

EUGENE'S MODERN FOLK SCENE SHINES

Covering local music in Eugene for a few years now, I'm frequently gob-smacked by the amount of talent in this town. And coming up at Sam Bond's on Dec. 23 is a bill that showcases three of the city's finest up-and-coming young songwriters:

Michael Conley, Paul Quillen and Caroline Bauer. While each has distinct differences, they all play what could be considered folk music, and that night will present their acoustic-based songs in the round. Some artists bristle at being pigeonholed a folk singer, but Bauer doesn't mind.

"I do like being called a folk singer," Bauer says. A native of Eugene, Bauer began playing guitar at a very young age but only began performing a few years ago while in school at Portland State University. "I started playing covers just like anybody else," Bauer says, joking that she wrote her first original songs about pets and Barbie dolls. Inspired by big names in folk music like Joni Mitchell and Bob Dylan, her songwriting quickly developed, soon integrating the indie edge of contemporary artists like Cat Power, Joanna Newsom and Mirah.

Bauer's voice is a raw, sparse and sweet instrument. It's a more subdued sound than Mitchell's, combining the sprightliness of Newsom with the world-weary burden of Cat Power. Her guitar playing is simple, gentle arpeggios mixing with a rootsy Patsy Cline saunter, and her lyrics expose a wisdom seemingly beyond the years of the fresh-faced musician. In "If You'd Like," she sings, "Love is a place where two people live in separate rooms," but it's not all heartbreak for Bauer: "If you'll have me I will marry you," she sings in the sweetly romantic "Marry You."

Bauer is working on her debut album and has just finished her first music video, which can be viewed on her ReverbNation page, so expect to hear a lot more from this talented young songwriter.

Caroline Bauer, Michael Conley and Paul Quillen play 8:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 23, at Sam Bond's Garage; \$3-\$5. — *William Kennedy*



PHOTO BY SEAN DANAHER | SEANDANAHER.COM

VENUE GUIDE

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