

Pick Fast, Pick Fancy

Eugene's Sid and Fancy celebrate new CD

Sid and Fancy's new CD, *Barrelhouse Angelinas*, grabbed me from the first lines of the opening track, "Only a Bum": "I drank again last night / My dear the time does fly / I had a dream that I held you tight / In my sleep I heard you cry." I mentally listed myself among their fans before the song was half over, and as I listened to the rest of the CD I only became more certain that I had made the right decision.

Sid and Fancy's five guys and one gal have played Eugene's many stages for more than two years now, and I'm ashamed that I've never seen them live before. Their brand of punk and bluegrass hybrid is similar to the Pogues, whom I will always love, and though the group is missing Shane

MacGowan's Irish brogue, I will always have a soft spot for rough-voiced guys singing about their lost loves and taking comfort in the nearest whiskey bottle.

In fact, there's a lot of whiskey talking on this album; I imagine the band members might bathe in it. It's full of whiskey-soaked tears, fueling a sort of desperate fury that can only be expressed through infernally fast mandolin and fiddle picking and body-thrashing rhythms that I feel certain any punk would like but that wouldn't alienate any bluegrass fans, either.

The band chose the title for the new album after discovering the phrase in an old-timey hobo slang dictionary. It was revealed in this ancient document that "barrelhouse" refers to a "cheap, filthy, lodging house," and an



Sid and Fancy CD release, *The Chapman Swifts*

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"angelina" is "a hobo's punk companion." I can't understand everything they are singing about in their lyrics, but I think some of it is cheap and filthy, and some of it is about punk companions, and that's good enough for me.

While they are definitely not a Pogues cover band or even imitators, it's a safe bet that Pogues fans will like Sid and Fancy. If you like fun music, go. If you like to drink, go. If neither of these applies to you, stay home and make room for the rest of us. **EW**

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