



A HIP-HOP STAPLE

Vince Staples, who recently signed to Def Jam Records, released *Shyne Coldchain Vol. 2* in March 2014 —the fourth mixtape he's dropped since 2011.

At 21 years old, the emerging MC from Long Beach, Calif., has been able to work with some of the most beloved rappers in the industry. His favorites include Schoolboy Q, Ab-Soul, Earl Sweatshirt and Mac Miller — who produced his album *Stolen Youth* (2013) under the pseudonym Larry Fisherman. Staples also had the opportunity to work with one of hip hop's most seasoned veterans, Common, for the Chicago rapper's upcoming LP *Nobody's Smiling*.

"He taught me how to become an artist to the point where people aren't buying your music just to buy your music," Staples says of Common. "They're buying you."

Staples, who grew up listening to Lil Wayne, Lil' Bow Wow and Ja Rule on Los Angeles hip-hop radio stations, admires the longevity of Common's career. He says he didn't realize he wanted to be a rapper, however, until L.A. producer Sydney Bennett ("Syd Tha Kyd" from Odd Future) helped him "level out" his life just a few years ago.

"I was still young, because I'm young now, but music wasn't really a part of my growth," Staples says. "They kind of gave me the push to want to make music."

While he may still have his gripes with the music industry — for one, he thinks the internet makes it "too easy" to become a rapper — Staples says he's excited to keep recording and putting out music. He adds that it "won't be too long" before he makes another video like he did with director Alexi Papalexopoulos for "Nate" earlier this year.

"I'm lucky," Staples says. "It's cool to kick it with the homies and get paid to screw around on stage."

Vince Staples performs with **Audio Push** and **Skeme** 9 pm Saturday, July 19, at WOW Hall; \$12 adv., \$15 door. — *Bryan Kalbrosky*

MAGNETIC GOO

Time changes things, and **Goo Goo Dolls** bassist Robby Takac knows this as well as anyone. After all, before he and Johnny Rzeznik became one of the more notable pop rock acts of the last two decades, they preferred to be noisy rather than pop savvy. But they got the chance to evolve artistically through early albums, get out their inner punk and heavy metal aggressions and figure out who they wanted to be as a band. Takac knows how lucky they are.

"A lot of folks don't get that chance these days," he says. "If it doesn't work right away, then they're tossed out of the machine and [the label] looks for the next thing that's going to work."

Considering the number of radio hits they've scored throughout the years, the band knows what works. Their most recent album, last year's *Magnetic*, was their fourth consecutive Billboard Top 10 release, and it contains more of the band's trademark energetic material. "First Beat" and "More of You" are downright ebullient pop numbers, "When the World Breaks Your Heart" uses sweeping strings to augment the rock track's power, and Rzeznik's scratchy vocals are as charismatic as ever on the ambient "Bullet Proof Angel." After so many years together, they clearly have a system that works for them, but Takac for one will never take music — or the band's success — for granted.

"Music is a huge thing," Takac says. "It means the creative process — which is unbelievably dear to me — but it also means [the wonderful] things that have happened in my life."

Goo Goo Dolls play with **Daughtry** and **Plain White T's** 6:45 pm Friday, July 18, at Cuthbert Amphitheater; \$41.50 adv., \$47 door. — *Brian Palmer*



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