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LET'S GO! STREET SCENE

MUSIC NOTES



CHRISTINA PUOCO

Loving sets up site on Internet

The industrial band Machines of Loving Grace has launched its own World Wide Web site on the Internet. This marks one of the first music-related Web sites to be administered by the artists, as opposed to being label- or fan-initiated.

The band has stocked its site with downloadable artwork from every Machines release as well as video clips, biographical and tour information, lyrics, a fan club registry, merchandise area and other features. The site also offers access to every track and re-mix ever released by the band and a photo album.

It can be accessed at <http://www.emerald.net/mlg>. The band can be reached at MLGinfo@emerald.net.

Alvin's in Detroit is throwing a farewell party for longtime Detroit musician Missy Gibson who will be moving to the West Coast early next year. Gibson's band Breech will perform that night. For more information, call Alvin's at (313) 832-2255. The bar is at 5756 Cass Ave. on Wayne State University's campus.

Capital Records has released W.A.S.P.'s greatest hits album, "First Blood, Last Cuts." They're calling it "a celebration of a band that will be sorely missed."

Quick name three W.A.S.P. songs...

Other new releases include "Toward the Within," an audio and visual documentation of new music from Dead Can Dance; "The Platinum Collection," a Blondie collection (EMI); "Nat King Cole: The Greatest Hits" (Capitol); "Private Dancer," a three-CD box set retrospective of Tina Turner's career (Capitol); and "Across the Great Divide," a three-disc box set by The Band (Capitol).

Guns N' Roses guitarist Slash will release his solo effort, "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere," under the name Snakepit in mid-February. In addition to Slash on guitars, Snakepit includes GNR drummer Matt Sorum, Alice in Chains bassist Mike Inez, rhythm guitarist Gilby Clarke and vocalist Eric Dover, guitarist for the now-defunct band Jellyfish.

Slash describes the album as "spontaneous, free-form, with only two ballads. It's a hard rock album with a lot of screaming."

"Although he plans to tour in support of the album, Slash says his first priority is Guns N' Roses."

A&M Records founders Herb Alpert and Jerry Moss have created a new record company associated with Geffen Records. The first releases on Almo Sounds will be Angel Corpus Christi, an alternative band from San Francisco; Rake's Progress, a New York City rock band; and Sherree Ford-Payne, an R&B singer from L.A.

Alpert and Moss founded A&M Records in 1962. In late 1989, they sold to PolyGram, but were retained to run the company. They officially exited in mid-1993.

If you have a question or a comment for Christina Puoco, call her at (313) 963-2047, mailbox No. 2130 on a touch-tone phone, or write her at The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich. 48150.

Send us your Band of Year nominations

There are a lot of impressive local bands around Detroit, and we're looking for the ones that our readers loved the most.

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers is asking readers to nominate their local favorites for 1994 Band of the Year honor.

There's a lot of choices out there — Wig, Big Chief, Majesty Crush, Spunk, The Verve Pipe, The Exceptions, Immigrant Sons, Snot, Hot Footin' Puddin' Pie, among others.

Last year's winner was East Lansing-based The Verve Pipe, who will headline a concert on New Year's Eve at St. Andrew's Hall in Detroit.

Deadline is Dec. 16. Call in your nominations to the 24-hour hotline (313) 963-2021 or send it in to: Street Scene, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, 48150. Please include your name and phone number.

Out of breakup comes Wheels

After 445 shows, three albums and two EPs, The Hannibals called it quits in mid-summer. Now two fledgling bands — Nineteen Wheels and the Tearjerks — are benefitting from it.

BY CHRISTINA PUOCO
STAFF WRITER



In July, East Lansing roots rockers The Hannibals exited the music scene the same way they entered — quietly, unpretentiously and without carnivalesque fanfare.

There wasn't a series of "farewell shows" or press releases mailed to entertainment writers. Instead, they notified only the hundreds of fans on their mailing list with an emotional, six-paragraph message printed on simple black and white postcards.

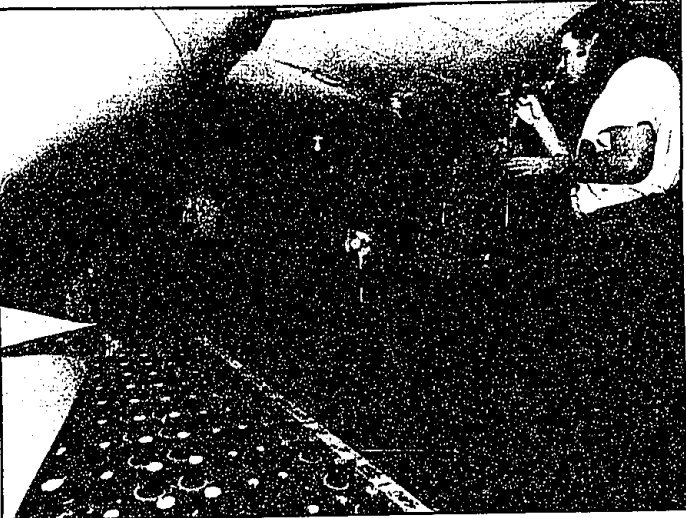
"In a day where farewell tours are the standard, we found ourselves again a square peg in a round-hole world," The Hannibals wrote. "We've never been the kind of people who actively seek out such fanfare and to break that tradition would go against many of the ideals we so strongly believe in."

"We realize that it might not make sense to all of you. For those in that category, we sincerely apologize and ask that you please try to understand."

The breakup was an amicable one. Guitarist/songwriter Chris Geherin moved to New Mexico to pursue a doctoral degree. Chris Johnston, lead singer and guitarist, and bass player Scott Owens moved over their musical choices while drummer Matt Aljian returned to his hometown of Birmingham. Recently, he joined the Tearjerks.

"We had been together almost seven years, and we had done a lot together. (There were) no hard feelings. We had done more than we had ever set out to do," the soft-spoken Johnston said via telephone from his East Lansing home.

In early fall, Johnston and Owens formed Nineteen Wheels with Lansing-area musicians drummer Jesse



Rolling along: Nineteen Wheels will perform at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor Saturday, Dec. 10, and at The Ritz in Roseville Friday, Dec. 16.

Soriano and bassist Tim Marzotati. Owens and Johnston both stepped on guitars supplying a fuller, more straight-forward sound. Johnston rarely played guitar in The Hannibals because most of the songs were written with one guitar part.

"It's kind of hard to get used to singing a song and performing a song with a guitar in my hand. I can't really walk around the stage the same way that I used to, not that I'm a big mover and shaker," Johnston said with a laugh.

Nineteen Wheels chose to play only one Hannibal song, "Shadow of a Man" penned by Owens, but the band maintains the same basic theory.

"In both bands, we were never one to improvise and the way of music that we do, there's not really a lot of

room for that. Even the best bands that are doing similar music probably don't really improvise. That hasn't changed," said Johnston, a Birmingham native.

The Hannibals were probably one of the more well-known local bands. With Nineteen Wheels, Johnston and Owens are starting from the ground up. Fans don't pack shows yet, and they aren't familiar enough with Nineteen Wheels songs to sing every word.

"That took some getting used to, (but) it takes a lot of the pressure off. I'm in a young band again (and it will) take awhile for our songs to develop."

To familiarize fans with their music, Nineteen Wheels will soon head to the studio to record their debut effort.

"We want to put something out just because it's important, especially for a new band for someone to be able to take your music home and understand it and hear it better. You start to hear things differently."

"I think the whole fresh blood thing and new sound is good for us (and) good for the people who listen to us."

Nineteen Wheels performs Saturday, Dec. 10, with the Restroom Poets at the Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call (313) 696-8555. The band will also open for The Pursuits of Happiness and The Gandharvas on Friday, Dec. 16, at The Ritz, 17580 Fraxho, Roseville. Tickets are \$10. Call (810) 645-6666 or (810) 778-6044 for more information.

... And a future with Tearjerks

BY CHRISTINA PUOCO
STAFF WRITER

Tearjerks only formed in February but already its members have learned the perils of performing live. While bands like Dinosaur Jr. and Frisious are getting pelted with Doc Marten boots and daniel shirts, Tearjerks have found themselves the objects of messier ammunition — Silly String.

"It's so funny because on the videotape (the announcer says) 'Ladies and gentlemen, the Tearjerks.' Then I smoke all over the place. We come out and Mike (Brown, vocalist/guitarist) starts playing and as the camera starts focusing in he was pelted with Silly String. He had little whiskers so it was dripping from his face, his microphone stand and his guitar," said lead singer/guitarist Mike Nolan with a laugh.

"Then I started singing and I started getting pelted. They were having a blast, and we didn't want to say 'Hey, knock it off.' It's Silly String

night so we had to expect it. It added to the character of the night."

With incidents like that and endorsements by the likes of Rootbox vocalist M.E. Jonson, Tearjerks are creating a name for themselves. Now the band is being thrust into the spotlight even more with the recent addition of ex-Hannibals drummer Matt Aljian.

He hooked up with Tearjerks during last summer's Earthfest. After the Tearjerks' set, the then-drummerless quartet — which also includes bassist Jim Sabourin and vocalist/key-boardist Landon Summay — roamed around Earthfest mingling with other bands. They mentioned to a handful of people that they were looking for a permanent drummer. Three suggested Aljian.

Coincidentally, Aljian was "scouring Earthfest" for a new band. Hearing that Aljian was there, Nolan asked a mutual friend to introduce them. Aljian liked what he heard on Tearjerks' demo tape. After two shows, the Birmingham resident realized Tearjerks was in his future.

"There really wasn't a lot of effort. We're not pulling teeth for the music to happen. It's definitely a good thing," said Aljian.

Nolan, a Troy resident, agrees.

"He's very communicative and very interested. I think it comes from The Hannibals. He wants to make sure there's a distinction in each song," said Nolan who hosts open mic night at Planet Ant Coffeehouse in Hamtramck. "When we played our last show at Griff's Grill, some friends (said) he has a very quirky style. He just never misses a beat, not that we haven't had that before. He changes all the time and he never throws you off."

Change is a main player in the Tearjerks' music. Besides Aljian's evolving drum style, Nolan swaps his gritty vocals with the bluesy, guttural stylings of Brown.

Facts of Tearjerks' musical personality remain the same. The simple organ by Summay provides the undercurrent of the Tearjerks' music, which resembles Canada's Blues Rodeo. The songs stick to the three-verse style.

As their name suggests, Tearjerks lyrics revolve around broken romances: "I know it sounds a little dark to just pretend I have no heart. But I fall in love and I fall apart when I do the same thing they do," Nolan sings in "Do the Same Thing."

Fans will be able to take Tearjerks home with them in early spring when the band releases their debut CD. Recording will be in January at Warren's Boneyard Studio, run by Sister Seed member Benjamin Ridley.

"We think, in the short time we've been together, that the best stuff is yet to come. We all feel like there's something there. When we get our schedules together, it should take off for us," Nolan said.

Tearjerks perform Thursday, Dec. 8, at Grounds Coffeehouse on the campus of University of Detroit Mercy, 4001 W. McNichols, Detroit. Call (313) 963-1945 for more information. They will also perform at Lili's, 3830 Jacob, Hamtramck, Friday, Dec. 9, with Capt. Brody. For more information, call (313) 875-8363.

At Lili's:
Tearjerks —
Landon
Summay
(from left),
Mike Nolan,
Matt Aljian,
Mihey
Brown and
Jim Sabou-
rin — per-
form at Lili's
in Ham-
tramck Fri-
day, Dec. 9.

