



Wouldn't It Be Nice?

The romance of insanity is as intrinsic to our concept of genius as it is to our love of rock-'n'-roll gold. Combine the two, and you've got one serious speedball of flameout. Nothing sucks worse than fading away. We demand that our avant-garde icons be brilliant, fucked-up and heading for early death. A good, solid addiction always sweetens the pot. But for every authentically tortured genius who's ever revolutionized his chosen artistic cosmos – for every Plath, Poe, Van Gogh and Artaud – there are at least 5,127 imitative hacks scrambling on the fast track, striking a mope 'n' dope pose for the crown-of-thorns set. What a ruse. It's a suicide shtick for the e-masses, a pretty pig in a public poke, and it pays off like a fix in the sixth at Fenway.

So, with this in mind, let us now praise "Little Surfer Girl." Back in my teens, the **Beach Boys** were considered a bad joke – a geriatric cash cow of perennial headliners pimping the state-fair suck circuit, regurgitating "Surfin' U.S.A." and "Barbara Ann" into a hayseed fug of cotton candy and pig shit. Little did we know, as we moped the Puyallup midway, stoned and snarling in our Black Flag tees, that the harmonic vibration we heard over the rattle of rollercoasters wasn't really the Beach Boys –

something essential was missing. We had no clue that the songs we mocked as the quintessence of brainless bubblegum pop had, upon appearance, shocked the international music community to such an extent that the Beatles – the Beatles! – felt as though they'd been challenged to an aesthetic duel.

That something missing at the Puyallup Fair, year after year, was songwriter/singer Brian Wilson, and he wasn't only M.I.A. – the poor guy was looping the cosmos, paralyzed by mental illness and severe anxiety exacerbated by drug use, not to mention the Sisyphean pressures of a tyrannical father and possessing the brains behind America's greatest band. Wilson is right: He just wasn't made for these times, and his tragicomic struggles – the antics and abandonments, the stasis and sand in the living room – have been well documented. As has his genius: the ecstatic transcendence of *Pet Sounds*, the orchestral magnificence of "Good Vibrations," perhaps the most satisfying pure pop song ever written.

But, now being now, we seem to have forgotten more than we ever knew – if we ever knew it at all. This is the Culture of Kardashian, and our hunger for so-called reality has grown so insatiable and

indiscriminant, so greedy, that we seem to have gnawed away our own common sense. Celebrity and art (and talent, and worth) are not always synonymous. Talk about insanity, people: Clint Eastwood's daughters now have their own television program running continuously on the E! Network, but the fact that in 2004 Brian Wilson actually completed *SMILE* caused scarcely a fart among the empty calories of our culture. If you don't know whether to laugh or cry, maybe you should put on some Beach Boys. You'll feel better.

The Beach Boys celebrated their 50th anniversary last year by miraculously reuniting the band's remaining original members – Wilson, Al Jardine, Mike Love – along with David Mark and Bruce Johnston, and recording a new album, *That's Why God Made the Radio*, released June 5. Wilson has said he wants to record another album, "a bit harder and faster" this time. And Eugene just happens to be one stop among the 50 cities in the United States where the Beach Boys will play. The Beach Boys are playing in Eugene. I repeat: The Beach Boys are playing in Eugene. Got plans?

The Beach Boys play 8 pm Saturday, July 14, at Cuthbert Amphitheater; \$45, \$70 reserved. – Rick Levin

Temporal Geology

Deep Time is a band that cracks sonic earth in a new epoch. Known for the past six years as Yellow Fever, an infectiously discordant two-piece pop outfit out of Austin, Texas, trademark litigation with a clothing company forced a name change.

"Deep Time is a geologic reference," Jennifer Moore (guitar, organ, vocals) says. "The concept of the earth going through cycles [of] water, life and mountain-building is what we're going for."

And the richly cyclical sound, like Ian Curtis and Kim Gordon locked in a stereo-lab, gives Deep Time enough rough weight to hold down the wispy structure of their songs. Whereas Adam Jones (drums, bass, vocals) draws influence from the harsher, more abrasive sounds of free jazz and grunge, Moore's songwriting avoids the gloss of pop by integrating a different palate of sounds and tones.

"We're like an ugly door that came with a prefabricated house," Moore says. "An open door for a new project."

Deep Time's new album, the first under the fresh moniker, is set to be released eponymously July 10, on Seattle-based record label M'Lady. Recorded over the past year, *Deep Time* is a cleaner, more complete sound than the previous Yellow Fever releases. Lead single "Clouds" is a skittering, yelping, guitar-licking igneous inclusion that tumbles from sedimentary cliffs. "Bermuda Triangle" sounds like a march into the Marianas Trench. The songs "Marathon" and "Homebody" offer a mellower take on molten music.

For Deep Time, summer brings a West Coast tour, followed by a Midwest and East Coast supporting gig for The Mynabirds, and then an eventual month-long European circuit. Live, the multi-task juggling of an array of odd noises inserted around a liquid-metal center of off-kilter melodies makes Deep Time sound like the band is mining diamonds from the future veins of pop music.

Deep Time plays with the Groundblooms 8:30 pm Friday, July 13, at the Old Whiteaker Firehouse, 1045 W. First Ave.; \$5 suggested donation. – Patrick Newson

