Friends combine to make touring more enjoyable

CHRISTINA FUOCO

Touring can be pretty tedious and boring. Bands spend hours in vans or buses try-ing to sleep or kill time. They show up at the venue, do a soundcheck and then kill wore time. more time. Fellow

renow singer/songwrit-ers and friends Mark Eitzel and Jill Sobule thought the perfect solution to the boredom would be

splution to the boredom would be ito tour together. " "I've never double-billed with homeone I was friends with But there's a lot of time to waste so you might as well be with some-some whom you like, the soft-spo-ken Sobule said. E titzel, the former found cr/writer/lend singer of American Music Club, agreed. " She's a friend of mine. I really love her. That's why we're doing

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9 p.m. Friday, Aug. 1. For more information, call (313) 833-POL. Eitzel is promoting his sopho-more solo effort "West" (Warner Bras.), a collaboration between bin and R.E.M.'s Peter Buck, a collaboration between the source of the solowed solution at The Crocodile in Scattle, Buck and Eitzel began writing music together. The pair recorded the songt at Ironwood studios in Stattle with Tuatara, whom Eitzel describes as "sort of a world music jazz rock 'n' roll band' featuring Barrett Martin of the Screaming Trees, Skerik of Critters Buggin, and Buck. Steve Berlin of Los Lobos and Mike McGready of Pearl Jam also make guest appearances. The songs on "West" atrike a somber chord, an Eitzel trade-mark. For example in "In Your Life" he sings "I know Tin in your Life" he sings "I know Tin Your

Have to Ask" which includes the line "There's no way in/the streets are all blocked off." "West" offers some hope near the end of the album on "Fresh Screwdriver" when he sings "I forgot there was such a thing/ss good people loft." Eitzel explained that recording "West" was a relaxed process unlike the work he did on his clotut sole offert "50 Watt Silver Lining."

"The first one I tried to live up to it (American Music Club) and failed misserably. Now I don't eare, I don't let it worry me. I make the kind of music I want to make. Eitzol's set will include songs off "West" and his debut solo effort "60 Watt Silver Lining", as well as American Music Club standardia

standards.

standards. "I wrote them so I'm allowed to do them. I do them all. There's nothing I really don't do."

Like Eitzel, Sobule is promot-ing a new album - "Happy Town" on Atlantic. The writing process for the album was a tough one for Sobule. Specifically, she was bored with hor guitar because she kept playing the same chords over and over again. "When I was writing this record, I had just gof frustrated. I was trying to figure out new ways of writing so I started pick-ing up the druma, and playing more electric and doing more open tuning. I did a let of grow-ing and experimenting that I think I had to do: Calling from har New York

Calling from her New York apartment, Sobule explained that she was surprised with the results

That sho was surprised with the results. "When you pick up instru-ments that you're pretty igno-rant about, sometimes wonderful accidents and great surprises occur. That's what was fan about the record. I had no idea what I

Mas doing." One song in particular that stands out is "Attic," an Anno Frank.inspired discussion of the Holecaust. In the song she sings "Would you have hidden me in your attic?" a line which she calls the "ultimate love question." "You're looking at someone here and you're professing your love and devotion. There's not an twhat if this was 1936 in Foland? This is my version of 'How Deep is Your Love' with a sick twist," she said with a laugh.

If you have a question or com-ment for Christina Fuoco, you can write to her in care of The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, or you can leave her a message at (313) 953-2047, mailbox No. 2130, or via e-mail at CFuocoGaol.com



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wondered if it ever gets tempting for acoustic singer-songwriters to plug in and conform to the mar-ket. "You can play to the market to some extent, but it it's not a form that you can translate your art into, the audience can tell." The frustrations of the market-place take a real toll, though. "It's less a matter of being tempted to jump into a different genre - you're more tempted to juet quit." Trust me, this would be a tragedy. Luckity, Jan quickly adda, "But overy time I feel ikk quitting. I realize that I can't not do this."

do this.³ She also gets antifaction from bradening the scope of her art. "There's a group of women right now - including Jill Jack and Sister Shed, among others -putting together a sories of con-certs that will benefit women's shelters in Detroit, culminating in a really big concert next year. The first one will be in October in Royal Oak which will benefit battered women's shelters". The commitment of these artists is truly heartfelt. "The affects everyone - everyone seems to either know or is relat-ed to somebody touched by abuse. And we want to do some-supposed to fulfill as lot in soci-the good of urt communities." You can give back to these gener-ous artists in part by supporting the Acoustic songwriters' cir-cles happen the first Tuseday of on the You and you the Royal Ox Browry. When Jill Jack came to the Detroit Public Television studio, not on the Drum Dener-record label - Warde Over Me. Non dis low want to eavery content CD - leally pro-tion of showcasing with and at the Detroit Music Awards, show Rounding out our look at thentard bale way with the was and Royal Oxit the sole Nonton the Drum Dener-record label - Warde Over Me. Not pole Dale wards to wance the proced the Detroit Music Awards, show Rounding out our look at talenti-ad fomalo voices, we have the Bratons.

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Mark Eitzel It's a two songwriters kind of

it. It's a two songwriters kind of thing." The duo, who met during the "In Their Own Words" tour, play solo acoustic sets at the Magics Stick in the Majestic complex, 4140 Woodward Ave., Detroit at

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oraces itemate artists both nationally and right here in Detroit. This past spring, the Detroit Music Awards put three of the area's top female acts in a special showcase: Jan Krist, Jill Jack and Sister Seed (AKA Alicia Gbur and Chris Kerwin). We were lucky enough to have hosted two of these three amaz-ing acts, Jan Krist and Jill Jack. I talked to Jan about the set at the Music Awards. "They just decided to feature women in acoustic music in Detroit. Jill and I both had new records, and Sister Seed had a new EP, so they had us play. Truth be told; she laughed, "we only had eight minutes to apilit among us."

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