

STREET SCENE

Detroit Music Awards turns up the volume



STEPHANIE A. CASOLA

Forgot the Grammys. For one night each year, Detroit hosts a musical pat-on-the-back all its own.

The 2001 Detroit Music Awards begin at 7 p.m. Friday, April 6 at Detroit's State Theatre. Just ask Jim Cohen, president of the Motor City Music Award Foundation, and he'll say the DMA's "just like the Grammys" — but closer to home. Each year The Motor City Music Award Foundation, a non-profit organization that fosters local music, presents the award show to recognize and honor the music the metro area has to offer.

The buzz this year surrounds an expected and highly-anticipated appearance and performance by a Grammy-winner himself, Eminem. "There is a lot of excitement surrounding Eminem," said Cohen. "One of his projects is his rap group D-12."

D-12 will perform this year, with or without its most famous member, Marshall Mathers, as well as Alley Life, The Atomic Numbers, singer-songwriter Lisa Hunter, and The Brothers Groove. Bluesman Johnnie Bassett will be joined by The Butler Twins, and vocalists Thornetta Davis and Valerie Barrymore. House DJs for the event, Intuit-Solar's DJ Assault and Sean Deason will spin side stages. And Mahindi Masai will open the show with a drum circle performance.

Awarded

Past award winners like Chris Codish, The Brothers Groove, vocalists, believes local musicians can benefit from the exposure this event promotes, even if it isn't perfect.

"Detroit Musicians tend to get little recognition by the press and radio in this town and sometimes it's nice to find out your

peers appreciate what you've done," said Codish. "That said, the voting system is not perfect, and there can be big oversights in terms of people nominated and not nominated. It can also be a popularity contest, and the categorizations are a little broad, but I think the DMA's do the best they can."

Hip Hop artist Parndime, also known as Livonia's Freddie Beauregard, is nominated for five awards for his album, *Paraglyphs*. "We're excited," he said. "Last year we were just starting to really pick up, just starting to get some press. Now we do so many shows. And *Paraglyphs* hasn't really slowed down in sales."

Parndime is completing a follow-up, due out early this summer. "I think we're just starting the awards show this year rather than playing in it has alleviated some of the pressure. Last year we were playing in front of Kid Rock. My mom was there. It was the first time my sisters saw me play. All that pressure's off."

Cohen said much attention is given to creating a diverse show. "The shows are also defined by our distinguished award winners, voted on by our executive board," he said. "We narrow it down from a list of 20."

Distinguished

This year's distinguished award winners include legendary Motown songwriter Barrett Strong, of Southfield's BoomTown Sound Studio, blues great Willie D. Warren and WRIF disc jockey Arthur Penhalow. The Board of Directors Award for Special Achievement will be presented to WTVS's *Backstage Pass*.

The awards aim to draw attention to the local music scene, said Cohen. "If you've followed it for years you know more and more people now are talking about it. Whether you argue about it being a good thing, a bad thing, a stupid thing, people are talking about it. I guess that

to me is a positive."

Invited

Tim McHugh, one-fourth The Atomic Numbers and an Ann Arbor resident, said he's happy to be playing the State Theatre show. It's a rare opportunity to play a major area venue. "I think it's sort of a big Detroit-fel-good party and that's O.K. with me," said McHugh. "It's always nice to be invited to a party."

The Atomic Numbers are up for three awards, one for Outstanding Live Performance.

For singer-songwriter Liz Larin, of Bloomfield Hills, the music awards offer a chance to meet other performers. "When we in the music community become exposed to each other, we tend to cross pollinate in a way, and work with each other on one of our projects to further strengthen the music scene," she said.

As the newest addition on bass for local rock band, Give, she should know a little about cross-pollination. Nominated for three awards herself, Larin's working on her own project and will release a CD by the end of the summer.

The Detroit Music Awards also



Johnnie Bassett



Lisa Hunter

exposes a variety of musical styles to people who might not otherwise hear these performers. Those raised on Top 40 radio may never have heard of Planet E founder and internationally-renowned Detroit DJ Carl Craig. They might've missed the bombastic instrument-bashing, high kicking antics of The Atomic Numbers. Here's a chance to see what it's all about.

The Detroit Music Awards begin 7 p.m. Friday, April 6, State Theatre, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$10 balcony, \$25 for limited mezzanine.



The Atomic Numbers

seats and \$100 for tables of four. Call (248) 645-6866. Main floor tables and packages available, (248) 486-3424. For a list of nominees, check www.detroitmusicawards.com.

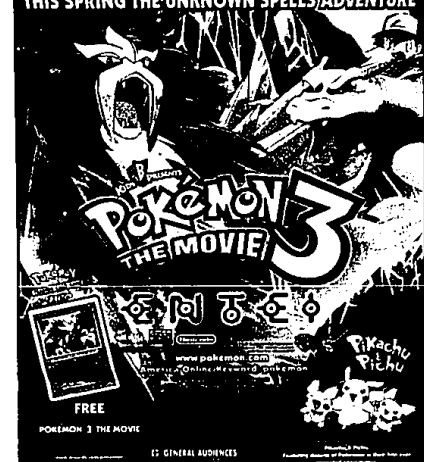
Stephanie Angelyn Casola writes about popular music for the O&E Newspapers. Call her at (734) 953-2130.

THEY'RE NOT JUST FROM ANOTHER TIME, THEY'RE FROM FRANCE.



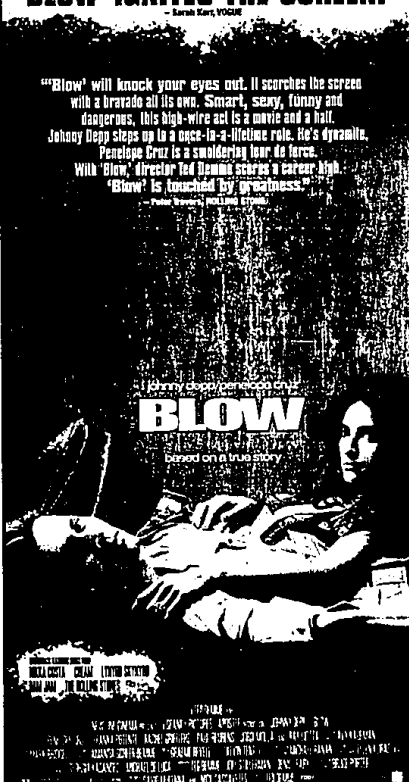
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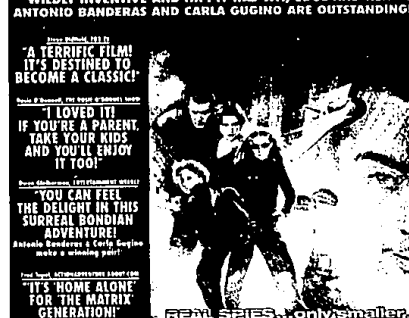
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