

DIVERECOMMENDS

Album from the Vault:

Tom Lehrer, *That Was the Year That Was*: This 1965 record blends Tom Lehrer's intelligence and razor-sharp wit with catchy piano tunes. The album may be as old as some of our parents, but Lehrer's tunes are still relevant to today's touchy topics — "The Vatican Rag" lampoons the Catholic church, while "Smut" champions "freedom of pleasure." Tune in if you need more sass in your life.

Movie from the Vault:

"History of the World, Part I": Mel Brooks strikes again in this film, which turned 30 this June. Brooks takes you on a laugh-filled (and heinously inaccurate) tour through history. You should definitely expect the Spanish Inquisition, but you won't expect the accompanying song and dance number that features tap-dancing monks and synchronized-swimming nuns.

Events:

Thursday
Pink Flag, Static Minds
Tir-na-nOg | This week's Local Beer, Local Band at Raleigh's Tir-na-nOg features Durham lady rockers Pink Flag with Raleigh rollers Static Minds. Both bands bring their guitar-driven attacks for what's sure to be another success for TNN. The show is free but restricted to ages 21 and up. 10 p.m., free

Friday
Kooley High, King Mez, Halo, Drique London
King's Barcade | Kooley High may have relocated to Brooklyn, but it doesn't mean they've lost sight of home. The sextet reps the Triangle hard wherever they go, and are sure to make area music fans proud. Fellow Raleigh natives King Mez and Drique London open the show, making this show a great primer for those wanting a lesson in local hip-hop history. 9 p.m., \$10

Friday
George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic
Lincoln Theatre | Father of Funk George Clinton busts into the Triangle tomorrow night for part of Raleigh's African American Cultural Festival. Superstar bassist Bootsy Collins isn't currently touring with Clinton and P-Funk, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't head down I-40 for what is sure to be a funkytastic time. 9 p.m., \$30.

Monday
Hunx and His Punx, The Cute Lepers, Something Fierce
Local 506 | Seth Bogard, better known simply as "Hunx," brings his punk-edged rock to town. Since January of last year, he's toured with an all-girl backing band. It could be a gimmick or coincidence; regardless, if you're looking to dance and stay hip at the same time, Hunx can help you out. 9 p.m., \$10

Supreme Fiction steps onto scene

By Elizabeth Byrum
Staff Writer

A kiddie secret police. Zombie love stories. Being a Berliner. Are these themes part of a collection of silly stories or just a busy imagination? For members of Chapel Hill's Supreme Fiction, it's the process of lyrical shenanigans resulting from sincere creativity that forms their latest release, "Berliners".

From their time at UNC-CH and before, the members of the quintet have been playing music together on and off since their teens. Avery residence hall was once home to the occasional band practice. When Swan Quarter, Daniel Lawrence and Kemp Watson-Ormond's previous band, broke up, they wanted to continue the same musical idea — thus, Supreme Fiction was formed.

Two years later, "Berliners" features upbeat songs with variations of energetic guitar, keyboard and rhythm. Drawing sound and style from influences like Elvis Costello and The National, Supreme Fiction brings a refreshing spirit of daftness to the scene.

The pop tendencies are infectious; through kooky allusions and referential album art, "Berliners" remains a clever record that doesn't take itself too seriously.

"I wanted to kind of convey that silliness and playful quality that I think our music has without giving it a title that sounds like Scooby Doo," said Lawrence, the band's lyricist. "Berliners, like the doughnuts or German pastries, seemed like a fun way to say 'Here are some modest, enjoyable pop tunes.'"

With song titles such as "Me and the Kiddie KGB" and "Zombie Bride," the band uses nonsense to describe real relationships and emotions. Multi-instrumentalist Tim Fenwick says the language is understandable, but the underlying theme is hilarious. Lawrence agrees.

"I wouldn't say that all our lyrics are just silly, but something I discovered around the time we started this band was maybe a sense of humor with writing songs," Lawrence said. "And that was really liberating."

Lawrence and Watson-Ormond were joined by friends and fellow alumni Kenny Jones and Bryan Reklis in 2009, and when Fenwick came onboard in late 2010, Supreme Fiction was fully operational. According to Watson-Ormond, adding Tim Fenwick, a N.C. State University graduate, as the fifth wheel helped fill out ideas and make songs more distinct.

The goofy dynamic between members of Supreme Fiction manifests itself in its live performances. They take their time swapping instruments on stage, leaving room for interaction and conversation with their audience, usually in the form of witty retorts or explanatory small talk. The informal stage presence and chatty between-song banter make the band's shows approachable and energetic.

Supreme Fiction recorded most of the album in a month, a process completed at Nightsound Studios in Carrboro, where Fenwick worked as an engineer.

"One of my favorite parts about the recording process was just the strategy and the setup because some of our songs have varying tempos," said Fenwick.

Friday, the band plays the Nightlight, and on Sept. 29, it has a CD release show at the Local 506. After putting together an album for three years, the band says it's eager to get on the road.

"Now that we have an album in our hands, I feel like we have a lot more drive. Now when we play shows and someone asks if we have an album, 'Yes! We do!' Before, it was like, 'Yeah, we have some demos,'" Watson-Ormond said.

Lawrence says the band is still working out what its niche is in



DTH/ELIZABETH BYRUM

Supreme Fiction blends guitars and keyboards with an energetic rhythm to form catchy rock with fun hooks.

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Daniel Lawrence,
Frontman of Chapel Hill's Supreme Fiction

the area. Regardless, the band is enthusiastic about future endeavors and communicating with listeners through exuberant songs.

The task requires time and some tweaking, but Supreme Fiction has the hooks and energy.

Lawrence said, "Maybe we are finally starting to speak the same language as the people listening to our album."

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DTH/ELIZABETH BYRUM

After three years writing and a month recording, Supreme Fiction is hitting the road promoting its new record. Friday, it plays the Nightlight.

MUSICSHORTS

Widowspeak

Widowspeak



Rock

Every song on Widowspeak's self-titled debut is about yearning for something — whether it's time gone by or what to do with the time you have.

With seductive, half-discernable vocals, this musical triumvirate creates a sound that is charming and haunting, while fully reliant on polished instrumentals. Lyrically, the album ranges from clever wordplay to subtle historical allusions.

"Puritan" opens the album with an inventive ballad combining an upbeat soundscape with

sharp religious references, sans preachiness. The song, like the rest of "Widowspeak", explores its subject with a romantic restlessness, like the mind of a wandering child.

This curiosity reaches its peak with "Limbs," where vocalist Molly Hamilton croons, "Floating in a forever haze / What to do with every days?" Lyrical questions like these, although nothing more than the idle musings of dazed youth, are popular among bored peers.

If there's one downfall to this album, it's vocal monotony. Hamilton's enthralling lull barely changes dynamics from beginning to end. It's emotive and interesting, but unchanging.

"Ghost Boy" closes the album,

showcasing the band's ability to match lyrics with sound. Steady, foreboding drums ring out as Hamilton sings, "I could see through him / His love for the living."

Hamilton's woebegone howls fill the final minute of the album — and just like the songs before it — leave the listener with the haunting sense that innocence has been lost.

-Tyler Confoy

Wesley Wolfe

Cynics Need Love Too



Rock

If Wesley Wolfe is sad, at least

he's honest. Painfully, unnervingly honest. Like Camus' absurd hero — the Sisyphus type who has resigned himself to the way things are — there's something respectable about the defeat that peppers "Cynics Need Love Too".

Without mincing words, Wolfe cuts straight to the chase: he's sad, he's a songwriter, and he's going to depress you.

Fortunately, Wolfe's latest is an understated and alluring form of emotional cataclysm. The local troubadour embodies the same aesthetic that Built to Spill adopted in the '90s, pairing clipped lyrics with brash and barren melodies.

But that is not to say these songs are not fresh or inventive. It's like reading realist fiction:

when Wolfe sings, "You dropped me like a kidney stone," you can't help but wince and say, "Perk up, buddy."

But there will be no perking up. Wolfe is caught in the flux between something dysfunctional and the unknown beyond it, and instead of hope, there's an overwhelming sense of trepidation.

It conveys beautifully in these sparse and brutal songs, and the honesty here is a refreshing change from the distanced, layered sounds that populate the blogosphere.

Wolfe's latest is nothing groundbreaking, but it's truthful, and ultimately, it's that sense of commiseration and intimacy that draws you in, listen after listen.

-Linnie Greene



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