

Lobos return to roots

By Larry O'Connor staff writer

For Los Lobos, there is no more "La Bamba." That makes them happy. Perhaps now the East L.A. five-piece can get down to the business of making music — their own music.

While the soundtrack from the hit movie thrusts Los Lobos into the spotlight, the irony of it all was this was anything but a cover band. In fact, Los Lobos' creative hybrid of Mexican folk with rock'n'roll sensibilities had a good swell of followers on the college circuit. The band's first two albums — "How Will the Wolf Survive?" and "By the Light of the Moon" — sold decently and were critically acclaimed.

Then came the film biography of 1950s Latino music sensation Ritchie Valens and the ensuing soundtrack. The LP sold more than 2 million copies and the title track remained No. 1 for three weeks on the charts.

Fickle followers of college radio went their way, newly-born fans clamored for "La Bamba."

"We had it [support from college radio], said vocalist/guitarist David Hidalgo in a telephone interview. "It's funny, college radio. Once we were accepted by the masses... We weren't cool anymore."

Certainly, Los Lobos couldn't be accused of a sell-out. After all, the band followed the soundtrack with "La Pistola y El Corazon" — an album of Mexican folk songs sung in Spanish.

So, when other bands would be counting the profits, Los Lobos talks about starting from scratch. "Neighborhood" (Warner/Slash) is the group's latest album. The LP is checkfull of the hallmarks of what made critics rave about Los Lobos in the first place — Mexican folk rhythms and rock'n'roll along with new elements such as country and R&B.

Also, Los Lobos gets by with a little help from their friends. Band



The soundtrack from "La Bamba" thrusts Los Lobos into the spotlight. Now, rather than rhythms and rock'n'roll along with new elements such as country and R&B.

Seeing the show

Los Lobos will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 27, at State Theater, 2111 Woodward, Detroit. Reserved tickets are \$17.50. For more information call 996-8742.

member Cesar Rosas and blues great Willie Dixon co-wrote "I Can't Understand." John Hiatt and The Band's Levon Helm serve as guest musicians on the LP.

"We were happy with what happened with 'La Bamba,'" Hidalgo said. "It got us in front of a lot of people."

"After 'La Pistola y El Corazon' we wanted to tour. We just wanted to make a good record."

A part of what makes "Neighborhood" a good record is the songwriting. Hardly prosaic, the lyrics have a directness and a sincerity few records possess in this day and age.

Drummer and multi-instrumentalist Louis Perez shares the songwriting with Hidalgo. Their songs about love can be optimistic without being maudlin.

SKETCHES of life in barrios are particularly vivid. The album

jacket contains paintings of the neighborhood they sing about where crime and decay have taken their toll.

The title track speaks of today. Hidalgo recalls the way it used to be where he lives.

"East L.A. was a working class neighborhood," Hidalgo said. "There were kids everywhere. Problems existed then, but they were not as out of proportion as they are now. It was like any small town in a way because you were

away from the city itself."

Remembering the old neighborhood is one of few reminiscences Hidalgo allows himself. He does ask about Joe's Star Lounge in Ann Arbor where the band performed several times.

But Los Lobos is very much in the present. Although the group has been together for more than seven years — coming out the L.A. club scene with bands such as X and the Blasters — music still very much about discovery.

"We never go too much one way. It's a combination of all this stuff we grew up with," Hidalgo said. "That's what makes this a unique band, I guess."

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IN CONCERT

- **SOMETHIN' WILD**
Somethin' Wild will perform Monday, Oct. 22, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **SNUFF**
Snuff will perform with guests, Samiam and Mol. Trifid, Tuesday, Oct. 23, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 994-3562.
- **THE DWAVVES**
The Dwaaves will perform with guests, Borax, Tuesday, Oct. 23, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **FAIR GAME**
Fair Game will perform Wednesday, Oct. 24, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **JOE AND OUT**
Joe and Out will perform with guests, Elter and The Gear, Wednesday, Oct. 24, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 994-3562.
- **JOHNNY WINTER**
Johnny Winter will perform Wednesday, Oct. 24, at the Nectarine Ballroom, 510 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$12.50 in advance. For information, call 996-8742.
- **THE GENERALS**
The Generals will perform with guests, Freemasons, Thursday, Oct. 25, at 3-D, 1815 N. Main, Royal Oak. For information, call 589-3344.
- **OPOSSUMS**
Opussums will perform 9:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 25, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. Assembly Required will perform 6-9 p.m. There is no cover for the Assembly Required show. For information, call 996-8555.
- **GRANFALLOON**
Granfalloon will perform with guests, Crazy Lizard, Thursday, Oct. 25, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 994-3562.
- **RED C**
Red C will perform 10 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 25, at the Waiting Room Lounge, 3216 Carpenter, Hamtramck. For information, call 891-9797.
- **THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS**
They Might Be Giants will perform with guests, Carmage De Forest, Friday, Oct. 26, at the Michigan Theatre, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Reserved seats are \$14.50. For information, call 996-8742.
- **CASS CORRIDOR FOOD CO-OP**
Cass Corridor Food Co-op will present folk singer and dulcimerist Eden Winter, reggae deejay Eddie
- Riot and solo jazz artist Ralph Koodarski Friday, Oct. 26, at the Food Co-op, 4201 Cass Ave., Detroit. For information, call 831-7452.
- **DUKE TUMATOE & THE POWER TRIO**
Duke Tumatoe & The Power Trio will perform Friday and Saturday, Oct. 26-27, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.
- **URBATIONS**
Urbations will perform with guests, Driven' Sideways, Friday, Oct. 26, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **GOOBER AND THE PEAS**
Goobers and the Peas will perform with guest, Ed's Redempting Qualities, Friday, Oct. 26, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 994-3562.
- **VAVOOM**
Vavoom will perform with guests, Lucy's Alibi, Friday, Oct. 26, at Finney's Pub, 3965 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 831-8070.
- **LOS LOBOS**
Los Lobos will perform Saturday, Oct. 27, at the State Theater, 2111 Woodward, Detroit. Reserved seats are \$17.50. For information, call 996-8742.
- **BLUES FESTIVAL**
The Butler Twins, Harmonica Shah, "Redford" Steve Pappas, James Wallin and Juanita McCray will all perform Saturday, Oct. 27, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.
- **THE GORIES**
The Gories will perform Saturday, Oct. 27, at Finney's Pub, 3965 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 831-8070.
- **CAPTAIN DAVE**
Captain Dave and the Psychedelic Lounge Cats will perform Saturday, Oct. 27, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 994-3562.
- **REO SPEEDWAGON**
REO Speedwagon will perform Saturday, Oct. 27, at the Fox Theatre in Detroit. Tickets are \$21.50. For information, call 567-6000.
- **PHINEAS GAGE**
Phineas Gage will perform Sunday, Oct. 28, at The Shelter in St. Andrews Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.
- **FLEETWOOD MAC**
Fleetwood Mac will perform Sunday, Oct. 28, at the Palace in Auburn Hills. All tickets for the originally scheduled dates will be honored. Otherwise, tickets are available for \$20. For information, call 377-0100.

These Animals thirst for success

By Larry O'Connor staff writer

Fortunately, Thirsty Forest Animals are only carnivorous when it comes to performing music. Indeed, they are hungry.

And band members are also young. Bass player and vocalist Matthew Baker and guitarist Campbell Doughty are fresh-faced chaps bordering on their 20s.

Thirsty Forest Animals bellow their name, possessing a sound that is optimistic and surging. Most would call it new music.

"That's where you would find it in the record store," said Baker, 19, who lives in Southfield. "There is that definite scene there. We don't try to particularly cater to any group. I hope we'll keep changing."

Seeing the show

Thirsty Forest Animals will perform Nov. 11 at The Shelter, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For more information call 961-MELT.

Change is to be expected. After all, Thirsty Forest Animals are only peeking over the edge of life.

Instead of acting bigger than their years, Baker and Doughty fully recognize and accept the place they are at — which might reveal an already

yearling maturity.

As a result, some of the band's more recently written songs are taking on an edge. Whereas "Sculpture" — the Thirsty Forest Animals' debut cassette tape — is a collection of youthful introspection, the group is veering toward more intense, inexplicable territory.

"This is a time when you're growing up a lot of negative emotions come out," said Doughty, 19, who speaks in a distinct Aussie growl. "And it finds its way into the music."

Thirsty Forest Animals met at school. Guitarist Andrew Peters, drummer Mark Patterson, Baker and Doughty attended Southfield Christian High School. Doughty moved to the area with his family from Australia.

Despite the conservative setting, the four got together one day and started playing. The vibe was right, as they say. Thirsty Forest Animals clicked from the start.

The band entered the studio with a handful of songs and recorded "Sculpture." Though all four come from different backgrounds, the cassette reveals a tightness that should serve Thirsty Forest Animals well in the future.

"If you talk to us, our views are so different," Baker said. "Then we get together and we all head in the right direction."

One direction the band has not taken is becoming a regular entity on the club circuit. Thirsty Forest

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TOP HITS

- Best-selling records of the week:
1. "Praying for Time," George Michael
 2. "I Don't Have the Heart," James Ingram
 3. "Love and Affection," Nelson
 4. "Something Happened on the Way to Heaven," Phil Collins
 5. "Close to You," Maxi Priest
 6. "Ice Ice Baby," Vanilla Ice
 7. "Thieves in the Temple," Prince
 8. "Black Cat," Janet Jackson
 9. "Romeo," Dina
 10. "Oh Girl," Paul Young
- (Source: Cashbox magazine)

LOCAL

- Here are the top 10 songs on "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-5 p.m. Sundays (repeated 5:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays) on WDTN-FM 92.9.
1. "Bullfighter's Duet Dance," Jack Rallex
 2. "I'm So Tender," Imitation of Life
 3. "Lofly and Beautiful," GTOY
 4. "Dirty Rascal," Wrath of Christias
 5. "4:30," Orlene Basilio
 6. "Blindfold," Phineas Gage
 7. "Windward," Blue Nimbos
 8. "Original Sin," Star of David
 9. "Testimony," Aural Sect
 10. "Calling Your Name," Jimmy Lifton

REVIEWS

ALL SHOOK DOWN

— The Replacements

This record says Replacements on it, but after hearing the varied texture of the songs and seeing the extensive list of "musicians who played on this recorded thing," you get the feeling that "All Shook Down" is a Paul Westerberg solo album that the other Replacements happened to play on.

The fact is, Westerberg's maturing, at least musically. It's been a gradual process from the early '80s thrashing punk of "The Replacements Slink" and "Sorry, Ma, Forget to Take Out the Trash" to the bopping pop of last year's "Don't Tell a Soul" and finally to "All Shook Down," an LP of acoustically-based songs with the rough edges left on.

It's that roughness, the demo-like quality that brings an immediate appeal to "All Shook Down," which, incidentally, has one of the greatest album covers ever.

The music is pretty straightforward, kept in time by the omnipresent pulsing of Chris Mars' drums. For old-time 'Mats fans, Westerberg threw in the rave-ups "My Little Problem," a wailing duet with Concrete Blonde's Johnette Napolitano, and "Bent Out of Shape," a



"Tim"-like tune featuring the staple siren of Slim Dunlap's guitar.

But Westerberg is at his best on songs like the title track, "When It Began," and "Someone Take the Wheel." Rock's potted poet laments in "Nobody," a great tune with a Beatlesque guitar hook, "You're still in love with nobody/And I used to be nobody."

His hold-up-the-bar lyrics have a knack for hitting the heart without missing the guts. "Rush was the first word you were taught," he hisses with a mouth full of spit in the opener, "Merry Go Round."

— John Cortez

NEW LEGEND — New Legend

The name of the CD as well as the band is New Legend. I'm not quite sure they live up to that title, but I am sure that their debut disc is worth a listen.

The music of New Legend is best described as a mix between the late great Stevie Ray Vaughan and raspy singer Joe Cocker.

This band hails from the Lowlands of Germany, this is the stretch of land that borders on Holland. They sing of this in their gritty blues tune appropriately entitled "Lowlands."

"I was born in the flat land/Where the sky's always low/Your head is consistently higher/Than the earth below."

There are nine solid, raucous bluesy tracks in this package. For the most part they're all pretty palatable to a blues lover's ear. One song of specific merit might fit the bill. "Feet Good!" This is a classic blues cut.

Peter Goodman has that raspy vocal quality that melts in with



the placid guitar style of guitarist Carl Carlton.

"I see as song as 50 percent music, 50 percent music lyrics," said Carlton. "A song, even a funny song is a little piece of art."

The band has a 19-year-old key boardist, Pascal Kravetz, but for the most part he is seldom heard.

The song "Mean Mistreater" breaks the blues mold and helps wind up the disc on a purely rock'n'roll note.

While this is the band's debut album they are not novices to the rock'n'roll biz, all but one of the members of the group used to play in Dutch rock bands through out the '80s. This seems to have broadened their spectrum a bit.

If you're in the market for a little something new in the R&B category, I think New Legend might fit the bill. Their compact disc comes complete with all the words to the songs. That's always nice.

— Joseph Hoffman

RAGGED GLORY — Neil Young

Neil Young & Crazy Horse's newest, "Ragged Glory," isn't ragged or glorious.

Much like Young's career, this one has moments of greatness and mediocrity. Young, reunited with Billy Talbot, Ralph Molina of Crazy Horse fame, this time joined by guitarist Frank Sampedro, set out to achieve the elusive "garage band" sound that so many nostalgia-feeling aging rockers have been seeking. They found mixed results in a barn on Young's farm.

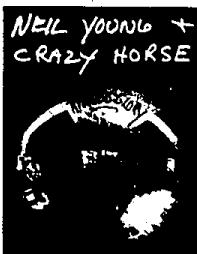
The sound is raw and lively, but muddled mixing sometimes ruins otherwise good tracks.

But when Young and Crazy Horse succeed, which is most of the time, this recording is worth a look.

"Country Home" reveals that Young still yearns for the simple life, and says "That Used to Be" hints that perhaps the years are creeping up on him and he'd like to return to the days of his youth.

"Over and Over" is another well-intentioned love song of sorts — nothing earth shattering, just a decent track.

In "F*in' Up," an intentionally brazen bit of the hat to censors everywhere, Young dares the moral majority to slap a sticker on his album. In "White Line" a deceptively titled song about driving at night, succeeds in blending folk rocker Young's passion with his electric guitar inclinations.



Even the somewhat preachy "Mother Earth" (Natural Anthem) works well.

Unfortunately, Young also includes several "so what" tracks in which he falls back into one of his greatest failings — his refusal to end a song before the idea gets old — "Love to Burn" and "Love and Only Love," as well as the downright awful "Farmer John."

Endless guitar licks that do little more than highlight average musicianship really defeats the purpose behind the reason we buy these records in the first place — Young's caustic wit and angry no-longer-young man views.

— Gerald Frustey