

## Through Being Kool

Whether or not he's certifiably mental, there's no denying that hip hop icon **Kool Keith** harbors many personas within that perverse carnival funhouse he calls a brain. He's also probably the only MC ever to bombard his audience with hunks of fried chicken (if not the only one to distribute thong underwear to the ladies). Unfortunately, Keith seems to be moving away from the theatrical stage antics of yore, forsaking the outrageous behavior in lieu of a more traditional hip hop performance. Then again, why should Kool Keith have to keep pelting his fans with fast food and changing his clothes as often as the protagonist in a Broadway play? He's good enough on his own not to have to continue one-upping himself with ever more outlandish behavior. In fact, that shit may actually be overshadowing Keith's unquestionably formidable skills as an MC and a lyricist. By now, Kool Keith's rhymes are the stuff of legend. He shouldn't have anything more to prove. And do you really want chicken grease all over your favorite jersey? We didn't think so. Kool Keith and Foreign Objects perform at 9 pm Tuesday, Jan. 26, at the WOW Hall. \$15 adv., \$18 door. -Sara Brickner



## Horse Feathers Fly Over

This spring, **Horse Feathers** will release a new album on Kill Rock Stars. It's currently being mastered, meaning that your only opportunity to hear the band's music until the album comes out in March is in a live setting. To tide us over, Horse Feathers released a 7-inch last fall called "Cascades." The title track starts out sparse, with stringed accompaniment swelling and receding over the course of Justin Ringle's tremulous vocals like waves lapping at a river's edge. As usual, Ringle's mumbled words are a little hard to make out, and he continues to retain that raw, homespun aesthetic present on his pre-KRS recordings, even as the number of stringed instruments he employs seems to multiply. While the band's sound hasn't changed much, the band's roster certainly has. Original members (and siblings) Heather and Peter Broderick have both left the band recently to pursue their own musical endeavors; multi-instrumentalist Peter actually quit two bands, Horse Feathers and Norfolk and Western, to become a full-time member of excellent Danish pop act Efterklang. To replace them, Ringle recruited violinist Nathan Crockett, cellist Catherine Odell and multi-instrumentalist Sam Cooper. Whether an extra member will translate to a more expansive sound, however, remains unclear, and will for all but the handful of cities on this short tour. Horse Feathers and Betty and the Boy perform at 8:30 pm Sunday, Jan. 24, at Sam Bond's Garage. \$5. 21+. - Sara Brickner



## Worth the Trip

A blues piano favorite is coming back to Eugene for the first time in five years, and it's easy to see why people are excited. Known to some as "The Original Boogie-Woogie Starchild," **David Vest** rocks and rolls with the best of them, and he and his band play with enough electricity to power the Eugene skyline for an entire year. Vest displays considerable vocal range as well, crooning soulfully one moment, growling the next and shouting "C'mon, baby" in a playful way the moment after that. Of course, Vest has been at this for over 50 years, so it makes sense that an artist of his caliber has perfected his craft.

Vest and his band have some versatile tunes in their catalog, including the funky "Too Old and Crazy" and the hang-on-to-your-hat wildness of the rollicking "Try Not to Kill Me (When You Say Bye-Bye)." Whether you're looking for an upbeat, good-time song like "Meet Me with Your Black Dress On," a dose of the don't-nobody-care-about-me blues heard in tracks like "Worried About the World" or just have a hankering for some good old country or gospel blues, Vest and Company take you right where you want to go and make sure the trip is worth it. The David Vest Band plays at 9:30 pm Saturday, Jan. 23, at Mac's at the Vets Club. 21+. \$7. - Brian Palmer

## Down Memory Lane with a Shooting Star

Take one of the late, great musicians of recent times, a drug-addicted and darkly troubled Van Gogh of a soul possessed by a genius for songwriting, and put his work in the hands of a pair of Portland musicians, one the scion of Portland's legendary Day piano-making family and the other an upbeat and affable UO music grad who can, at the drop of a capo, geek out on the intricacies of Baroque composition. Talking to Eugene native Asher Fulero of the duo **Fulero & (Nathan) Day**, it's quickly clear that the decision to form an Elliott Smith tribute band was as haphazard as it was completely natural. "It was really the songwriting," Fulero says of why he and Day bonded, the first time at a party when they took turns playing Smith's songs which, Fulero explains, move well beyond genre and style classifications. "Elliott just transcends all that."

As a solo artist, Smith hit the big time running after "Miss Misery" won the 1998 Oscar for Best Song; when, five years and five albums later, he killed himself, he ended one of the most quietly promising careers in modern music. This is where Fulero, a pianist, and Day, a guitarist, pick up: Without changing the original song structures, they strip Smith's compositions down to the essentials, tackling everything from early songs like "Condor Ave." to the posthumously released "Angel in the Snow." On the anniversary of Smith's death, Fulero and Day played at a converted funeral home, a fitting memorial to Smith's haunting melodies and elegiac lyricism. "It was really fantastic," Fulero says of the gig, adding that they play live simply to give voice to Smith's amazing work. "If you keep it simple, and you don't try to do too much, it's fucking amazing."

Fulero & Day play at 9:30 pm Saturday, Jan. 23, at Sam Bond's Garage. 21+. \$5. - Rick Levin

