



ON PLANET MEAT MACHINE

We welcome you all, to a world where no paper currency exists, no dreams of the afterlife are sought after and everyone is together, striving to form a unified consciousness.

That's not a snippet of *The Communist Manifesto*, but the opening line to the comic book *Bustin' Jieber vs. The Gravy Robbers*. The local goof-punk jazzers of **Bustin' Jieber** are releasing their latest, a concept album of the same name, via digital download code only available through purchase of the band's 30-page Kurt Vonnegutian space odyssey. It continues:

It is a society where musicians are a respected elite, and are true guardians of the vibe, and a society where everything is just gravy. We welcome you to the Meat Machine.

The tight-knit trio that makes up the contemporary jazz-pop outfit — Andy Page on sax, Susan Lucia on drums, Dusty Carlson on bass — are friends first, having met through the social circles of UO School of Music and Dance while studying jazz circa early 2011. The album's concept stems from a shared wackadoo humor and world vision.

"Some of the songs were developed and written out of this distaste for greed," Carlson says while sitting on an amp in the band's tiny practice space — a storage unit out on West 11th. "It takes place on a distant planet called the Meat Machine. The Meat Machine is like a utopia and gravy is the lifeblood. There's enough gravy for everybody and nobody has to work for their gravy."

Of course, there's enough gravy until there isn't: A businessman lands on Meat Machine and cooks up a scheme to horde all the gravy and convince an army of minions that they too can be gravy-rich someday if they put their head down and work hard for him. Sound familiar?

"It's *Lord of the Rings* meets anti-capitalist social commentary," Page says, laughing. "It's not very veiled."

Instruments are rounded up and hung from the ceiling of a gravy mine, where musicians are forced to extract the brown stuff. Epic music battles ensue. But dispel any preconceived notions of what anti-capitalist music may sound like because *Bustin' Jieber vs. The Gravy Robbers* is stuffed full of bubbly and hilarious rhythm-heavy pop-jazz tunes like "Jungle Banana" and "Gator Bacon." Bustin' Jieber may be silly as hell, but they have the jazz chops to back it up; think Weird Al meets the Bad Plus.

"The first album we made when we first started is really like a jazz album. There's no vocals on any of the tracks," Page says. "[*Bustin' Jieber vs. The Gravy Robbers*] is halfway through this transition that we've sort of made as a band. The last couple shows we've been playing are more like rock shows than jazz shows."

The band describes the six tracks on this album as closer to lyrically driven short-form pop songs.

"People will actually stay and listen to you," Lucia says of the new direction, laughing.

Bustin' Jieber is already planning for their next concept album, a rock opera, but don't expect it out soon. *Bustin' Jieber vs. The Gravy Robbers* took well over a year due to finances and the band members' other projects: Page plays sax with the Cherry Poppin' Daddies, Lucia plays drums in Human Ottoman and Portland's MarchFourth Marching Band and Carlson contracts out for bass gigs while pursuing his jazz masters at the UO.

Find out the fate of planet Meat Machine when Bustin' Jieber plays (and acts out) their music quest for the album release party at Sam Bond's.

Bustin' Jieber plays with Eleven Eyes 9:30 pm Saturday, May 31, at Sam Bond's; \$5.
— Alex Notman



BLUE LOTUS

PHOTO BY ROBERT J. WILLIAMS PHOTOGRAPHY

BB BACK BEAT

MUSIC NEWS &
NOTES FROM
DOWN IN THE
WILLAMETTE
VALLEY

Catch the blues-rockers of **Blue Lotus** 7:30 pm Saturday, May 31, at WOW Hall before they head out on tours spanning Oregon, Washington, California and next year Arizona, Colorado, Montana and Idaho with their 2013 album *A Thousand Other Things*. Blue Lotus nabbed "Favorite Local Band" in the 2013 WOW Hall Awards and lead singer and guitarist Brandelyn Rose won "Favorite Female Performer." Portland's African blues-rock outfit, **Dusu Mali Band**, led by Ibrahim Kelly (nephew of famed Malian singer and multi-instrumentalist Ali Farka Touré), opens the night.

Wandering Goat brings lo-fi dance-punk group **Mrs. Howl** from Seattle 9 pm Friday, May 30. Mrs. Howl, originally from San Antonio, Texas, describes themselves as "Elastica, cross them with Blondie, add dance beats and big, catchy guitar licks — then sprinkle in a little Cajun flavoring."



Get a chance to meet the men behind **Bone Thugs-N-Harmony**, who are back 8 pm Wednesday, June 4, at Dusk (44 E. 7th), touring with their 2013 album *The Art of War: World War III*; \$110 meet & greet, \$30 general. Eugene's **Starbuds** and Portland's **Champagne James** are also on the bill.



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