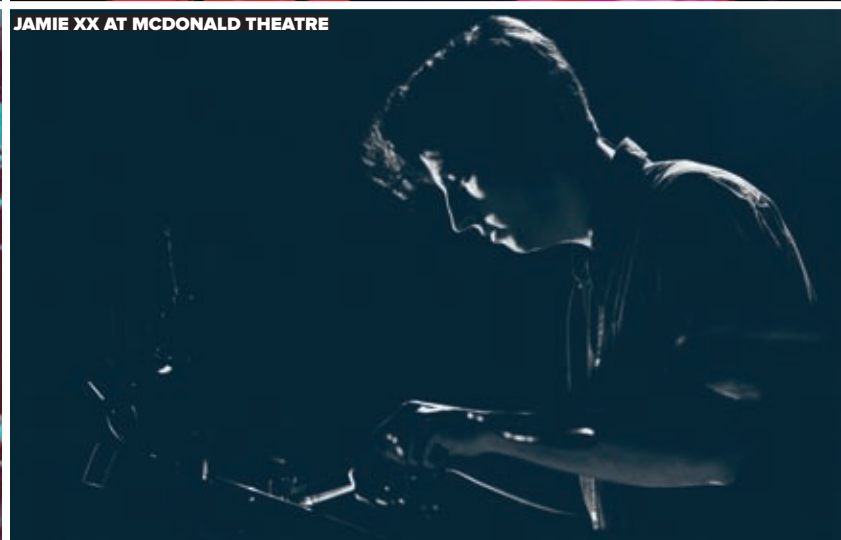




glitter — these items make up the kandi kid wardrobe. There's even a special PLUR handshake. Ortmann says the handshake goes like this: Two people make mirroring peace signs (peace), then curve their hand into half a heart each (love), followed by connecting their palms and interlacing their fingers (unity). Then each will slide one of their plastic bracelets — usually spelling out their rave names or a favorite artist — off their own wrist and put it on the other (respect).

However, PLUR people only fall on one part of the EDM spectrum. "Within the past few years EDM has just become so mainstream," she says. "It's so funny to me to see sorority girls and frat guys at this stuff because it's like, 'Oh, are you dirty rave kids now?' It's like the new toga parties." Ortmann and Cogburn both note the rise of dubstep on the national scene — like the aforementioned "Harlem Shake" and Skrillex — for the shift in public opinion (although Cogburn prefers the term "bro-step"). Dubstep stems from "drum-and-bass-jungle" and reggae music.

Ortmann shrugs and explains that Eugene is a college town so it's natural that students are attracted to music with a built-in dance party aspect. But party tunnel vision can also usher in a crowd that is in it for the drugs, namely Molly (said to be the purest form of ecstasy). Preferred by partygoers for its euphoric high — a world of fuzzy affection, high energy and a heightened sense of touch — Molly (aka MDMA) can also cause dizzying anxiety and depression, hot flashes and chills and lead to severe dehydration. Washington's Paradiso Festival saw dozens of drug overdoses — attributed mostly to Molly — and the death of a 21-year-old Washington State University student.

Cogburn remembers ravers taking one or two hits of ecstasy in the '90s but explains that now people are taking upward of six or seven hits. "Why are you trying to get so high?" he asks rhetorically. He also points out that there used to be "party smart" booths, educating partygoers about recreational drug use.

"Eugene and Springfield should take heed of what just happened at the Gorge with this festival that USC put on and understand, hey, people are going to get real loose," he says of the upcoming Kaleidoscope Music Festival.

Nathan Asman, frontman for local live electronic act Hamilton Beach, has noted this shift as well. "It's starting to be that going to an electronic show, the people don't go to see the music, they go to get as fucked up as humanly possible," he says. "I think that it's devaluing the music a lot, but on the other hand there are responsible drug users and that's fine; it enhances the experience." Ortmann points out that, even if the EDM music stopped, "those people would be doing it anyway."

"The bottom line is responsibility of the parents," Fennessy says. "Do you know where your child is tonight? But that's how it's always been."

Hergenreter, booker for the McDonald, notes, "Since our first EDM show, which used to be all ages, we have added age limits allowing the more mature fans to enjoy these shows."

KALEIDOSCOPE KIDS

One reason for the sea change in Eugene's EDM scene is OneEleven Productions, a local production company. Phoenix Vaughn, a former DJ, started

OneEleven in 2011 after seeing the community's positive response to electronic beats. Jason Lear, who works alongside Vaughn at OneEleven, says, "This last season we had eight weeks in a row of shows." Those shows included big names in EDM like Mord Fustang, Adventure Club and Dillon Francis at the WOW Hall, Dada Life and Excision at McDonald Theatre, as well as Zomboy and Bro Safari at the venue formerly known as The Rok. And the shows keep coming this fall, with dubstep producer Rusko already booked at the Lane Events Center in November.

Vaughn hints at a new venue downtown that will serve a more scaled-down crowd of 500 or 600 that could potentially offer OneEleven a platform to book acts that wouldn't necessarily sell out the McDonald or Cuthbert.

But for now Vaughn and OneEleven are pouring their energy into the Kaleidoscope Music Festival, set for Aug. 23-25, which they have deemed a "fusion" fest, with music ranging from hip hop to folk to dubstep.

"We started as an electronic company because we know the music and we love it, but we love a lot of kinds of music," Lear says. "We're eager to share not just the side of OneEleven that people have seen but our love for all kinds of music and our respect for the preferences of everyone in the community."

The emphasis, however, will be on EDM; of the sprawling 87-act roster spread out over three days, 53 of the artists will be rooted in electronic production and performance. So, as the kids say these days (or at least the neon tank tops they wear say it for them), "Keep Calm and Rave On." But don't forget the older credos: "Peace, Unity, Love, Respect" and "party smart." Oh, and drink lots of water. ■