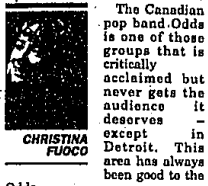


STREET SCENE

Canadian band Odds finds warm welcome in Detroit



CHRISTINA FUOCO

The Canadian pop band Odds is one of those groups that is critically acclaimed but never gets the audience it deserves — except in Detroit. This area has always been good to the



Promoting new album: Canadian pop band Odds — from left, bassist Doug Elliot, singer/guitarist Craig Northey, singer/guitarist Steven Drake, and drummer Pat Steward — plays the 7th House in Pontiac on Friday, March 14, in support of its latest album "Nest."

"Every time we're in Detroit it's great. The last time we played Pontiac (at a CIMX-FM's "X-Fest"), we had fun playing with Beck and Sponge, who went on to loftier extremes than us," said singer/guitarist Craig Northey.

"We played St. Andrew's once upstairs and once downstairs in the Shelter. We play a lot of the Freedom Festivals. Last year there were three times as many people on stage as there were bandmates. Then there's the time before when the stage was more populated by fish flies trying to mate on our guitars." The band — which includes drummer Pat Steward, singer/guitarist Steven Drake, and bassist Doug Elliot — returns to the area on Friday, March 14, to the 7th House in Pontiac to promote its fourth album "Nest" (Elektra). "Nest" is a marked departure for Odds taking its distorted guitar riffs and tasty harmonies and turning it up a notch — as heard in the first single "Someone Who's Cool." "I think for someone who's fol-

lowed us since the beginning, it's (Nest) a lot more different. But people who don't listen to us a lot or don't really analyze us, they tend to pigeonhole us and say it hasn't changed much. We still play two guitars, bass and drums, and sing," Northey said.

The self-produced "Nest" was recorded in the same environment as its previous album "Good Weird Feeling." "We didn't rehearse or learn any of the songs before we went

in the studio to record 'Nest.' We played them for the first time in studio so we would have the chance to reel in the freshness."

"We didn't go out on the road for awhile, though, so we completely forgot how to play all the songs. Last night we just learned to play 'Out Come Stars' and 'Night's Embrace.'"

Odds with special guest Gufs perform Friday, March 14, at the 7th House, 7 N. Saginaw, in Pontiac. Doors open at 8 p.m. for

the 18 and older show. Tickets are \$8 in advance. For more information, call (810) 335-8100.

The band Handsome was in a peculiar situation last month. Made up of members of New York veteran hardcore bands Helmet, Quicksand, and Murphy's Law, Handsome supported upstart teen rockers Silverchair.

"I can look at it and kind of laugh, as long as they don't make me buy cigarettes and buy beer for them," joked guitarist Pator Mengede, formerly of Helmet.

Mengede said he is much happier with Handsome than he was with Helmet. He added that he has to be "really discreet" about why he left Helmet. (According to Musician magazine, Mengede sued Helmet for withholding royalties.)

"People had different agendas pretty much, and I found myself in the position where it would be a very good idea to go off and start a band where everyone has an interest in their own lives," Mengede said.

"I found some people. We started playing together and made it as balanced as possible. If everyone's putting the work in then everyone should have a say. On paper it looks good, but sometimes it doesn't necessarily work out that way. (In Helmet) instead of basically having one guy in the band who's (a jerk), you have five."

With Mengede, vocalist Jeremy Chatelain, guitarist Tom Capone, drummer Pete Hines, and bassist

Eddie Nappi having equal say in Handsome, it's a much more comfortable situation but it's also tougher.

"It's definitely more difficult in that you have more people with more input, instead of a tunnel vision and having one person dictate the direction of the sound. It's good but it's the longer way of going with things."

Handsome recorded its self-titled debut (Epic Records) with producer Terry Dato (Prong, Pantera) at Bad Animals studio in Seattle. Mengede said the band wrote 27 songs for the album and recorded 16. In the end, 12 ended up on "Handsome."

Besides Mengede's searing guitar work, there are no specific similarities to Helmet on "Handsome." Grooving rhythm section, firm vocals, and a winding road of unexpected shifts in tempo, fill "Handsome."

One thing Mengede said not to expect is the stop and start guitars that put Helmet on the map.

"It may sound corny to say but why bother stopping if you're going to start again?" Handsome and Unsane open

for Orange 9mm. Wednesday, March 19, at The Shelter below St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Doors open at 6 p.m. for the all-ages show. Tickets are \$10 in advance. For more information, call (313) 961-MELT.

Misc: King Coffey of the Butthole Surfers has launched a 24-hour Internet radio program called Brainwash on his band's website. The show can be reached at www.monsterbit.com/brainwash. Each week Coffey delivers a new installment of the show. It has featured music from a variety of musical genres, including the Chemical Brothers, DJ Spooky, and Folk Implosion.

If you have a question or comment 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 CFuoco@aol.com

Failure's album is poised for success

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO STAFF WRITER

Nothing combats failure better than success.

The Los Angeles band Failure is poised to take that step with its critically acclaimed third album "Fantastic Planet."

The lyrics to "Stuck On You," the first single from "Fantastic Planet" sum up the entire album.

"Your voice got trapped inside my head/Over and over again/You played yourself to death in me," guitarist/bassist Ken Andrews sings.

With the partnership of acerbic and fuzzy guitars in "Stuck On You" should have made the song a bigger hit. Bassist/guitarist/pianist Greg Edwards, calling from Columbia, S.C., is confused that more people haven't picked up on the album.

"The Alternative Press review, that was good. But I wouldn't have minded if some of the bigger magazines would have reviewed it. I'm surprised Spin didn't do it."

Obsessive love, whether it be with drugs, a patient's psychiatric nurse, or a song, seems to be the common thread of "Fantastic Planet."

Edwards — who wrote the lyrics to "Solaris," "Blank," "The Nurse Who Loved Me," and "Another Space Song" — agrees. "I would say there's a story with a chronological plot, at least for the songs or the portions of the songs that I wrote lyrics for. There was certainly a continuing thread thematically," he said.

"I generally Ken would write the vocal melodies and I would write the words, except for the song 'Daylight' which Ken wrote completely. 'Blank' and 'The Nurse Who Loved Me,' which I wrote, were written before we came into the recording situation. Everything else was thought up on the spot."

"It's the oldest idea that we've used on the album. Ken and I did a demo of it a long time ago. It was kind of like the first attempt at starting to write new material. The basic progression and the lyrics 'stuck on you,' and the guitar melody existed then. I actually was the genius who came up with 'Stuck on you' till the end of time' lyric. Except for like a few lines, Ken wrote the lyrics to that song."

With its Beatlesque pop sensi-

bilities, and Pink Floyd-like lush vocals, "The Nurse Who Loved Me" is an eerie tale of a psychiatric patient who thinks that his nurse is his lover. Musically, the chorus "She's got everything I need/Pharmacy keys/She's fallin' hard for me/I can see it in her eyes/She acts just like a nurse/With all the other guys"

builds from a twinkling to crashing guitars.

Failure and the local band Beer Nuts open for Local H Friday, March 14, at Club Carga, 66 E. Huron, Pontiac. Doors open at 7 p.m. for the all-ages show. Tickets are \$8 in advance. For more information, call (810) 333-2362.

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