

MUSIC NOTES



CHRISTINA PUOCO

Johnny, what's with the hair?

It first happened to Jon Bon Jovi and then Eddie Van Halen. Now the Goo Goo Dolls' singer Johnny Rzeznik is getting bombarded with questions about why he grew his hair. "People seem to be hung up on my hair. They say stuff like 'You've got good hair (he does),' " he said. "I wish they got hung up on my music instead of my hair."

The Goo Goo Dolls visited Detroit late last month to promote their new record "A Boy Named Goo." (Warner Bros.) The band returns to Detroit — St. Andrew's Hall to be exact — on Wednesday, May 3. For more information, call (313) 961-MELT.

Here's one that spells out the sad future of vinyl. Last weekend Collective Soul asked me to pick up for them. Ginger's latest CD "Far Out" (Netwerk) — lead singer Ed Roland is a Grapes of Wrath fan — so I stopped by Harmony House in Berkeley.

I couldn't find "Far Out" but I was waiting in line to pay for my CDs when a man behind me asks his female companion, "What are these?" She explained to him that the little yellow plastic pieces are the adapters that allow you to play 45s on turntables.

The scary thing was, the couple was in their early to mid-50s so they must have grown up when vinyl was still hot.

Fans of the Cure who attended the Page/Plant show at The Palace earlier in the month got a nice surprise when Robert Plant introduced his guitarist — Porl Thompson of the Cure.

Soon after he said that Thompson "would have been better off if he had stayed where he was (!)," the band broke into the Cure's "Lullaby." Looking around the venue during the song, you could see the age difference between the new and original Zeppelin fans.

Older fans, many of whom were stretched-out original Zeppelin concert shirts, sat there with their mouths hanging open, trying to figure out what the heck they were playing. Younger fans, getting their first real-life glimpse of pseudo-Led Zeppelin, danced away.

If you have a question for Christina Puoco, you can write her care of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich. 48150, or you can call her using a touch-tone phone at (313) 953-2047 ext. 2130. You can also e-mail her a note at CPuoco@AOL.COM.

CD stars not-so-urban singers

A group of Detroit area singers/songwriters have decided to dispell the misconceptions about "folkies" by releasing a compilation CD entitled "Lost in Detroit: The New Urban Songwriters."

By CHRISTINA PUOCO
STAFF WRITER



Singer/songwriters are the Rodney Dangerfields of the music industry. Often times they're dismissed as "folkies." So people who would be interested in their music if they heard it, stay away from the coffeehouses and clubs where these singers perform.

To dispel these misconceptions, a group of Detroit area singer/songwriters have released the compilation disc "Lost in Detroit: The New Urban Songwriters" (Trampoline). All of the artists — Chris Moore of Crossed Wire, Priscilla Ederle, Scott Fab, Adam Druckman, and Alex Lumelsky — are from the suburbs but Druckman used "urban" in the title to make their project's intentions clear.

The last big wave of singer/songwriters in the early 1970s like Jackson Brown and Neil Young, all sang about rural life like in the song "Home with No Name." These five musicians sing about relationships and other things that city folk can relate to, Druckman explained.

Tooting their horn

Besides that, all the musicians on the CD have a reputation for being very humble and they figured it was about time to toot their own horn.

"I kind of thought it was about time that we stopped that, let people listen to what we're doing and see who's interested," Druckman said.

The CD was recorded at his Dream Street Recording Studio in Southfield, where Druckman also worked on Ederle's disc "Last Will & Testament." Fab's "Peasants Dream" (Rustbelt), Lumelsky's "Wake Up Dreams," and Wally Pleasant's "Houses of the Holy Moly" (Miranda).

Just because the songs on the CD are acoustic, it doesn't mean that Moore, Ederle, Fab, Druckman and Lumelsky can't rock. They all have rock in their blood. Moore fronts the group Crossed Wire, Ederle used to be in Cylinderead, Lumelsky's history is with Phineas Gage, and



Struggling songwriters: Alex Lumelsky (from left), Chris Moore, Priscilla Ederle, Scott Fab and Adam Druckman will perform songs from "Lost in Detroit: The New Urban Songwriters" April 23 at the Magic Bag Theatre Cafe, Ferndale.

Druckman played in a variety of rock bands. Fab and Moore also dabbled in hardcore punk during their teenage years.

"Chris and I know each other from the hardcore days of Negative Approach, the Necros and the other (bands) in the Detroit hardcore scene. We both played the drums in a band. Neither of us played guitar and neither of us sang," Fab said.

The two careers may look unrelated to outsiders, but Fab added, to him they're correlated.

"There's an edge and there's a rawness to it. It's polished and rough around the edges. It stirs me like the days of old. I don't feel a whole lot different except I was beating on drums before."

On the forefront

Now that they've stepped up to the mic, they're on the forefront of the scene. Moore is probably one of the most widely acclaimed singer/songwriters in the area having opened shows as a solo act for American Music Club, Tori Amos, and Sarah McLachlan. Two songs that he wrote for Crossed Wire were featured in the recent Eric Stolz/Meg Tilly movie "Sleep With Me."

His band is currently working on a

full-length album at White Room Studios in Detroit, but Druckman said, Moore isn't planning on releasing a solo record. That's one of the things that makes "Lost in Detroit" special. Not only are they talented, they have good-marketing skills.

Other songs on the CD are acoustic versions of the originals that appeared on the respective singer's record.

Fab, Druckman, Lumelsky and Ederle aren't as well-known to the masses but have received a fair amount of acclaim by critics and booking agents. Ederle's debut album "Last Will & Testament" won the 1994 "Best Folk Record" award, even though this group of musicians would disagree on the category. Fab's performances have included gigs with Sheryl Crow and Jonathan Richman.

Aside from owning Dream Street Recording Studio, Druckman is finally working on his debut CD which should be out in fall. Lumelsky, who has opened for The Cranes and Goober & The Peas, recently finished a successful six-week tour of the Midwest and Southern states with Wally Pleasant.

Lumelsky and Druckman, both graduates of Southfield Lathrup High School, also co-founded Trampoline

Records, the label which put out "Lost in Detroit" as well as Ederle's and Lumelsky's albums.

By playing around together, the five musicians have created a close-knit family-like relationship. Still, the main priority is to expose each other's music to those who may not go out to see shows, Druckman said.

"The first thing we want to do is get a wider audience for what we're doing. Over the past three years, we kind of gravitated toward each other as friends," Druckman said. "It sort of happened kind of naturally because we were all doing similar things."

"Because of that, we started playing shows together. We also do shows separately, but when we play together, somehow the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

The CD release party for "Lost in Detroit" is Sunday, April 23, at the Magic Bag Theatre Cafe, 22518 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Doors open at 7 p.m.; showtime is 8 p.m. Tickets are \$6 for the 18 and over show. For more information, call (810) 544-3030. Trampoline Records can be reached at P.O. Box 20811, Ferndale, Mich. 48225-0811, or by calling (810) 258-2765.

SOUND Bites

Philo Boddow

- Members:
- Bill Palers: guitarist/vocalist
- Wayne Palers: guitarist/vocalist
- Hyatt Yu: bassist
- Dave DeVore: drummer

Release: self-titled CD

Experience is definitely something that Philo Boddow has in his corner. Drummer Dave DeVore came from Something Wild, the infamous rock band that literally had to escape from Russia during an uprising. Bassist Hyatt Yu has played in a handful of punk bands in New York's Lower East Side.

And while Philo Boddow's dark, dirgy, sometimes-industrial influenced sound is easily traced to Yu of West Bloomfield and the Palers of Canton, it's definitely a departure for DeVore.

"It's really different; I don't know exactly where it falls. There's an element of a lot of different things that attract me very much," he said.

The infant band didn't waste any time releasing a CD. DeVore said that it was important to him to have something that fans could take home with them.

"One of the big mistakes in our old band was we never had anything available in stores. If we did, we could have done a lot better for ourselves," he said.

The CD was mixed by the currently hot producer and DeVore's former bandmate Tim Patalan, who produced Sponge's smash debut "Rotting Pineapple."

The band, who recently opened for Today Is the Day and Cop Shoot Cop, plans on touring around the United States to promote the record. They don't want to fall into the local band trap of just playing around the city.

"We don't want to become the biggest band in Ann Arbor."

For more information about Philo Boddow, write Magnolia Records, 118 S. Main St., Suite 163, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104.

—Christina Puoco

By CHRISTINA PUOCO
STAFF WRITER

Even though Collective Soul's album "Hints, Allegations and Things Left Unsaid" went platinum, the band considers its self-titled recent release its debut.

"The first one was a demo that I did; that's it, no more no less. The guys aren't even on it," said singer/guitarist Ed Roland. "This is the first band record. This is what we have been working for years to get to do."

Hoping to land a publishing deal, Roland recorded "Hints, Allegations and Things Left Unsaid," ironically, on the heels of Collective Soul's breakup. However, radio stations around the band's hometown of Stockbridge, Ga., got around Roland's tape. "Shine" became such a big regional hit that Roland was forced to put the band back together — this time with his brother Dean on rhythm guitar along with lead guitarist Ross Childress, drummer Shane Evans and bassist/backing vocalist Will Turpin — so they could play live.

Have a listen

To hear music by REM plus R.A.I.N.N., public service announcement by Michael Stipe (message 2), Scott Fab (message 3), Adam Druckman (message 4), Priscilla Ederle (message 5), Chris Moore (message 6), Alex Lumelsky (message 7), Collective Soul (message 8), Philo Boddow (message 9), Korn (message 10), Slash's Snakepit (message 11) and The Impossibles (message 12), can call the Street Scene Music Line at (313) 953-2025 on a touch-tone phone. Fast-forward to the corresponding message by pressing 33. To repeat a message, press 4.



Collective rocking: Georgia's Collective Soul — Will Turpin (from left), Shane Evans, Ed Roland, Dean Roland and Ross Childress — are touring with Van Halen following their hit single "December."

"The one time you don't take it serious is the one time it really just like explodes. You try so hard for so many years, and all of a sudden, here you go," Roland said.

A few months later, they went to Atlantic Records, who signed the band and released "Hints, Allegations and Things Left Unsaid." The around-the-clock alchemy of "Shine" pushed the band into the national spotlight.

Roland is grateful for the success of "Hints, Allegations and Things Left Unsaid," but, he said people had the wrong idea about Collective Soul. To showcase the "real" Collective Soul, the band quickly went into the studio and recorded their self-titled second album.

The single "Gel" which was featured on "The Jerky Boys" soundtrack, gave fans a hint of what they were about to hear. The driving guitars and the youthful lyrics shocked skeptics of Collective Soul who were surprised that they could rock.

"If I had taken these songs on 'Hints and Allegations' to the band, maybe we would have played three or four songs; the rest of them they would say, 'Nah, that doesn't fit us,'" Roland said. "It wasn't a true representation of Collective Soul."

The real Collective Soul is paying off well for them. Area radio stations picked up on three of the songs off "Collective Soul" and the group landed a series of gigs opening for Van Halen. At first the band's management was leery of putting them on another rock tour. They wanted Collective Soul to do an "alternative" tour. Eventually, the management company backed down.

"So much has been made of classifying music lately, than listening to it," Roland said. "I look at it as all rock'n'roll. Rock'n'roll is a full spectrum of sounds and a full spectrum of emotions. You can't be just one thing, that's the way it is."

"Collective Soul" is a wide variety in itself. It kicks off with a funky, groove-laden "Simple" and ends with the gospel-tinged ballad "Reunion." In between, it's a roller coaster of sounds making hard-driving rock its peak. One aspect of the album that Roland is particularly proud of is the use of strings in "December" and "The World I Know."

"I love strings in general," Roland said. "To me it adds a different mood to the song; it gives it a different dimension just as long as you don't over abuse it. The guys, they watch me on that. Two songs isn't that bad."