

## STREET SCENE

## Days of the New defy comparisons with anyone



CHRISTINA FUOCO

There's one thing that Days of the New frontman Travis Meeks hates — being compared to Alice in Chains.

"During one interview I said, 'don't call us Alice. Don't put Alice in the front of it (the name). Then it said that I didn't like Alice in Chains,' a frustrated 18-year-old Meeks said."

Meeks is one of the hot names in music these days. His band's self-titled debut effort on Outpost Recordings is filled with dark lyrics over beautiful acoustic melodies played with the ferocity of electric guitars.

In "Touch, Feel, and Stand" Meeks sings "Yes, I've finally found a reason/Don't need an excuse/I've got this time on my hands/You are the one to abuse." "Face of the Earth" includes the lyrics "I'm the one receiving the pain from you/You would make those lies/I would take them true/You're self-existing."

It was Meeks's heart-felt lyrics and obsession with music that attracted producer Scott Litt to



Days of the New: Jesse Vest, Todd Whitener, Travis Meeks, and Matt Taul.

the band.

"Normally did I hear something special in the songs. I felt something special from the first time I sat down with the guys and their families," said Litt who has worked with R.E.M. among others. "It's the first time in a long time I could really believe music and passion were the entire reason they were doing what they were doing. This isn't one of those run-of-the-mill music busi-

ness stories."

Meeks's first reaction was, "Who."

"I'd never heard of Scott Litt. I hadn't heard of any producers at all except maybe Bob Rock who worked with Metallica. I was 17. I was very ignorant when it came to the music business," Meeks said via telephone from his Louisville, Ky. home.

"Now I know everybody. It was really cool though. The coolest

thing about it was he is one of the most genuine persons I ever met. He was a very big influence on me."

Litt, Meeks said, put him in touch with "vibes."

"He just really pushed me into my feelings. He told me to let it flow and stay with the vibe. He made me understand and realize that the vibe was important. I've always had relationships with

vibes and that, but I wasn't in touch with them."

Because of his young age, Meeks has been compared to the Jackson 5 wannabes Hanson, blues guitar slinger Jonny Lang, and torch singer Fiona Apple. Meeks said those comparisons won't be around for long because Days of the New is on a "totally different level" than those acts.

"It really hasn't bothered me yet," Meeks said of the comments. "I was walking out of an in-store premiere and these two rednecks said, 'Oh, there's another Hanson.' It ain't no big deal. That's their way of putting us somewhere."

"They could put us in some country messed-up stuff. It's not going to be like that for long."

Days of the New and Sugartooth perform Wednesday, July 23, at The Shelter below St. Andrew's Hall, 421 E. Congress, Detroit. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for the all-ages show. Tickets are \$7 in advance. Call (313) 961-MELT for more information.

■ If the Chicago-based pop band The Krinkles makes it big, the foursome already knows who

to thank.

"We were all dishwashers at the Bill Knapp's in Livonia at Six Mile and Newburgh. We have Bill Knapp's to thank for The Krinkles," said drummer/vocalist Matt Favazza.

Graduates of Livonia Churchill and Stevenson, the former Livonia residents — guitarist/vocalist Henry Klotkowski, bassist/vocalist Jerry Overmyer, and guitarist/vocalist Dan Edwards — moved to Chicago after college to form The Krinkles.

"It seemed like a good place to go because it has a good music scene. You have to find your niche and that's what we're doing," Favazza said.

This week, the band is making a rare Detroit-area appearance to celebrate the release of its debut album "Three Rings." The show will perform Friday, July 18, at the Mosquito Club in Westland.

"The concept of The Krinkles is to write good songs but entertain people first. We're trying to be entertaining. Just because we've known each other for such a long time, there's a certain chemistry on stage. We just try to let our personalities come out on stage."

## Lillith Fair celebrates women and their music

By CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

For years, summer festivals have brought with them the "token chick band." Lush, the Breeders, and Babes in Toyland have all been in that position.

In the words of Wild Colonial's singer Angela McCluskey, "We've got a token woman tour now."

This year, Canadian songstress Sarah McLachlan and her management company bring the Lillith Fair to Pine Knob Music Theatre Friday, July 18-Saturday, July 19. In addition to McLachlan and the Wild Colonial's, it features a wide spectrum of acts including The Cardigans, Paula Cole, Victoria Williams, Tracy Bonham, Fiona Apple, Kinrie Starr and others on three stages.

"It doesn't exclude men. It simply celebrates women," McLachlan explained. "Three years ago promoters were really scared to put two women on the same bill. Now, the climate has changed dramatically. We've proved it can be done."

"This tour is a huge step in the right direction for women's rights, but it isn't a soapbox for extremist feminism. It isn't dissing men. It's about quality in every aspect of life between men and women — so that's part feminist, part humanist. I just think

**Lillith Fair**  
Where: The parking lot opens at 12:30 p.m. with the gates opening at 1:30 p.m. Showtime is 3 p.m. for both days, Friday, July 18, and Saturday, July 19.  
Where: Pine Knob Music Theatre, 175 and Sashabaw Road, Independence Township.  
Tickets: \$36 pavilion and \$18.50 lawn. For more information, call (248) 377-0100 or (248) 945-6666.  
Performers, all times subject to change:  
Tracy Bonham (5:50-6:30 p.m.), Paula Cole (7:15-7:50 p.m.), Fiona Apple (8:05-8:40 p.m.), The Cardigans (9:10-9:50 p.m.), and Sarah McLachlan (10:10-11 p.m.) on the main stage.  
Aurour de Lucie (4:30-4:50 p.m.), Wild Colonial's (5:10-5:30 p.m. Friday only), and Victoria Williams (6:40-7:05 p.m.) on the Borders stage.  
Acoustic set featuring special guest stars (3:35-3:55 p.m.), Kinrie Starr (4:05-4:25 p.m. Friday only), Allisha's Attie (4:05-4:25 p.m. Saturday only), Kim Fox (5:30-5:50 p.m. Friday only), and Lori Carson (5:30-5:50 p.m. Saturday only) in the Village Square.  
Other information:  
Picnic baskets with food (no beverages), coolers, beach and sand chairs with short legs and back, blankets, sleeping bags, tarps, umbrellas, binoculars, and empty plastic liquid containers will be allowed into Pine Knob.  
Patrons without shoes or shirts will not be allowed into Pine Knob. The following items may not be brought into Pine Knob: long-legged lawn chairs, bottles, cans or any containers with liquid, and glass containers of any kind.  
Due to Independence Township ordinances, alcoholic beverages cannot be consumed in the Pine Knob parking lot or picnic area. Picnicking is allowed before, but not after, the festival.

everybody is equal."

Last year, Detroit was one of four cities in which Lillith Fair was tested. Thanks to capacity crowds at each of the dates, McLachlan and her management company were convinced that it would arrive this summer.

"It's been a long time since I was this excited about something," McLachlan said. "We wouldn't have been able to do this five years ago. It's a very cool feeling."

The bands will perform on three stages throughout Pine

Knob. A second stage on the lawn will feature performances by special guest artists, and will give emerging artists the chance to play for audiences bigger than they would have likely drawn touring independently.

Recently, Ann Arbor-based Borders Inc. was named the Learning Sponsor of Lillith Fair because, according to a statement issued to the press, they have the same vision — to entertain, benefit, and contribute to local communities. The store will sell music at the concerts with a portion of the CD sales going to benefit Lifebeat, a not-for-profit AIDS resource and awareness organization, and The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) founded by pianist/singer Tori Amos. The network operates America's only national toll-free hotline for survivors of sexual assault. The number, (800) 656-HOPE, provides free counseling and support.

As a way of thanking Borders, McLachlan will sign copies of her new CD "Surfacing" at Borders Books and Music at 30995 Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills on Saturday, July 19. Lillith artist Tara McLean, who isn't performing at

the Detroit Lillith dates, will sign copies of her CD and play at set 10:30 a.m. McLachlan will sign afterward until 1 p.m. For more information, call (248) 737-0110.

The shoe store Nine West is the Wellness sponsor. The store, which has supported the Strang Cornell Breast Center since 1993, will further its support of breast cancer awareness, detection and prevention by participating in the event.

The Wild Colonial's McCluskey, a former film publicist for Miramax, is "extremely excited" about playing songs of her Scot-influenced band's latest album "This Can't Be Life" (DGC) at Lillith Fair.

"I'm really happy about it. I think she's (McLachlan) amazing. It's encouraging for me to know that she's doing something so great. It's amazing for all of us singers, instead of the usual, when they only add two women on the bill, or add three women singers to the play lists at radio stations. It's ridiculous."

Kinnie Starr, a singer/songwriter from Vancouver, got accepted to play Lillith Fair from more than 700 applicants.

"I got accepted for the final 60 and I really didn't make it past that. I was really happy that I made it to the final 60. When

they said I got to play, I said

"Tipper!"

Starr, whose album "Tidy" was recently released on Mercury Records, also applied to the H.O.R.D.E. festival but didn't get accepted.

"You know how many women did get in? None. It's so stupid. There's no other word for it. Some people put it down as sexism. I chalk it up to simple stupidity."

Fighting for equal rights of women is something that Starr is used to. A former feminist artist, she felt herself going into "explain mode" when people questioned her work.

"Men get really offended if you point out the fact that women receive a lot more objectification in media than men do. That's not our fault. They tend to react really defensively instead of just listening."

"There's always been good female players in music but we haven't been visible enough because there's not enough of us out there. We're sitting in our room practicing... It's pretty and that Sarah McLachlan had to go to the point of actually creating an all-women festival. All the other festivals are all-men festivals and no one ever comments on that."

## Detroit artist presents complex allegories at Bunting

"Breakthrough" is more than applicable to the new work of Detroit artist Nelson Smith, whose recent paintings and drawings are currently on exhibit at the Bunting Gallery in Royal Oak. The exhibit, "Sweet Alchemy," is the first solo show in a commercial gallery for Smith.

Smith is well-known for his many avant-garde theater and performance pieces which

employed his talent as a set designer, painter and sculptor. A recent performance/installation of his work, "Human Radiation," was staged at the Performance Network in Ann Arbor.

"Sweet Alchemy" demonstrates Smith's many talents into a new mix in a group of maturely balanced and inventive meditations on his personal iconography.

In a representative painting of

his style entitled, "Neutral Tension," a coffee percolator — a cardinal image in Smith's symbolic world — stands alongside a half-filled aquarium. The effect is that the painting, which

extends beyond the frame, composes a stage where the viewer participates in an apparent experiment. Meanwhile, a veil of text floats over the painting, posing a riddle.

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