



**Kris Ray**  
 ARTIST AND  
 MUSICIAN WITH  
 NOVELAS  
 AGE: 27

Artist and musician Kris Ray fronts “melodic hardcore band” Novelas, which frequently performs at The Boreal. Novelas is celebrating the release of its latest EP, out now on cassette and available on Bandcamp.

Novelas’ EP features “South Carolina, God Damn,” part hardcore-eulogy, part fiery and hugely impactful statement about the mass shooting perpetrated by Dylann Roof at a Charleston church.

Ray self-identifies as a “queer, non-binary Afro-Latinx” and says, “I first got into DIY punk and indie music as a teen growing up in SoCal. I needed music that validated my struggle as a femme/person of color, and fast aggressive music gave me that validation as well as helped me realize the power of my voice.”

**You’re from SoCal. How does Eugene music measure up?**

Eugene has an eclectic music scene that I have grown to love. It’s not as vibrant as the big city scene I’m accustomed to, but it’s got heart and soul. The only down side is that a lot of these shows are at bars. I may be well over the drinking age, but I’m horribly allergic to alcohol.

People need to start leaving the bars and venture to the shows off the beaten path. You’d be surprised at how many good shows happen right under our noses in this town.

**‘Everyone assumes that there are only jam bands and hippie/psychedelic bands to see in this town, and that’s just not true.’**

**What are some misconceptions about Eugene’s music scene?**

Everyone assumes that there are only jam bands and hippie/psychedelic bands to see in this town, and that’s just not true. There’s a pretty solid punk and metal scene here.

There are a lot of good bands breaking new ground that are worth looking out for. A few of them have femme/women musicians leading the pack. It’s exciting!

**While Eugene is growing more diverse, it’s still a pretty homogenous place. Can you talk a little about diversity issues in Eugene’s music scene?**

A next-level scene in my eyes is more equitable and inclusive: more space taken up by femmes, queers, people-of-color and trans folks.

I try to create that space at the beginning of every set my band plays by making sure those who are marginalized know that they belong in that space and they deserve to take up just as much space as any dude in the room.

Music is one of those amazing mediums that bring people together for a purpose: to move and lift our voices together. Investing our dollars in local venues and artists is an act of community that we need to continue to engage in.

Eugene music is hard to pin down. It’s a cross between raspy buskers on the downtown streets backed by psychedelic waves of ambient rock n roll. It’s a weird mix for a weird place.

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