

Plato's Cave to rock the "Dock"

by Ryan Bogart
Collegian Staff

Plato's Cave, a local band, is scheduled to play at Docksider's on State Street in Erie on Friday, February 16th. With the release of their new CD a couple of months ago called "Free Nick Stein," the band has expressed their musical diversity and complexity. Nick Stein is a character that gets into some trouble with a strong beer infatuation, which they wrote all of the songs from. "Free Nick Stein" becomes a playful concept album with an amusing theme that involves the song "Dominicks," a restaurant in Erie.

Randy Baumann is the heart and sole of the band playing the keyboards and entertaining the audience with his light, quick,

and agile hands. He wrote most of the songs on the album and adds to the sound with vocals.

The singer, Erik Walker creates the second half of the band, writing the other songs. With two lead guitarists, two percussionists, a bassist, and a plethora of exotic and pleasing sounding instruments; this band is fully complete.

The song "Strange Voyages of Marco Polo" shows just how precise the drummers can be. There are sounds in this song that you'll listen to and wonder what in the hell they are. "3,6,9," a song taken from School House Rock on Saturday mornings, is a playful tune with a group of kids singing backup.

"Boogie on the Mezzanine" demonstrates the ability of most of the band. Baumann's creative style of keyboards along with the

great guitar jam creating a sound that could almost be compared to Phish. If you don't believe me, just listen to it. The style in which it is written can be shown with the speed changes that they provide; it will speed up with quick guitar riffs, then slow down and then build back up only to go back into the beginning jam.

Their style of music is hard to define because they don't have one sound on this disk that could describe their physical ability. One style resembles a reggae sound, "Freedom's Challenge," another a rock-n-roll style, "Tellride," and a country fiddle song, "One Trick Toad," shows that their roots aren't from every normal band. This song almost can be described as an anthem because it is like no other.

"Jonesin' for Marie," and "One Trick Toad" could just be their

way of expressing their abstract ideas through everyday creatures. "Sometimes I wish I was a trout in a stream" is the opening line from "Jonesin' for Marie" and it ends up that the fish is caught; then he says "I still ain't gonna do nothin' today, except lay around and think about you."

Their clean style sounding guitar in "Meet me at the Station" has been heard on Jet FM 102 in Erie, which is usually unheard of. Erie radio stations don't play hometown bands for reasons unknown. This local band could just put Erie on the map for a good band, finally. They don't follow the ways of the convention, their songs are abstract ideas that are accompanied by playful and creative styles of music.

If you're expecting serious music with serious lyrics, you won't

like this band. Even if you listen to "Free Nick Stein" and in general don't like it, there will be a song or two that you will appreciate. Do yourself a favor and check this band out on Friday the 16th at the Docksider!

Plato's Cave is going to play the Docksider on February 16th. The band just released their latest CD, "Free Nick Stein." Their song "Meet me at the Station" can be heard on Jet FM 102.

Bad Brains and Marty Hayes' reviews

From The Bin: Record Reviews
College Press Service

GOD OF LOVE

Artist: Bad Brains
Genre: Rastapunk
Label: Maverick/Warner (9 45882-2).
Grade: B+

Just when you'd given up hope of ever smelling patchouli oil in the mosh pit again, they're back—the original Bad Brains lineup is together again, complete with their on-again, off-again singer HR.

The band itself never officially disbanded, though its last incarnation was far from inspiring, and it hasn't been able to stay with a label for more than

one album at a time since leaving SST some years back.

For those who weren't paying attention in the early 80s, Bad Brains are a quartet of dreadlocked Rastafarians who can't decide whether they're a hardcore punk band or a reggae band. And it's a good thing they can't. Their debut album (the Ric Ocasek-produced "Rock for Light," Caroline 1613-2) was one of the most exciting things ever to come out of Washington, D.C.'s burgeoning punk scene. Careening from mile-a-minute shriekathons to spacey dubwise reggae at the drop of a beat, Bad Brains established a territory all their own.

Neither their punk nor their reggae was terribly original, but the combination certainly was, and HR's raw-throated falsetto

screech was far more frightening than anything Minor Threat ever produced.

Over the years the band refined its sound, reaching a creative peak with the spectacular "I Against I" (SST 065) and then declining through a series of increasingly disoriented HR solo projects and an uninspiring foray into thrash funk.

"God of Love" finds the brenren older and chubbier than they were 12 years ago, but hardly less energetic, even if their tempos have moderated somewhat and HR is content to spend most of his time singing in a normal voice. The band still veers crazily from funky metal raveups like "Cool Mountaineer" and "Justice Keepers" to bone-deep reggae grooves like "Thank JAH." HR's

satisfying recordings of traditional music I've heard in a long time. Accompanied in most cases by only an understated guitar, and on one lovely track by his father, Hayes performs a long set of tunes that range from the familiar ("Rakish Paddy," "The Cliffs of Moher") to the more obscure ("Kilnamona Barndance," "Farewell to Milltown"). But what's special about this album isn't so much the material Hayes has chosen, though it's all lovely. Instead, it's his unflagging focus on the tunes themselves rather than on his own virtuosity that makes "Under the Moon" both musically inspiring and emotionally rewarding.

UNDER THE MOON

Artist: Martin Hayes
Genre: Celtic folk
Label: Green Linnet (GLCD 1155)
Grade: A+

Martin Hayes is a fiddler from County Clare whose sure but gentle touch and deep musical intelligence have combined to produce one of the most

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