

Studio Junkies Make Live Debut

My Father's Ghost is an accidental band. "There initially was no plan for an album, or even a band. We were just getting together and recording," says MFG vocalist and primary songwriter Timothy Shaw. "By the time it became a conscious intention it was already happening." The Eugene group began life as a three-piece with Shaw, bassist Bobby Stevens and drummer Beau Eastlund working on songs together in Eastlund's Springfield recording studio. The musicians clicked.

To round out the sound, the trio added Daniel Gallo of Moonbox and Concrete Loveseat on lead guitar. Since then, the group has been recording tracks in Eastlund's studio for what will one day be their debut. "I'll come in with a complete song and no real sense of how to arrange it. We'll work out an arrangement in the studio," explains Shaw of the band's creative process. MFG hoped to have their first album ready for their live debut as a four-piece but "we decided to take a step back rather than rushing to finish it for the show" clarifies Shaw.

Two finished tracks are highly polished updates on '70s soft rock, "The Great Unknown," and "Even Worse." In these songs the smooth-jazz inflected keyboards of Steely Dan meet the lush vocal harmonies of Fleetwood Mac over a tight rhythm section.

"The biggest musical influence for me was my father's record collection," says Shaw, "In particular the later Beatles. I grew up mourning the breakup, though I'd never known them together." Shaw says of the band's name, "The ghost, as in Hamlet, is this vision of the past that in effect sets you in conflict with the present and likely future."

My Father's Ghost plays 9 pm Saturday, Aug. 13, at Sam Bond's Garage; \$1-\$5. - William Kennedy

Reggae Time

Midnite is old school reggae that audio-junkies get off on. The band's incredible sound production and use of overdubbing technique sets it apart from other acts within the genre, as does its epic performances - Midnite has been known to play live sets that last up to three hours in length.

Playing together as a group since 1989, co-founding Benjamin brothers Vaughn (vocals) and Ron (keyboard/bass), along with Christian Molina (drums), Edmund Fieulleateau (guitar), Edwin Byron (guitar) and Ras L (keyboards) possess a chant and call style of reggae somewhat reminiscent of Black Uhuru. Benjamin's unique vocal tone buoyed by the signature upstrokes is the sound that anchors the exquisite audio production of these veterans.

Midnite is not just some marathon-esque live-act sensation riding the vapor trails of reggae subculture in the U.S. from their hometown of St. Croix, Virgin Islands. This band has created more than forty original albums. A look through Midnite's discography is more than enough proof that this band is both legendary and iconic. Not to call the members old, but it is anyone's guess how much longer the band will continue to tour and make music. If you have the chance to see them, you must.

Midnite plays 11 pm Saturday, Aug. 13, at the Northwest World Reggae Festival in Marcola; prices vary. - Dante Zuñiga-West



Jayme Stone

A Feast of Fests

The Oregon Festival of American Music's summer musical, the Gershwins' 1930 *Girl Crazy*, which we wrote about last month, completes its run at the Hult Center this Thursday and Friday, Aug. 11 and 12, but you may have to hit the road briefly to take in August's other music festivals.

The Zimbabwean Music Festival has been around almost as long as OFAM. Its 20th annual edition alights in Corvallis Aug. 11-14 at Oregon State's LaSells Stewart Center. The festival celebrates the work of the late Dumisani Maraire, who beginning in the late 1960s seeded the music of southern Africa's Shona people throughout the Northwest. The festival features lots of learning as well as entertainment opportunities, so this is your chance to sing, dance and play as well as listen to the mbira thumb piano, marimba, drums, guitars and more, plus check out Zimbabwean art, clothes and instruments. It's a blast for world music fans - see details at <http://2011.zimfest.org>

It's a much longer jaunt, but down in the Siskiyou, the Beloved Sacred Art and Music Festival Aug. 11-15 hosts banjo virtuoso Jayme Stone, sarod fusion master Jai Uttal, Malian percussionist Baye Koutate, storyteller Michael Meade, Everyone Orchestra, throat singers, Hassan Hakmoun, kirtan chanting, electronica, Portland world music DJ Anjali and the Incredible Kid, Global Ruckus, mbira and more. If you're still in Country Fair withdrawal, this is the cure. Details at www.belovedfestival.com

Closer to home, Stone (a Béla Fleck student whose recent album with Mansa Sissoko connected African and Appalachian banjo traditions) appears with Room of Wonders Aug. 12 at Unity of the Valley. He's expanding the banjo's ambit. - Brett Campbell

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