

STREET BEATS

Buck Pets shun metal label

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

Needless to say, The Buck Pets' music wouldn't make it through any airport metal detectors.

There must be a lot of deaf cattle roaming around Texas. The Dallas foursome's music is loud.

Some would call it metal. Some could call it avant-garde. The Buck Pets don't care. Just call them when it's show time.

"Nothing really inspired us," said Andy Thompson, lead singer of the band that will perform tonight at The Blind Pig in Ann Arbor. "We started playing in a bedroom and it just developed from there."

"As far as the metal thing goes, we really hate being tagged with that. We don't even like any metal bands."

If anything, the Buck Pets are at the forefront of a growing trend. Metal, or, hard rock sounding bands are suddenly creeping up on college radio.

Thanks to the recent success of bands such as Jane's Addiction, and even, to an extent, Guns N' Roses, record labels are dressing up metal and marketing it as alternative music.

ANOTHER FEATURE that makes the Buck Pets a bit strange on the range is the record label they're on, Island Records, mostly known for U2 and Bob Marley, has the Dallas foursome on its roster.

The Buck Pets were on an Island compilation album of Texas bands. When other groups submitted sub-par demo tapes, the label's A&R person went with the noisier Buck Pets.

The group is one of the few from Dallas on the college circuit. The Buck Pets formed in 1985 when high school chums Tony Alba, Chris Savage and Thompson began rehearsing in a spare basement in Alba's house.

Aside from a few gigs in Dallas, the Buck Pets ventured out of the prairie and to the West Coast, Canada



The music of The Buck Pets started when they played in a bedroom and has developed into a growing trend — hard rock bands that are finding popularity on college radio.

and New York.

"The Dallas scene never really helped us," Thompson said. "The press and the local magazines would never write anything about us. If they did, it was a little blurb. We said, (the heck with) this and took it on the road."

"We would drive all the way to New York and play one show for \$100. We'd end up having to hit up our parents for money. We still owe them thousands of dollars from past tours."

After catching the band's act, Island Records was willing to foot the band's bills. Ian Beach joined as the bass player and the Buck Pets were unleashed.

Ron St. Germain (whose credits include Mick Jagger, Whitney Houston and Bad Brains) went into Compass Point Studios in the Bahamas to record their debut LP, "The Buck Pets," features the slush-and-gush guitar playing of Savage along with vocal utterings of Thompson. Some of the numbers actually have a rhythmic quality to them.

IN THE aftermath, the Buck Pets toured with Jane's Addiction and have garnered their share of airplay on college radio. Thompson hopes this latest tour will give the band a much-needed shot of notoriety.

"I'm getting tired of staying two to a room," he said.

So far, audiences have been quite taken aback by the massive sound the Buck Pets possess.

"I think a lot of people don't know what to expect," Thompson said. "People will come up to us after a show and say, 'Wow, I've never heard that before.' Or we get stupid comparisons to Black Sabbath or Metallica and we say, 'Huh?'

"We never considered ourselves an underground, avant-garde metal band. It's just rock 'n' roll."

The Buck Pets perform at 10 p.m. Monday, May 8, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$7.50 in advance. For information, call 996-8555.

IN CONCERT

• BUCK PETS

Buck Pets will perform at 10 p.m. Monday, May 8, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$7.50. For information, call 996-8555.

• PANDORAS

The Pandoras will perform on Tuesday, May 9, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555. The group will also perform on Thursday, May 11, at the 3-D Nightclub, 1815 N. Main, Royal Oak.

• INFECT

Infected will perform along with special guests, Oddsley, on Wednesday, May 10, at Blondie's, 21139 W. Seven Mile, Detroit. For information, call 535-8103.

• MAP OF THE WORLD

Map of the World will perform on Wednesday, May 10, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

• RHONE

Rhine and the Freedom Band will perform on Thursday, May 11, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

• PRECIOUS METAL

Precious Metal will perform along with special guests, Misanthropy and Vampira, on Thursday, May 11, at Blondie's, 21139 W. Seven Mile, Detroit. For information, call 535-8103.

• MOONMEN

The Moonmen will perform on Friday, May 12, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Canfield, off I-75. For information, call 873-8555.

• WORLD STATES

World States will perform with special guests, Ash-Fashion, on Friday, May 12, at Blondie's, 1815 N. Main, Royal Oak. For information, call 547-4476.

• JOONIE RAMBOCAT

Joonie RamboCat will perform on Friday, May 12, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

The Cowboy Junkies will perform on Saturday, May 13, at the Power Center, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. For information, call 334-9292.

The Cowboy Junkies will be at the at the Power Center May 20.



LOCAL

Here are the top 10 songs on "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-5 p.m. Sunday on WDR-FM 90.3 (repeated 5:30-4:30 p.m. Tuesday).

1. "Open Up and Bleed," Iggy Pop.
2. "Deadline," Figure 4.
3. "Should I," Ed Densley.
4. "Lies," Dharma.
5. "Detroit Won't Fall," Civilians.
6. "Love Gone Blind," Hyper Performance.
7. "The Fall," Doe Boys.
8. "Silence Calling," Jaggers and Thieves.
9. "Just Living," The Blanks.
10. "Deal Me In," Johnny Allen and The Appeal.

As would only be expected after quoting these bands, musically, they are loud and brash. Their twin, aggressive guitars are ably accompanied by the scratchy, frantic vocals of Miles Hunt and Kate Proctor. The main vocal is nasal enough to have you believing that the singer is laughing these lyrics at you, which may not be far from the truth as most of the songs display the band's subtle sense of humor.

Witness these song titles: "No, for the 13th Time," "It's Yer Money I'm

996-8555.

• ORANGE ROUGHIES

Orange Roughies will perform on Friday, May 12, at Lili's 21, 2920 Jacob, off Jos. Campau, Hamtramck. For information, call 873-8555.

• THE SHY

The Shy will perform on Friday, May 12, at Griffs Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. For information, call 334-9292.

• COWBOY JUNKIES

Cowboy Junkies will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 20, at the Power Center, Fletcher and Huron, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$18.50 and \$14.50. For information, call 99-8555.

• ASH CAN VANGUARD

Ash Can Vanguard will perform on Saturday, May 13, at Jamerson's, 1812 N. Main, Royal Oak. For information, call 547-4476.

• VICTIMS OF CIRCUMSTANCE

Victims of Circumstance will perform on Saturday, May 13, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Canfield, off I-75. For information, call 873-8555.

• CHEVELLES

The Chevelles will perform on Saturday, May 13, at Lili's 21, 2920 Jacob, off Jos. Campau, Hamtramck. For information, call 873-8555.

• SCOTT MORGAN

Scott Morgan will perform on Saturday, May 13, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

• BLUE ROOM

Blue Room will perform on Saturday, May 13, at Griffs Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. For information, call 334-9292.

• THROWING MUSES

Throwing Muses will perform at 10 p.m. Friday, May 19, at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.

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COUNTRY

Here are the top 10 songs on WCXI-AM in Detroit.

1. "I'm No Stranger to the Rain," Keith Whitley.
2. "In It Still Over," Randy Travis.
3. "If I Had You," Alabama.
4. "My Train of Thought," Barbara Mandrell.
5. "Down That Road Tonight," Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.
6. "Young Love," The Judds.
7. "I Got You," Dwight Yoakam.
8. "Love On Lock," Earl Thomas Conley.
9. "Don't You Take Us Away," Patty Loveless.
10. "Who You Gonna Blame It on This Time," Vera Evdina.

After, Baby" and "Give, Give, Give Me More, More, More."

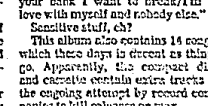
All of which possess some lyrical gems, such as "I'd like my friends to be rich and I'll never do a stitch." Or this one, "Forget your heart, it's your bank I want to break/It's in love with myself and nobody else."

Sensitive stuff, eh?

This album also contains 14 songs, which these days is direct as things go. Apparently, the compact disc and cassette contain extra tracks in the ongoing attempt by record companies to kill record sales.

The Wonder Stuff may not have rock'n'roll, but at least they'll dirty the airwaves with a laugh for awhile.

— Corinne Wright



— Wayne Peal

— Wayne Peal

By Debbie L. Sklar
staff writer

Five individuals from some of Detroit's more well-known bands gathered at Ambience Recording Studio's recently to cut a 45, "Music for MD," to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

"The idea stemmed about three months ago," said Scott Forbes, a national accounts manager for Hubert Distributors in Pontiac. The company distributes Budweiser, which is the sponsor of the project.

Forbes along with Jim Calica, a sales manager for Tom Ryan Distributors of Flint (another Budweiser distributor), decided to combine their interests and backgrounds in music in hopes of raising funds for MD.

"We thought we could get some local talent together and really do this thing with perfection," Calica said. "Kind of a 'We Are the World' type of thing."

"Obviously, this isn't on the Michael Jackson/Bruce Springsteen level, but we do feel there is an awful lot of talent in the Detroit metro area that we could solicit. We believe it is a rare opportunity to produce something really special."

— Larry O'Connor

REVIEWS

DOOLITTLE

— The Pixies

So here are The Pixies, the Boston-based best new thing in music. At least that's what everyone has been saying of late.

From the basis of "Doolittle" (Elektra), we can't understand what all the fuss is about.

Sure, this group has the modern post-punk sound of scrapping guitars, creeping bass lines and near-coma vocals. But when is new music no longer new?

The Pixies don't seem to be breaking ground that hasn't already been covered by The Fall or Sonic Youth for that matter.

Perhaps the whole post-modernist distortion has become a cliché. Nonetheless, The Pixies carry on with the music press fawning all over them.

Simply, in the essence here, Black Francis works his guitar like a snake charmer, trying to lure the listener out gradually and then going into a frenzy. Sometimes it flows, as in the number, "Fame."

— Larry O'Connor



"Johnny Bee" Paganek signs a drum head, with help from Scott Forbes, a Budweiser distributor, for Muscular Dystrophy poster child Ryan Young at the Ambience Recording Studio in Orchard Lake.

The five musicians involved in the project are Johnny (Johnny "Bee") Paganek and Mark Gougeon, who are with Mitch Ryder's band; Jim McCarty, a guitarist; Tommy Cort, keyboard player with Mitch Ryder;

and Ron Panghorn, a drummer and member of Was (Not Was).

McCARTY PLAYED guitar on all Ryder's hits and performed with the late Jimi Hendrix. Paganek is the spokesman for the project.

— Larry O'Connor

THE MOTOWN SONGBOOK

— Ruby Turner

Old show business adage: If you need a hit record, dip into the Motown catalog.

Turner, an R&B singer from Birmingham — the one in England, that is — does just that on her second RCA/Jive release.

Her choices are solid, if not surprising, as she gives a neo-disco treatment to such chestnuts as "Nowhere to Run," "Just My Imagination" and "Ooo Baby, Baby," among seven others.

Turner's an adequate singer, if not quite a match for Diana Ross, Martha Reeves or even such minor Motown princesses as Kim Weston and Brenda Holloway.

The songs are catchy and danceable, but then so were the originals.

What saves this album from immediate dismissal, is the presence of many original Motown stars in supporting roles. The Four Tops, Temptations, Jimmy ("What Becomes of the Broken Hearted") Ruffin and

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THE EIGHT LEGGED GROOVE MACHINE

— The Wonder Stuff

This group was touted as the one of the "new big things" by the British music press last year and now they have a release in the United States with this album on Polydor Records.

With this evidence, their reputation is well-deserved.

If you were looking for frames of reference, I would point you in the direction of the guitar power and pop sensibilities of That Petrol Emotions and the Buzzcocks.

As would only be expected after quoting these bands, musically, they are loud and brash. Their twin, aggressive guitars are ably accompanied by the scratchy, frantic vocals of Miles Hunt and Kate Proctor. The main vocal is nasal enough to have you believing that the singer is laughing these lyrics at you, which may not be far from the truth as most of the songs display the band's subtle sense of humor.

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