

NO STRANGER TO THE DEVIL

Ask Pete Bernhard, the guitarist and lead singer for **The Devil Makes Three**, what surprised him most about the band's recently released album *I'm A Stranger Here*, and he'll tell you how easy the experience was.

"Buddy Miller is not a really heavy-handed producer, so [making the album] was actually really easy," Bernhard says. "It ended up working out really well and was not hard to do at all. I think it was actually easier than self-producing. We recorded the whole record in maybe a week and a half. We were all a bit nervous playing with a bunch of musicians we'd never played with before, but so many great people worked on the record, it just happened really quickly."

Like previous efforts, *Stranger* is chock full of upbeat music that is juxtaposed against more weighty material — a tricky balance to strike. One minute you have the whirlwind-inducing ragtime number "Spinning Like a Top," and the next you are treated to a delightful riff on old vocal gospel songs with numbers like "Hallelu." The band is all about keeping you on your toes, both literally and with regard to the content.

"It's a traditional thing to do in folk music and bluegrass, those traditional musical forms, blues as well," Bernhard says. "There's always a lot of social commentary and political critique, as well as gospel, religion or whatever mixed in. I figure it's an opportunity to say things that maybe people aren't hearing, but also, we love playing upbeat stuff that is fun live."

The Devil Makes Three plays with The Brothers Comatose 8:30 pm Tuesday, Jan. 28, at McDonald Theatre; \$20 adv., \$25 door. — *Brian Palmer*



PSYCHO DANCE ORGY

Look around at your next house party. Doesn't everyone look the same? Isn't everyone there for the same damn reason? If there's a band, and they aren't playing Elliott Smith covers, there's a good chance everyone's there to dance. Nothing else. That's it. Dance.

San Francisco-based **Battlehooch** may just be the party band to end all party bands. It isn't always completely dance-tastic — or even upbeat — but there's something about this brand of psychedelic orchestral rock that makes our toes wanna tap 'til they break.

The main player on this stage is collaborative complexity. Sure, any old one-man producer can take a rabble of noisy, experimental verve and turn it into something half-groovy, but Battlehooch is a six-piece effort. Most groups tap into a creative wavelength together and go from there. With this project, it seems, these guys built their own wavelength from scratch and invited all the world's eccentricity in to breed. Picture Kevin Barnes forcefully impregnating Menomena while Late of the Pier stands in the corner and laughs.

Touring now in support of their third LP, *Hot Lungs*, Battlehooch is poised to hybridize this hip, fragmented dance scene. Picture a room full of hipsters, surfers, Claypool freaks, Deadheads, jazz connoisseurs and rolling EDM sweat-slingers. Now picture them actually *having fun together*. Personal preference doesn't matter. Venue size doesn't matter. When these jams break out, it's a house party for the brain, and that's all we really need.

Battlehooch plays with Paleons and Egotones 10 pm Friday, Jan. 24, at Luckey's; \$5. — *Andy Valentine*



Luckey's
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