

Get Down with the Get Down

Thao Nguyen likes Dan Marino. She likes the idea of farming and chocolate fights in foreign hotel rooms. She and her backing band, the **Get Down Stay Down**, make raw love songs – some desperate, some flirtatious and giddy, but all enveloped in a particular pop-timism that kindles reassurance – a reassurance that sometimes even Nguyen doesn't trust.

"When we swam our love to pieces / We washed up on messy beaches," despairs Nguyen, before repetitiously chiding "Bring your hips to me / Oh bring your hip to me."

It's this hanging state between the reality of brokenness and a desire for exploration that seems to define her thematic terrain. Nguyen's lyrics iterate that if gaining romantic commitment brings bliss and excitement, then we can be more than sure of a subsequent exhaustion.

"I am too, too sleepy to fight," she mutters at the end of the title track to the band's latest CD, *Know Better Learn Faster*.

Nguyen's swagger in her wonky melodies, her soft cadence or even her disposition on stage, which at times tends towards the raucous, all lend to her suggestive but never uncouth character. Her slight country-pop sensibilities – the occasional banjo jangle or spattering of honky-tonk melodies – mirrors her Virginia upbringing and adds diversity to what otherwise might just be bubbly indie pop.

Coming off a well-buzzed summer tour with fellow San Francisco singer-songwriter Mirah, Nguyen rejoins the Get Down Stay Down more mature in her music and even more heartfelt in her disclosures.

Thao Nguyen with the Get Down Stay Down plays 9 pm Tuesday, Oct. 18, at WOW Hall; \$15. – *Andrew Hitz*



Boom!

Close your eyes and YouTube "Tobacco Road – Eric Burdon and the Animals" and you'll hear a rangy, deep voice that sounds like it belongs to a large middle-aged singer from the Deep South. Now open your eyes. Mid-'60s Eric Burdon was a skinny, white Brit sporting that awkward bowl cut so pervasive in his time. Throw on a **Boom Chick** CD and it's a similar experience, but with a time warp rather than a culture blip. The shiny silver disc will elicit sounds previously heard on large vinyl Frisbees that haven't been dusted off in decades.

With Frank Hoier on guitar and vocals and Moselle Spiller on drums, this coed duo transports listeners to a time when rock 'n' roll was new. *Show Pony*, Boom Chick's first and only release to date, was recorded in 2010 and consists of eight songs that reverberate with the frenetic energy of fresh rock music. Recorded mostly live, with very little re-mixing and absolutely no auto-tuning, *Show Pony* may be a shock to the systems of those currently subsisting on modern radio. Boom Chick has been touring North America and Europe since 2009, and the band is currently in the throes of recording a series of 7-inch records. Their second full-length album is set to release in 2012.

Refreshing and almost exhaustingly upbeat, Boom Chick captures the youthful innocence of early American rock, effortlessly mixing it with the gritty, echo-like substance of Bo Diddly-style Southern blues.

Boom Chick plays 8:30 pm Wednesday, Oct. 19, at Cozmic Pizza; \$5. – *Natalie Horner*



PHOTO BY INGRID RENAN

The Good Hurt

AND AND AND's conglomeration sounds like a post-generational reboot. Right off the bat you can hear the influences, though the band is a bit hesitant to name any – spitballing it, you'd probably guess The Kinks, The Kooks or Pavement.

The members of this six-piece outfit all lived in and met in Eugene, then moved to Portland and won the *Willamette Week* Best New Band of 2011 category.

"We thought we'd place, but we never thought we'd win," says guitarist/vocalist Berg Radin. "That might be the coolest thing that ever happened to us."

Listening to lead vocalist Nathan Baumgartner's lyrics and tone, it's obvious that AND AND AND is, as the band says, "fueled by depression and anxiety." But that aside, the music isn't going to bum you out. AND AND AND isn't on some Gary Jules trip that makes you feel like you and Donnie Darko should commit suicide somewhere in tragically personal isolation.

There is a frantic celebratory angst that AND AND AND brings to the forefront. This is roadtrip music – to be played loud on long drives down highways lit by the sun behind clouds. Baumgartner and Radin are joined by Ryan Wiggins (guitar, trumpet), Bim Ditson (drums) and Jon Sallas (bass).

"Our sound is poppy, folksy and dark," Radin says.

AND AND AND is an in-studio powerhouse, having been together only two years and releasing four albums in their first 365 of existence. With the help of Blitzen Trapper, they recently recorded an album which has yet to be titled. The garage-punk sound AND AND AND puts out sits on the cusp of an exciting, unforeseen evolution.

AND AND AND plays 9 pm Friday, Oct. 14, at WOW Hall; \$8 adv., \$10 door.

– *Dante Zuñiga-West*

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