

THE LOVE LANGUAGE: TRYING TO BE SOUL

Already having made a name for himself in the Triangle as part of the now defunct *The Capulets*, Stuart McLamb is now performing solo as *The Love Language* and focusing on crafting lo-fi pop treasures that sound as though they could have come from any era — and would have sounded just as exciting.

Staff writer Benn Wineka caught up with McLamb after a weekend trip to Wilmington, N.C., to talk about his unique sound, musically-inclined friends and what he would do in a silo with his grandmother.

Tonight, McLamb — backed on stage only by the strength of his songs — will be playing at *Nightlight with Monologue Bombs and Heads on Sticks*.

Diversions: You describe your sound as Etta James kicking heroin. How would you sum that up?

Stuart McLamb: I'd say, I give a pop aesthetic in a lot of things.

It's just like a white boy trying

to be soul.
Dive: A lot of your recordings to me sound almost like you are performing into a tin can microphone.

SM: I think a lot of that is just me. I know I don't have any type of formal training or anything.

A lot of the lo-fi-ness wasn't really like, "This is the sound I wanted."

I don't know what it is. I found there's something in that box, and there's some weird kind of time-machine thing. I just crank the reverb up 100 percent.

Dive: John Kirby of Wax Poetics said he often pictures himself singing your songs to a French girl on a jetty in Quebec.

If you had your choice of serenading any woman, who and where would it be?

SM: I want to say, like, my mom, but that might come out gross.

Let me think.
My grandmother.

Dive: And where would you do this?

SM: I'd play her something psychedelic; try to get her into it.

We'd do it in a silo on her farm with some black lights.

Dive: Kirby also says that you write music that he wishes he had written. Are there any songs out there you wish you had written?

SM: Oh, yeah. I was just listening to the Beirut album, and a lot of that stuff is great.

I would have been down to write "Super Freak," too, or something like that.

Dive: You say you were listening to Beirut. If you were to make a mix tape right now of what you are listening to, who would be on it?

SM: I just made one recently, so I could tell you.

I had some of my friends. My good, close friends, Soft Company. My friend Timothy Poovey.

Dive: You mention The Light Pines on your MySpace page. Is that the same Josh, Kate and Tom that play with you sometimes?

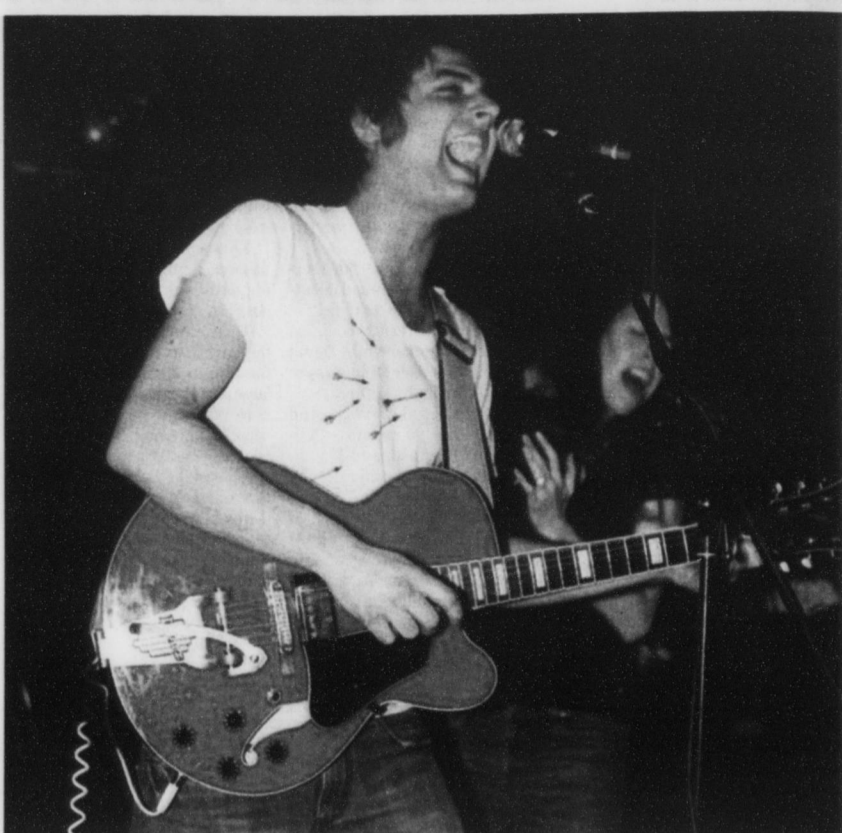
SM: Yeah, that's Josh and Tom from The Capulets.

The goal is for The Love Language and the White Pines to be more or less the same people.

But at the same time you can hear the two different kinds of music. They are two polar opposite kind of styles.

So, we are really interested in trying to do two bands at once.

Give it a little time. We should get it going.



COURTESY OF DAVE HERRON

The Love Language, fronted by former Capulets member Stuart McLamb, will bring its timeless-sounding pop-rock songs to the *Nightlight's* cozy space tonight. *Heads on Sticks* and *Monologue Bombs* will open.

Contact the Diversions Editor at dive@unc.edu

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Mega effort a marvel to hear



MUSICREVIEW
MEGAFAUN
BURY THE SQUARE
FOLK/NOISE

★★★★★

BY JAMIE WILLIAMS
ASSISTANT DIVERSIONS EDITOR

If progress and innovation is the true measure of greatness, then Megafaun has made one of the best records to come out of N.C. in a long time.

Combining elements of Appalachian folk with tape manipulation and ambient noise, Megafaun emerges from the niche of traditional folk with joy for the craft and the creative spirit to propel the band far beyond the limits of genre classification.

Bury the Square, which was released locally last year, saw national release this week on British label Radium/Table of Elements, which has led to increased attention for the crown jewel of the Triangle scene.

And with good reason. *Bury the Square* is the type of record that has intricacies that flesh themselves out with repeated listens, but the immediate reaction to the harmonies is undeniable.

The beautiful three-part harmonies from brothers Brad and Phil Cook, along with drummer Joe Westerlund, float high above the sometimes frantic instrumentation, percolating their way up through the chaos shining through at the most opportune moments to bring it all back together before splitting off in seemingly disparate, but always meticulously arranged directions.

The sprawling triumph of "Where We Belong," an ode to the band's adopted home state of North Carolina, provides the perfect example.

"Ride the rails and sing the songs/In the pines where we belong," sing the Wisconsin ex-pats in a song that starts with slow banjo picking and soft vocals before expanding with vocal effects, soft keys and strings into a raucous sound collage of ambient noise and drone that proves why Megafaun belongs on anyone's short list of the most creative and innovative bands working now — in North Carolina, or elsewhere.

Contact the Diversions editor at dive@unc.edu

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