



Kick Up Your Boots With Old Man Markley

Old Man Markley’s sound begs to be hyphenated: punk-bluegrass, hardcore-country, etc., etc. Whatever you call it, these guys can play. There are about a million people in this band (OK, just nine, but it *sounds* like a million) wailing on instruments like fiddle, washtub bass, auto-harp, and banjo – and it doesn’t hurt that the girls in this band are awful ‘purdy too.

Backing it all up is shit-kickin’ hardcore rhythms with the tempo-meter turned up to 11 – like Dropkick Murphys or Flogging Molly - minus the leprechaun, add more down home cooking. Or like a bunch of farmhands bonding over their love of Social D. and Doc Watson. Old Man Markley puts their stuff out on Fat Wreck Cords – a punk label – because most country labels are too wussy these days to release music like this.

They hail from California and have only been together since 2007. While their live shows quickly gained legendary status in the So-Cal area, they didn’t put out their debut until January of this year, and it’s been getting rave reviews from both punk rock and roots music fans alike. Joining Old Man Markley are two of Eugene’s favorite live acts: Portland’s Hillstomp, and Cooper McBean of the Devil Makes Three.

Look out Eugene, one of the best and most consistently booked venues in the area might just be in the Grove. Hillstomp, Cooper McBean, and Old Man Markley play at 7:30 pm on Saturday, March 26, at the Axe & Fiddle in Cottage Grove. \$7. 21+. – *William Kennedy*



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High On Mountain Air

Dustin Hamman fits the mold: a soft-spoken, skinny, white guy, an untamed wispy beard, songs about nature and the wild, dirty bare foot performances. Really, the only thing left is an isolated escape to the mountains to “reflect” and record an album on some shitty, lo-fi 4-track. And Hamman’s got that covered too. But Hamman’s music and vision go far beyond any stereotype and his current project, **Run On Sentence**, is testament to that.

ROS was born in 2007 in Portland as the vehicle for Hamman’s multi-instrumental and singer-songwriter talent – sometimes rotating local musicians, sometimes just featuring Hamman solo. The direction Hamman wants to go with ROS is evident, however. His voice gives off the vibe of an independent traveler, more used to his situation than content with it. And even though he’s pigeonholed as an indie folkster there’s more blues, rockabilly twang, and foot stompin’, banjo pickin’ roots than any Bon Iver or Fleet Fox could ever get away with. His newer album, *You, the Darkness and Me*, was written while living on a vineyard in the Columbia Gorge. Tracks like “Out In the Woods” has a back-to-the-land feel to it as Hamman’s vocals twang:

“And I, I came to get lost in the night/Moonbeams and shadows/taking a place among guillotines and gallows/And we came to get high off of breeze/blowing straight off the mountain air/gusts full of joy overflow you like a fountain.”

When ROS is fully equipped they’ve been known to play with horns, double bass, and violin among other sections and never fail to impress.

Run On Sentence plays 8:30 pm Sunday, March 27, at Sam Bond’s; 21+; \$1-5 suggested donation. – *Andrew Hitz*

Girl With A Guitar

I had already made up my mind that I liked Seattle’s **Charlotte Thistle**, just from reading her bio. It seems her father felt that she hadn’t amounted to much, so she “released him from his association” with her by choosing a new family name, Thistle, as “an inspiring symbol of determination, and in particular, the will to grow deep roots and thrive in spite of adversity.” Once I got to her music, I felt even more of a kinship.

Thistle’s new CD, *Wild Wind*, begins with a smoky clarinet line, itself an anomaly in the world of acoustic guitar-based folk rock. She sings, “You said you wanted to learn how to love without playing games/But I had to find myself so I got on a train.” Who among us hasn’t had that urge? She goes on to ponder what life would be like if she’d stayed, a question that creeps into even the most confident mind in the darkest and loneliest moments of the night. Throughout the album Thistle uses unexpected musical touches, like the clarinet providing the cool of jazz, and a bluesy, wailing harmonica in “On The Interstate” adding some spice. Her plucky voice even gets a bit accusative and raspy on “Fugitive.”

Thistle seems to take inspiration from the heartache of daily life, but her innate lyrical talent and bravery elevates her far above the fold of those who simply sing their diary entries. Thistle’s second CD is a breath of fresh air in American folk, and surely her career will be as tenacious as her namesake. Charlotte Thistle plays at 7 pm Thursday, March 24, at Territorial Vineyards. (21+ show) free. – *Vanessa Salvia*



Catch the Drift

Billing themselves as socially conscious folk with the contemporary sounds of alternative country, the **Low Tide Drifters** are at home in the Eugene music scene. Their soul-filled ballads chronicle the “experiences and struggles of everyday working people.”

With an acoustic guitar, a banjo, a blues harp, and a harmonica, the Low Tide Drifters have crafted an old-time simple sound with universal appeal. Not as upbeat as bluegrass, the somber arrangements set the mood with bluesy lyrics sung by Nathan Wood and Kate Downing. Whether singing about struggling coastal towns or Lakeview loggers, the band has a strong Northwestern flavor. The group was described by singer-songwriter Melissa Ruth as “rough and tumble with a whole lotta heart. To me, the Low Tide Drifters are Oregon.”

The gentle guitar strumming, lively harmonica, and solemn duets that make up the Drifters’ sound is equally at home in bars as it is in restaurants and coffee shops. They command a pleasant, non-intrusive sound that beckons introspection. The group has been bringing their unique style to bars and festivals all over the state of Oregon for four years now. In 2009, they released their first EP *Progress and Porchlights*. The group also released “A Prayer for Josseline” as single, with all of the profits going to No More Deaths, a migrant rights organization in Tuscon, Ariz.

The Low Tide Drifters play with The Kindreds at Cozmic Pizza on Sunday, March 27. The show starts at 6:30 pm. Tickets are \$3-\$5. – *John Locanthe*

Wynia Floats On Alone

It is a testament to an artist’s abilities when he or she can continue to change, evolve, and subvert the formula that made them successful without alienating their fan-base. **Rob Wynia**, lead vocalist and primary songwriter of Floater, continues to do just that both with his band, and now with his solo debut *Iron By Water*.

Fresh off touring behind last year’s Floater release *Wake*, Wynia has wasted no time getting right back out there on the road – and as usual he’s making Eugene, his former home, a tour stop. This time he’s promoting a collection of quiet intimate songs more along the lines of Floater’s acoustic experimentation than their arena-rocking tendencies. And appropriately he’s chosen Sam Bond’s Garage over Eugene’s bigger and less intimate venues.

While words like “radio-friendly” were used to describe *Wake*, words like “darkly beautiful,” “soulful,” “simple” and “stark” are being used to describe Wynia’s first solo outing. On *Iron By Water*, his trademark emotive vocals are backed by lap steel guitar, violin, and cello in arrangements ranging from bluesy to operatic.

In the past when Floater unplugged their distortion pedals, Wynia has shown that he’s an adept singer-songwriter who rides the line between folk rock and the ballad vibes of post-haircut Metallica. Floater fans might be biting their nails to find out if this solo outing means the end of their beloved band, but anyone who’s followed Wynia’s career knows to expect the unexpected.

Rob Wynia plays a free preview all ages performance at 6pm on Friday March 25, at CD World, and 9:30 pm that night at Sam Bond’s Garage with Rainbow Show featuring Pete Corrett, also of Floater. – *William Kennedy*

