

LIFE'S A RIOT

The attitude and brilliance of punk-pop band Not A Part of It



PHOTO BY TRASK BEDORTHA

You're living in a sleepy, shitty, cozy little town and, suddenly, everything changes. It seems to happen overnight, like some bent fairy tale: The restaurants get way better, the drugs improve, coffee shops sprout on every corner, yuppies start yammering about gentrification and yesterday's wine, bourgeois hepcats from L.A. and Phoenix gallop in, now everyone's either an artist or a suit or a fucking snake.

Nostalgia hits the roof. Your rent spikes.

And then, through some squeeze of fate and native talent and uncanny evolution, the music gets really good. Great bands everywhere. Where'd they all come from? Maybe these bands were here all along, making static in some dank garage, but now it *matters*. They appear full-flowered, furious, sprung from the soil.

I've seen this happen in other city's lives, and now it's happening in mine. It's a short, sharp shock, a talent wave, and you've got to enjoy it on the way up, before it crashes all snotty and clotted and overblown on the shores of saturation.

Yes, Eugene, it's time to salute your burgeoning music scene, and a part of that consciousness-raising should rightly involve a three-fingered salute to **Not a Part of It**, a tight, tempestuous trio of punk-pop corndogs descended from The Clash and making music how it oughta do —

with loud guitars, reckless charisma and equal doses of attitude and brilliance.

I first caught Not a Part of It earlier this year at a Black Forest gig, where lead singer and guitarist Jason Burton pogoed around the stage, bordering on unhinged and confronting the crowd with an inciting defiance to go mad. It was controlled chaos, held together by the hammering rhythm section of bassist Daylon Liles and drummer Cody Lamb.

The music was loud, fast, ferocious. Beneath the fuzzy Buzzcocks assault there crept smart melodies anchored to the egalitarian ethos of punk: We are you, you are us, fuck it, let's rip this joint. Glorious.

"We're a punk-rock band," Burton tells me. "We are heavily influenced by '70s punk rock, but are of course fans of many subsequent eras. I think the message in the lyrics is positive, and hopefully the music is interesting and not too un inventive. But the music is subjective, so ..."

Not a Part of It's self-titled debut album, due out sometime late summer or early fall, is a strong collection of aggressive, hook-heavy songs ranging from furious punk anthems like "Outta Control" and "Life's a Riot" to rebel yells of ambivalent defiance like "They Won't Get Us" and "Mind Games." In its happy rage and breakneck abandon — all band-saw

distortion and sing-along growls — the record recalls everything from the martial stomp of the Sex Pistols to the glinty, slashing pop of American Steel and the apocalyptic tics of Modest Mouse. It's a barnburner, full of harmonic arcs and crunching beats that stick sideways in your craw.

In a sense, the amalgamated lethargy of Eugene's major sonic legacy — jam bands looping into eternity — has paved a perfect path for a trio like Not a Part of It: They hit the skids running, with a sense of purpose that borders on messianic. They tear away the old skin and zap the flabby heart, inviting you to relish the voltage. Consider them party crasher at the gates of New Eugene: Punks bent on joyous destruction.

"Punk rock is to me the thing that I discovered as a kid that helped me through difficult times," Burton recalls, though he might as well be talking about the here-and-now. "I never knew there were other sounds, an underground music scene made up of the waste of the better class bubbling up to the surface. Trying to right wrongs. It was awe-inspiring as well as simply inspiring. I had to write. I had to join." ■

Not a Part of It plays twice this week, with Dirty Discount Kid and Wetsock 7 pm Thursday, July 2, at Wandering Goat, and then with Dwight Dickinson, Brain-ake & The Family Mullet and SpaceWaster 8 pm Friday, July 3, at Black Forest; both shows are free.

WOW HALL

★ THE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS PROUDLY WELCOMES: ★

FRONTIER RUCKUS

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS
CAITLIN JEMMA & THE GOODNESS

THURSDAY, JULY 2

DOORS 8:30 PM, SHOWTIME 9:00 PM • TICKETS \$10 ADVANCE, \$12 DOOR
PROCEEDS OF 10% GO TO THE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

The Grateful Web Presents

GRATEFUL DEAD DANCE PARTY

Live Video Webcasts from the Grateful Dead Shows in Chicago

Doors open at 9:30pm
July 3rd, 4th, 5th 2015

EST 1963

All Ages | Donations \$5 - \$10 | WOWHALL.ORG
Dance to the Grateful Dead 50th Reunion shows! Live Video of Shows Projected on Big Screen!
All proceeds to benefit the WOW Hall Hot Water Project

SHELLAC

WITH SPECIAL GUEST
SHANNON WRIGHT

FRIDAY, JULY 10

DOORS 8:00 PM, SHOWTIME 8:30 • TICKETS \$13 ADVANCE, \$15 DOOR
PROCEEDS OF 10% GO TO THE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

THE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS PROUDLY HOSTS

BASS CAMP

HIP-HOP ★ EDM ★ FUSION

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY,
AUGUST 10 - 14

TWO CAMPS:
9:00 AM - NOON:
ELECTRONIC MUSIC BASICS
1:00 - 4:00 PM:
PRODUCTION MASTER CLASS

\$100 EACH, \$150 FOR BOTH
TO REGISTER: INFO@WOWHALL.ORG
OR CALL 687-2746 3:00-6:00 PM MONDAY-FRIDAY

8TH & LINCOLN ★ 687-2746 ★ TICKETS: CD WORLD, CD GAME EXCHANGE, HOUSE OF RECORDS, UO TICKET OFFICE, TICKETWEB.COM, WOW HALL BOX OFFICE ★ WOWHALL.ORG ★ ALL AGES