

Pachyderm, Unleashed

Cage the Elephant put on a hell of a show a couple summers back opening in Eugene for the Silversun Pickups and Manchester Orchestra. Now the band is teaming up with Manchester Orchestra again for a McDonald gig in support of their latest disc, *Thank You Happy Birthday*. Fans should expect a more mature but no less frenetic live experience this time around.

Unlike Cage the Elephant's previous release, *Thank You Happy Birthday* doesn't contain much in the way of radio-ready rock hits, though there is a raucous sort of beauty present throughout the album. The song "Always Something" contains a number of kooky and sinister sounds that mirror the ominous scenes described by singer Matt Shultz, who perpetually sounds on the verge of a coronary as he blasts through tracks like "Aberdeen" or the biting social commentary of "Indy Kidz." The first single, "Shake Me Down," does demonstrate the band's ability to be traditionally melodic (pleasant vocals, slick production, etc) when it feels the urge to do so.

Cage the Elephant shows a lot of variety on *Thank You Happy Birthday*, which pays tribute to the band's desire to do whatever the hell it feels like doing with its music. Sometimes that means Shultz hooting and hollering like a monkey on "Around My Head," admitting his imperfections on the ballad "Rubber Ball," stressing the importance of individuality on "Sell Yourself," or choosing to give "Sabertooth" an atypically charming demo-quality sound. Cage the Elephant has a number of rock 'n' roll weapons at its disposal, and the band will use them all when it comes to town.

Cage the Elephant plays 7:30 pm Tuesday, June 7, at McDonald Theatre; \$21-\$23. — *Brian Palmer*



PHOTO BY DANNY CLINCH

Sounds of Water

Misty River is a four-woman band blending bluegrass, country and Celtic sounds into a musical flow that runs like water. The band is also quite prolific, with 14 years and five albums to its credit. Friday, June 3, at The Shedd, Misty River will play what most likely will be its final Eugene show.

Though claiming that its leave from stage life is only a break from the fast-paced music industry, Misty River is very upfront about the likelihood of playing again after 2011; the band say they "just don't know." After so healthy a career and such spellbinding albums, you could see how calling it quits now may be a graceful bow rather than a sudden death.

Given the band name, as well as the natural vibe of Misty River, it's only fitting that these ladies make their final Eugene appearance at the McKenzie River Trust's second annual Living River benefit show. The concert is a celebration of the vitality possessed by rivers as well as the people who love them. Look to see Grammy Award-winning guitarist Doug Smith and speaker Jeff Douglass of Oregon Public Broadcasting both add to Misty River's performance, sure to be yet another demonstration of pitch-perfect vocal harmony.

Misty River plays 7:30 pm Friday, June 3, at The Shedd; \$18-\$30. — *Dante Zuñiga-West*



Return of the Pharoahe

Before hip hop committed suicide and shortly after rap videos on MTV became full-blown SUV commercials, a lone Pharoahe's music reigned supreme. It was 1999, and an album entitled *Internal Affairs* became standard issue for any true underground hip-hop head. The style was defiant and street, but it wasn't thugged-out or ignorant. It was fresh. We bobbed our heads to it; we set off car alarms playing it too loud through obnoxiously large speakers; we ditched class, played ball and made bad decisions to this music — that was in L.A.; I can't even imagine the effect it must've had on teenagers and young folk in the artist's hometown of Queens.

Pharoahe Monch is one of the still standing East Coast emcees who helped bridge a gap between like-minded East and Left coast rappers, to create what promoters and A&R reps coined "conscious" (or "underground") hip hop. His peers include groups such as The Arsonists, Non Phixion, Jedi Mind Tricks, Heltar Skelter, MF Doom — I could go on and on. Though it is often said conscious hip hop started on the West Coast, the East boasts lyrical leviathans of the genre; Monch is proof of this.

He comes to Eugene after recently making *W.A.R.*, his third solo album; it's more upbeat than *Internal Affairs* and less funky than his 2007 release *Desire*. Make no mistake, this new joint definitely brings it. If you don't know, you better ask somebody or, as Monch would say, "Get the fuck up!" and get down to his upcoming Eugene show.

Pharoahe Monch plays 9 pm Wednesday, June 8, at WOW Hall; \$13 adv., \$15 door. — *Dante Zuñiga-West*



Slammin' Bluegrass

Are you ready for music re-re-re-vival of Americana? Granted, this one's been going on for a while now. But with a Mumford & Sons song like "Little Lion Man" burning up the charts (still trying to work out how a band of Brits can be considered Americana, but nevermind), the emo-grass sound perfected by the Avett Brothers is hotter than ever.

Portland's **Water Tower Bucket Boys** play the same kind of updated punky-bluegrass as the Avetts. But instead of swerving raucously like the Avetts, the Boys tend to toe a more traditional line. And this makes sense, seeing as the group got its start busking old-time folk and bluegrass covers.

Since then they've toured the U.S. and Europe, playing everything from square dances to bluegrass festivals and opening for big names like Wilco and Old Crow Medicine Show. But the fact that these boys are firmly rooted in tradition doesn't mean their grass don't... well, slam. "Blackbird Pickin' at a Squirrel," from their critically acclaimed 2011 release *Sole Music*, is a hootin'-n'-hollerin' fiddle-squealin' banjo-pickin' throwdown.

Catch the Water Tower Bucket Boys before they're singing a duet with Dylan on the Grammys next year.

The Water Tower Bucket Boys plays a free show 5:30 pm Saturday, June 4, at CD World; and with Bad Mitten Orchestre and Conjugal Visitors 9 pm Saturday, June 4, at WOW Hall; \$10 adv., \$12 door. — *William Kennedy*

