



PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

WHISKEY DIZZY

Shovels & Rope don't play nice

When South Carolina husband-and-wife duo **Shovels & Rope**, comprised of Cary Ann Hearst and Michael Trent, clang their collective musical bell, something in the reverberation reaches my ears a bit like The White Stripes.

I hear male/female vocal interplay and whiskey-dizzy harmonies that are less than tight alongside scarpyard guitars and percussion. There's gospel holler, honkytonk groove and country swing. It's all riddled with rock 'n' roll buckshot and boiled down in a two-piece crucible.

But where the Stripes are Detroit urban, Shovels & Rope are dusty road rural and post-hard-work comedown. Nobody's ever been up to any good with a shovel and some rope. Let's be real.

One of Shovels & Rope's better-known tunes, "I Know," could be a takedown on all those mustachioed and suspender-wearing, stomp/clamp, Americana acts so prevalent in the past decade or so (hey ho, Lumineers, I'm looking at you).

Hearst and Trent don't play nice with the NPR-acoustic-Americana folk-rock set, and I'm grateful for it.

"I know exactly where you got that sound," Hearst and Trent sing in unison. "See, I was at the same shows, we used to hang around. See you in a year on your way back down."

Shovels & Rope come to Eugene in support of *Predecessors*, a reissue of Hearst and Trent solo records released as *Shovels & Rope*.

The three-LP package features Hearst's *Lions and Lambs*, Trent's *The Winner* and a third LP with previously-unreleased material from the Shovels & Rope archive.

Shovels & Rope plays 8 pm Sunday, Sept. 16, at Hi-Fi Music Hall; \$25 advance, \$30 door, all-ages.

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