

### What Have You Got to Lose?

Hey, here's three fellas you may have heard of: David Crosby, Stephen Stills and Graham Nash. Well, at the very least I'd wager you recognize their last names. Separately, these three gentlemen are already country-folk gods, but together they become the legendary, eponymous trio **Crosby, Stills & Nash**. Occasionally joined by fellow superstar Neil Young – who acts as an adjunct to the already magisterial group – the trio is one of the world's most premier folk acts, and they may have some notches in their belts by now, but that doesn't mean they can't still annihilate a crowd. In case you're still lost, thinking, "who the fuck are these coots?" now is the time to Google "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes" and try to make sense of the vocal harmonies. N.B.

Crosby, Stills & Nash have had several Grammy award nominations in the past, and the trio got away clean with the Best New Artist Award back in 1970, and I should probably mention that each member has been inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame twice. So how does one effectively describe a super group whose achievement speaks for itself? Well, you just gotta sit down and listen.

What you'll find is classic folk, the kind of politically suffused anthems that echoed from the speakers at Woodstock, and vocal stylings that rival just about anything Paul Simon & Art Garfunkel ever came up with. Add to this an element of virtuosic musical adeptness and you're on your way to just vaguely understanding how magnanimous these guys really are. They've been playing together, off and on, for the better part of the last half-century, and, old age notwithstanding, they're still chuffing on down the idyllic road of American country. Maybe next time you're listening to some flash-in-the-pan indie-folk collaboration, you'll stop and think about where that music came from – and the fact that the masters of folk still effing live. For your health.

Crosby, Stills & Nash play 7:30 pm Tuesday, Sept. 11, at Cuthbert Amphitheater; \$43.50 adv., \$63.50 D.O.S. – *Andy Valentine*

### Shoegaze: When an Invented Verb Becomes a Genre

Take Enya's voice, lay it over some steady Calvin Harris beats, then add layers of reverb and synth effects and you'll get something that resembles modern "shoegaze" (or nu-gaze). The layers of effects create a sort of soundcloud, which forces the listener to experience the song as a whole, rather than focusing on its individual aspects. Purists will say shoegaze only existed for a very short period of time, mostly in England, but iterations of it can be found at nearly every music festival today. Brooklyn's **School of Seven Bells** is a perfect example.

School of Seven Bells (SVIIB) was originally a trio consisting of Benjamin Curtis and twin sisters Alejandra and Claudia Deheza. They met while on tour with different bands: Curtis with Secret Machines, and the Deheza sisters with On!Air!Library!. In 2007 they joined forces and launched SVIIB with Alejandra and Claudia's haunting harmonies at the helm and Curtis acting as producer and guitarist. In 2008 the band released its debut album, *Alpinisms*, and a few years later its sophomore release, *Disconnect from Desire*, was a critical darling.

Now a duo consisting of Curtis and Alejandra, SVIIB released *GhostStory* early this year. One member lighter and keen to explore new territory, this album plunges the band, for the first time, into storytelling. The album centers around the life and loves of a girl named Lafaye. Lyrics are more discernible than on previous releases, and melodies stand out a bit starker, but the essence of shoegaze lingers heavily. This results in a kind of dream-pop/shoegaze mashup. Discernible lyrics give the listener something to grab onto, something to relate to, while the wall of synth behind them lets those lyrics slide off and allows the listener to find their own experiences in Lafaye's stories.

School of Seven Bells opens for Silversun Pickups 7 pm Friday, Sept. 7, at McDonald Theatre; \$30 adv., \$35 door. – *Natalie Horner*



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