguar Love**. Though the threesome has yet to release a record, they are signed to Matador, home to the likes of Belle and Sebastian, Cat Power and Stephen Malkmus. They've opened for Queens of the Stone Age and will embark on a two-week European tour in the middle of June. Pretty damn impressive if you ask me. Jaguar Love plans to release its debut album, *Take Me To The Sea*, August 19 but also recorded a self-titled, three-song EP that will be available June 3. The band sounds like a mix of the members' former projects, though not to the point of imitation. Whitney holds the same position that he did in his former band, playing piano and singing. His voice is just as shrill as it was with the Blood Brothers, where you swear he either hasn't yet reached puberty or has been castrated – but in a good way. However, Whitney's shrieks are not counteracted by a lower, rougher voice as they were by Jordan Blilie. Instead, Whitney layers his squeals with lower vocal tracks (also sung by him) in the EP, nicely balanced with bass, guitar, drums, keyboard and piano. If you are a fan of these guys' previous bands, you don't want to miss this. Jaguar Love and Nazca Lines play at 8 pm Saturday, May 31, at the Indigo District. \$7 adv., \$8 door. – *Katrina Nattress*

Don't Trust Anyone with Over \$30 in Their Pockets

Describing **The Athiarchists** as "a little angry" would be like describing Strom Thurmond as "a little racist." They're against religion, the government, police, grammar and just about anything else you can think of. The most positive words spoken by the duo are endorsements of marijuana and fisticuffs (in separate songs, of course). The Eugene group plays fast, trashy hardcore. While they fill up a room with their loud, straight-ahead music, their debut CD, *Don't Be Another Part of the Herd*, is thin sounding, the digitally distorted guitar buried in the mix by overzealous vocals and drums. The production is not particularly fuzzy, nor particularly clear – mid-fi, perhaps. As far as

song structure goes, there aren't too many surprises here. They're kind of like Death By Stereo without the sense of humor. CD booklet in hand, you can almost discern the content of the pair's hardcore shouting. The liner notes reveal the band has played over 400 shows and handed out demos without lyrics. That's a pretty good reason to publish them, except of course for the songs wherein the band repeats the same phrase eight to 14 times in a row. If you want to discuss politics with The Athiarchists but don't want your head smashed in, it would be wise to shelve the ironies of willfully printing an "explicit lyrics" label on the CD, beginning the album with a rendition of the theme from a \$102 million Hollywood movie and promoting a single concert with a two-sided full-color glossy flyer with toxic inks.

The entrance fee to the WOW Hall show includes a free copy of *Don't Be Another Part of the Herd*. That's rad. They also get bonus points for playing the opening set of their own CD release show. The Athiarchists, Oblige, Across the Sun and Jean Grey play at 8 pm Friday, May 30, at the WOW Hall. \$7 adv., \$8 door. – *Nick DeMarino*

Donna the (Un)Dead

Donna Jean Godchaux-MacKay knows the Dead. As the only woman officially billed with the Grateful Dead, she sang with them for seven years during the '70s, belting out harmonies and providing a female counterpoint to what had traditionally been an all-male group. But her career didn't begin and end with the Dead. Prior to boarding the jam band bus, the Muscle Shoals singer backed up the likes of Elvis Presley, Percy Sledge, Boz Scaggs and a pre-nose job/leather-jumpsuit wearing Cher. Post-Dead, she sang with Robert Hunter and embarked on her own musically eclectic endeavors. On her latest album, Godchaux-MacKay teams up with heirs to the jam band throne, the Zen Tricksters, to form **Donna Jean and the Tricksters**. It's a marriage that you'd think would go together as well as tie-dye and patchouli. And it does. But the music isn't the noodley, loose-limbed, free-form fare that you'd expect from Dead alum and acolytes. Donna Jean and the Tricksters dig into soul, blues, folk and rock, crafting classic melodies and tight grooves that don't inspire twirly dancing as much as good ol' fashioned foot tapping. That's probably a good thing for the not-as-limber-as-they-used-to-be Deadheads anyway. Donna Jean and the Tricksters play at 8 pm Sunday, June 1, at the WOW Hall. \$12 adv., \$15 door. – *Jeremy Ohmes*

endless motion, the constant harmonies, the interplay between the bitter lyrics of guitarist/singer Matt Skiba and the deeper tones and sometimes slightly more optimistic songs of bassist/singer Dan Andriano, the bittersweet tangles of love and heartbreak given such passionate and infectious delivery – and the inevitable lone acoustic track, the best example of which might be "Blue in the Face" from 2003's *Good Mourning*, which closes with Skiba wryly asking, "Your coffin or mine?" In Alkaline Trio's world, death is a constant, along with a glass of booze, a black heart and a simmering fury. But while their schtick isn't cartoonish and ironic, it doesn't seem entirely serious, either. It melds giant choruses and thick guitars with increasingly slick production and endless self-doubt, which sits in contrast to the musical certainty that comes from being a band for more than a decade; Skiba and Andriano (and drummer Derek Grant, who joined up in 2002) have their formulas down cold. *Agony and Irony*, the band's aptly named sixth full-length album and their first on a major label (previous albums were on Asian Man and early emo powerhouse Vagrant), is due out July 1. A few songs are up on the band's MySpace profile, including the single "Help Me," which shows that the label-hopping hasn't done anything to dull the gloss, the density of the layered choruses or the brutal self-reflection; it's himself Skiba wants saving from. At least, that's what he says. Alkaline Trio, Broadway Calls and The Medic Droid play at 8 pm Monday, June 2, at the Indigo District. \$18 adv., \$20 door. – *Molly Templeton*

Shipe Shape

John Shipe never really left; he just morphs from one recording project to another. Eugene's Shipe has made a career of creating music that straddles the line between rock and pop, from his earliest days with Nine Days

Tuneful Dark Hearts

I've spent the weekend listening to almost nothing but **Alkaline Trio**. By all rights, I should be dreaming of red hands and black walls, long drives and pale men who shy away from sunlight and never stop smoking. But despite the macabre imagery that paints the band's stage set as sparsely as their album covers (almost always black, white and red), there's a strange, wryly resigned cheer under the surface in so many of the Chicago band's songs that when I listen to them for hours on end, I find myself ... happier. It's a funny happiness born of the

