

MUSIC

Grungey college couple crank out the noise

Sand Rubies

Sand Rubies
Polygram

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For a duo, the Sand Rubies sure can crank out a lot of noise. While the album breaks no new ground, David Slutes and Rich Hopkins really don't write songs that fit into an exact musical mold.

Their songs most frequently resemble muted college grunge. But a hint of folkiness creeps in every once in awhile, particularly later in the album.

Slutes and Hopkins tackle the production of a couple of songs themselves, and with help on other tracks from Waddy Wachtel (Keith Richards) and Mike Campbell (Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers), the Sand Rubies have put together a genuinely solid effort.

The duo also takes care of the majority of the songwriting, the only exception being Neil Young's "Interstate."

Among the album's stronger tracks are the two openers, the catchy

album

JENNIFER DURHAM

"Goodbye" and "Santa Maria Street," an electric nostalgia trip down a strip of road transformed by progress in Tucson.

Also impressive is "Interstate," which, along with "Bar Room Light," sounds eerily like Crazy Horse meets the Connells.

The Sand Rubies really get going on "Drugged," and it's almost humanly impossible to crank into a higher gear than the band does on the ravaging "Hit the Brakes (at the Pearly Gates)."

As an added bonus, Slutes and Hopkins throw in decent, often clever lyrics:

"Yeah me and Adam knew how to raise Cain, even got the Lord using my name in vain."

The duo downshifts in the mandolin-laced "Guns in the Churchyard" and the final track, "Black Eyes and Broken Noses," but less noise doesn't reduce quality in the Sand Rubies' case.

One could, in fact, argue the opposite.

The major complaint to be made



Who knew two people could be so loud?

against Sand Rubies is excessive noise. But, in the age of Seattle's prominent grunge scene propelled by the likes of Nirvana and Mudhoney, too much noise is not a complaint for some.

Woe be unto the eardrums that meet

the Sand Rubies in a small club or a loud stereo.

This pair is wired to kill.

But don't let that stop the rest of you from enjoying this album, at an appropriate decibel level.

Local rockers prove one of Chapel Hill's treasures

Polvo

Today's Active Lifestyles

Merge

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Chapel Hill has myriad treasures.

UNC. Dean Smith. Franklin Street. Polvo.

Yes, that demure yet ingenious quartet is undoubtedly one of this town's most cherished entities. Although this may be obvious to those readers who had the good taste to purchase last summer's brilliant debut LP *Cor-crane Secret*, it is once again necessary to highlight this fact, as the fellows have

album

GRANT TENNILLE

just released their second full length effort, titled *Today's Active Lifestyles*.

Everything about this record, artwork, song titles (e.g. "action vs. vibe"), even the fonts, reflect the absolutely impeccable taste of this band. Then, of course, there's the most important aspect, the songs.

Polvo's writing ability grows tremendously with each release, and this album is no exception. "thermal treasure," the album's opener, features one of the swankest riffs to ever emerge from the triangle, and other tracks like "tilebreaker" and "time isn't on my side"

contain hooks that should make other local popsters think about a career change.

And that's not from busboy to xerox dude. Not that there isn't any of the angular meandering which is something of a trademark for them, there's plenty, but it's incorporation is even more clever than before. The eastern thing is still going strong, as evidenced by "lazy comet" and "my kimono," and they've traded in their zylophone for a cheap keyboard, with no loss of coolness and a tip of the hat to Pavement.

As for vocals, guitarist Dave Brylawski chimes in for a couple more than last time, which is welcome, and Ash Bowie is even more melancholic,

while only strengthening his reputation as one of the most creative guitarists around.

When Polvo entered the studio, they had a dearth of songs, and the result says a lot about the band. Of the 10 songs, a few are clearly somewhat hurried. However, instead of serving as weak links in a chain, the tunes merely add to the diversity of the album, making the 40-odd minutes of the album minutes that go by all too quickly.

So reward yourself, for exams, or for just being alive. Check it out.

In summary: Five Blobs. Count'em. Then square'em. And that's not because their local. It's because it, and they, truly deserve to be heard.

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