

arts SHORTS



Lange's Lens in Oregon

The art of photojournalism is an undertaking that many dabble in but few master, and even fewer are remembered for. The old saying of a picture being worth a thousand words is true almost always, but perhaps never more unerringly so than when attached to the work of **Dorothea Lange**.

American photo laureate of the Great Depression, Lange is best known for documenting the exploitation of rural sharecroppers and migrant workers. Her interests were primarily in capturing the barefaced and harsh realities of people surviving in dire times. She was a recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship for excellence in photography which she relinquished in order to pursue the photographing of Japanese Americans detained in internment camps on U.S. soil – and a champion of the modern artist citizen.

Daring to Look: The Photographs of Dorothea Lange in Oregon

will be on display Tuesday, Jan. 10, at the UO's Knight Law Center and will run through mid February. The exhibit, sponsored by the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, courtesy of the Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission, will include more than 50 photographs taken by Lange. – *Dante Zuñiga-West*



MUSIC



File Under: Music, World

When I hear the term "world music," I reach for my revolver. That category ranks right up there with such fallacious and vaguely ethnocentric utterances as "reverse racism" and "primitive culture," and the queasy phrase contains all the smug bourgeois self-abnegation of a middle-age white dude in a beret reading *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* over a non-fat vanilla latte at Café Sniff. Isn't all music world music? Or is it actually the case that such an empty-set category is just a ruse of liberal self-congratulation hiding a desire to appropriate the sort of transcendence our nihilistic consumer culture promises but never delivers? World music my ass – can we just call it fucking music, please.

The Portland-based band **Brothers of the Baladi** originally formed in Yuma, Ariz., as a mid-'70s backup band for local belly dancer Zamara. Fronted by singer and multi-instrumentalist Michael Beach (the only founding member still in the outfit), the Brothers boast some deep and abiding roots in Eugene's cultural legacy; they co-founded (and built) the original Gypsy Stage at the Oregon Country Fair, where they've shared the stage with various belly dancers over the years. It goes without saying that, from the get-go, the band has revealed a strong Eastern music influence, and their East-meets-West sound is an odd mixture of Don Henley sunshine, Steely Dan groove and the warbly vocals, syncopated percussion and arcing strings of George Harrison's Maharishi experimentation.

Even if, like me, this isn't your cup of tea, the talent and orchestral savvy of this band is undeniable and, what's more, there is a large and limber demographic in Eugene that just eats this stuff up. The Brothers of the Baladi have one shy of a dozen albums under their belts (including the Grammy nominated 2008 CD *Just Do What's Right*), their music was featured on that loopy TV show *Lost*, they sing in seven languages and play such instruments as the def, riq and midjwiz.

Brothers of the Baladi and District 19 Flamenco, featuring belly dancers Sabine, Tribalation, Deena & Donyah, play 8 pm Saturday, Jan. 7, at Cozmic; \$8. – *Rick Levin*

Trippy Tributes

Remember Pink Floyd? Remember that front man who the band supposedly just "forgot" to pick up before a show? That front man was the cosmically nuts original weirdo Syd Barrett. The late ex-Floydian's music will be on display at Sam Bond's, kicking off back-to-back nights of classic rock.

Syd Barrett's style and strange eloquence are among the weirdest and most unique characteristics in rock history. With lyrics that you couldn't possibly understand unless you wrote them, and jaunty, primitive tunes interspersed between cascading psychedelia, Barrett stands among the mind-fucking elite, and he did it all with class.

Barrett's tribute show will feature his tunes as played by a gang of local musicians; **Jennifer Dean, Joe Pettit, Jake Pavlak** and **Terrienne O' Rourke** will be bringing it to you, so tune in and drop a vial of acid for the psychedelic legend.

Saturday, Jan. 7, the madness continues with a Frank Zappa tribute performed by **Pojama People**, who take their name from the 1975 Zappa song of the same title.

How best does one describe the seminal mastermind that was Frank Zappa? Well, in truth, you just need to listen to him. When you think his music is improvised jam-band fusion funk whatever, it's probably not, and when you think you're going to be listening to psychedelic rock, you might end up listening to a brand of sassy jazz music that you didn't know existed. Zappa had so many albums that you really can't know what you're in for, so go find out.

The Syd Barrett Tribute starts 9:30 pm Friday, Jan. 6, at Sam Bond's; \$3-\$5. Pojama People w/Ike Willis performing the music of Frank Zappa begins 9:30 pm, Saturday, Jan. 7, at Sam Bond's; \$10. – *Andy Valentine*

Straight Outta Union

It happens, and it isn't always a bad thing: A band catches the right kind of fire, garnering minimal mainstream radio play but a strong word-of-mouth following of devoted fans who are drawn to something familiar yet new about the music. And if that band sticks around long enough, other musicians start absorbing its style. Lucero happens to be that band right now; featuring the bourbon-scorched plaint of Ben Nichols, Lucero's influence is opening the door to a new generation of songwriters heartened by their Memphis-bent take on loneliness, booze and heartbreak.

Sideways Reign out of Union, Wash. (a one-horse town on Hood Canal's Hwy 106, where Bill Gates keeps a summer house, and where meth, tourism and logging are the leading industries) immediately sparks comparisons to Lucero – especially guitarist/singer Justin Stang's ashtray-and-gravel vocals. The comparison does the band no harm, because these Mason County kids use their apparent influences – Neil Young, Ray LaMontagne, a bit of '90s Seattle pop-'n'-sludge – as a starting point for exploring their own captivating take on down-'n'-out rock/country/blues, Northwest style.



Similar in its defiance and tenacious drive to a certain defunct band that hailed from nearby Aberdeen, Sideways Reign – whose excellent full-length debut, *A Stand for All Stages*, has become something of a download sensation – creates good, often great music in a cultural vacuum. And with songs like "Fire, Lies & Wine" and "Oxygen," the group reveals a knack for keen melodies and bittersweet lyrics buttressed by the intimate, organic instrumentation that only comes from jamming together for a very long time. If that ain't enough stumpin' for you, check this: Stang ran for state senator in 2010 on the Sustainability Platform (in the heart of clear-cutting country, no less), and Sideways Reign has toured overseas, started a scholarship program and adopted a state highway. Righteous.

Sideways Reign plays 9 pm Friday, Jan. 6, at the Black Forest. – *Rick Levin*