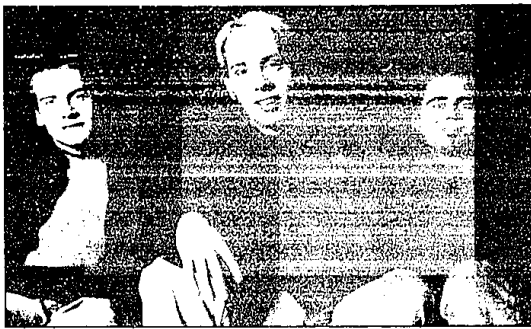


STREET SCENE

The Brothers Groove have 'got that thing'



Like family: From left, Michael Caskey, Chris Codish and Jim Simonson are The Brothers Groove. The band has proven itself worthy of a national grant and are garnering local attention.

Chris Codish knows the power of words and the passion of playing music. As the voice and keyboards behind Detroit-based The Brothers Groove, the tall, blond 28-year-old has been surrounded by music most of his life.

BENEFITTING EMERGING ARTISTS IN MUSIC

Who: Unsigned, emerging musical artists who are 21 or older can apply.

Where: Grant applications and information is available at www.jimbeam.com or by writing B.E.A.M. at P.O. Box 4723, New York, N.Y. 10163-4723.

What else: Future deadlines for 2000 applicants are April 29, July 31 and Oct. 31. A total of \$75,000 will be distributed this year.

Codish said he's far from his days of catering to older crowds with traditional blues. "I love that music, but I also like Led Zeppelin just as much, or P-funk or James Brown... there's elements of that."

Simonson admitted he's "in love with the Chili Peppers," but he doesn't want to lose that traditional jazz, either.

Caskey, honed his skills playing in jazz bands, but said he no longer has to live up to other people's expectations. "I actually have a part in the tunes."

The Brothers weren't the only ones to catch the resonating effects of that vintage sound. The band was awarded \$2,200 from a Jim Beam program, Benefiting Emerging Artists in Music. Chairman of the advisory board for B.E.A.M. and Smith's reed player, Pat DiNizio, chose The Brothers Groove along with 26 other unsigned musicians across the country. "I'm extremely

impressed with The Brothers Groove's talent and dedication to its music," said DiNizio in a press statement. Entering the final competition of the 1999, the band was one of ten winners in a pool of 100 applicants, and the only recipients from Michigan.

Hearing about the grant program from a friend, Simonson mentioned it to Codish, and the singer went online to apply — writing about his influences and why his band deserves the grant. In late December, he was interviewed by DiNizio. Just one day later, the band got the grant. "I was thrilled when they told me," said Codish. "The grant really helped."

The Brothers Groove are using the money to design a Web site, purchase promotional materials and studio gear. "You gotta view

it as a business, that's the thing creative people don't like."

Codish writes the band's lyrics as if he's overheard "a meeting between Frank Zappa and Harry Connick Jr." His deep voice pulls it off onstage without a hitch, especially with catchy tunes like "You've got that thing" and the funkified "Fat Daddy."

"We definitely don't sound like anyone else," added Simonson. From cover bands to the house band at Walt Disney World, the 1994 Clarkston High School graduate has finally found his niche.

The band's focus is on its own music and growing fan base. Codish said more people are making it to shows and they

often tell him "they don't know what we sound like, but they know they like it." That's the essence of The Brothers Groove, a group of musicians who are close enough to be "brothers" in music — if not relation.

Look out for a debut CD around May. As Caskey said: "We basically feel like we need a product, a CD, before we can take it on the road." While momentum builds beneath them, Codish remains calm and confident: "I want to take it as far as it can go."

Caskey agreed: "It would be nice to get a killer record deal... The bigger plan is to teach people how to listen differently."

See The Brothers Groove 9 p.m. Saturday, March 4, Edison's, Birmingham. Free show. (248) 645-2150, or 9:30 p.m. Sunday, March 5, Dick O'Dow's, Birmingham. (248) 642-1135. Check the Web at www.thebrothersgroove.com

Stephanie Angelyn Casola writes about popular music for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. She can be reached at (734) 953-2139 or e-mail at scasola@w.hmc.com.

STEPHANIE A. CASOLA

"I wanted to get back to having my own band," said Codish. "I was tired of being a sideman." By incorporating the musical talents of his bassist Jim Simonson and drummer Michael Caskey, The Brothers Groove was born. Simonson, a Clarkston native, met Caskey at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp as teenagers. When the guitarless trio came together September 1999, the Brothers immediately recorded a four-song demo fusing blues, rock and funk.

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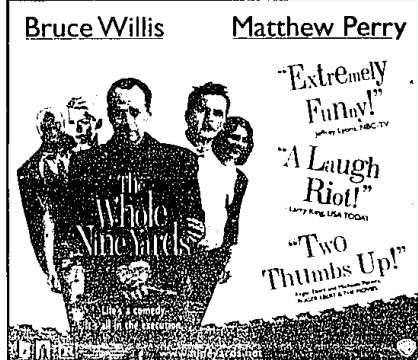
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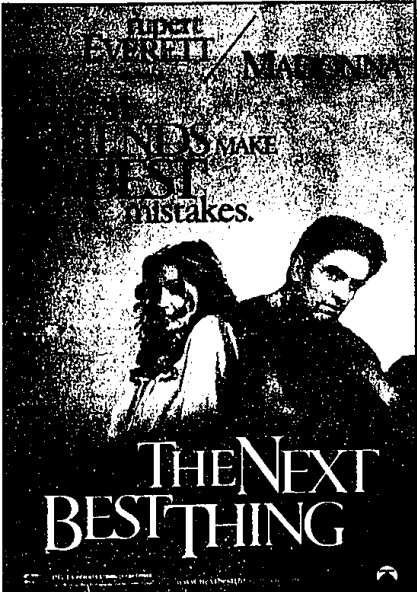
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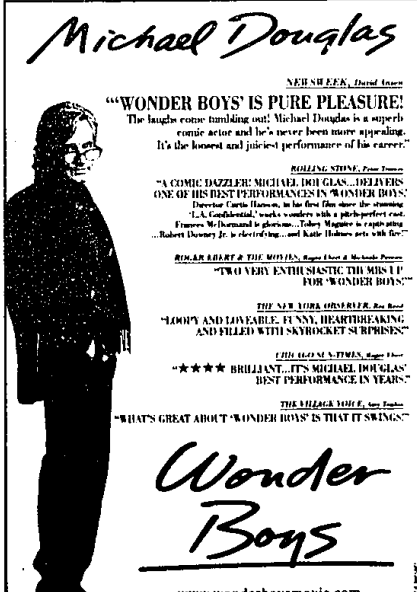


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