

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

# N.C. Music Showcase to feature funk and pop

## Cat's Cradle to host the 15-band lineup

By Scott Pitts  
Staff Writer

This summer's North Carolina Music Showcase at Cat's Cradle looks good. It looks real good.

The featured bands represent a wide range of musical styles and geographical backgrounds, with everything from teen funk out of Wilmington (Billyclub Fest) to blonde pop from Chapel Hill's own beloved Dillon Fence. At any rate, this year's Showcase has something for everyone.

The 15-band lineup for this weekend's Cradle Showcase — sponsored by Spectator magazine, ASCAP, and WZZU-FM — was chosen from a field of 225 entries from around the state. The selection committee included local music writers, local radio higher-ups and local management reps. The emphasis here is on "local."

The purpose of the annual summer event, in addition to putting on a good show for all of us in summer school, is to get some of the most promising local bands from around the state together with interested record-label representatives. This occasion could be the "big discovery" of sizzling local bands such as Teasing the Korean or No Reason to Hate, and, just think, you could be there! Go buy your ticket now. Hurry. They're on sale at SchoolKids and the Cradle for \$5 per night.

The show starts at 9 p.m. on June 6, 7 and 8, and each band will play for approximately one hour. The schedule is as follows:

**Thursday, June 6:** Teasing the Korean, No Reason to Hate, Billyclub Fest and Southern Culture on the Skids.

**Friday, June 7:** Second Skin, Urban Edge, Buster Rogue, Dillon Fence and The Straight Ahead.

**Saturday, June 8:** The Good Old Chicken Wire Gang Band Boys Brothers, Dahli Llama, Lady Luck, Finger and The Point.

And if that isn't enough, two other clubs are featuring showcases Saturday afternoon. The Moist Records/Baited Breath Productions Showcase at La Terraza — featuring Metal Flake Mother, Bicycle Face and Sex Police — starts at 2 p.m. and should end around 6 p.m. The North Carolina Singer-Songwriter Showcase — featuring Jim Smith, Tracy Drach, Gerald Duncan, Jeff Heart, Joan Miley and Jack Wenberg — runs 2-6 p.m. at The Cave.

Chapel Hill becomes the center of the New Music Universe this weekend, so cancel the trip to the beach, skip the ECON 135 assignment, get a ticket and enjoy it. After all, the Showcase only comes around once a year.



Southern Culture on the Skids will perform at the N.C. Music Showcase

## Local groups battle for big-name fame

By Charles Marshall  
Staff Writer

Who will get the big break?

That's the question bands and fans in the North Carolina music industry have been contemplating ever since the Connells shot into college radio's spotlight as Chapel Hill's (smaller-scale) answer to R.E.M.

The Veldt won't be playing at this year's North Carolina Music Showcase, which runs Thursday, June 6, through Saturday, June 8, at Cat's Cradle. But maybe the big-name labels will be there anyway — after all, there are a lot of promising bands on the bill this year.

Although this year's Showcase allowed bands from North Carolina's independent labels to make an appearance, most chose not to — probably because they've played so many showcases already. As a result, many lesser known, younger bands have been given the chance to jump into the spotlight. Here are some hints for the first-time Cradle-goer, the summer student from another school or the Warner Bros. rep

**Teasing the Korean** has built one of the largest local followings around. Sporting a truly dark alternative sound distinctly alien to southern college pop, Teasing the Korean unloads a heavy dose of British guitar thunder on their audience and continually combines sonic drones and hellfire percussion.

Vocalist John Ensslin possesses an all-encompassing physical presence that challenges — even threatens audiences to listen and observe. Tim Roven, the steadily swirling guitarist, clashes and blends with six-string counterpart Lyndon Jernigan, who plays with a vengeance. Jeff Taylor loves opera but plays the meanest bass guitar in town. Tom Maxwell rounds out the crew and drums up some fascinating beats.

When you hear Teasing the Korean, check out some of their acoustic "neocabaret" numbers before comparing them to the Cure. TTK has completed an eleven-song LP, not yet available, on which Ensslin's vocals range both wide and wild. On "Beg," he sounds like a grief-stricken Robert Smith in pain, and on "What Peggy Wants," he crosses

David Bowie with Axl Rose — the ultimate theatrical performance. Show up Thursday (9 p.m.) to see for yourself.

**Billyclub Fest** proves that age has nothing to do with talent. Dubbed "Johnny Quest's younger brother," Billyclub Fest is definitely the funkiest and hardest-hitting band in the lineup. Sweaty, shirtless and bass-heavy, this group plays fast and loud. The Showcase may give the band a chance to prove it's ready to rock with anyone. The band members give 110 percent on stage, and that could be their biggest asset in catching someone's eye.

Four bands, **Second Skin, Dahli Llama, Buster Rogue** and **Hard soul Poets**, hail from Charlotte and should make the Showcase a more even East/West balance. **Urban Edge**, a veteran N.C. band that has toured more out-of-state than in-state, may be another inter-

esting band to watch. Mitch Easter produced the group's first full-length LP, *Songs from the Hydrogen Jukebox*, which made an immediate impression on CMJ (College Music Journal). The Showcase may help the band stake a strong claim in North Carolina.

**No Reason to Hate** was rather stale the first time I saw them, but that was a while ago. I've heard nothing but rave reviews lately. A true dance/rock band, No Reason to Hate exudes a dynamic stage presence and produces music with strong, energetic backbeats. The group should make an extraordinary one-two punch alongside Thursday openers Teasing the Korean.

**Southern Culture on the Skids**, also playing the Showcase Thursday night, may be the hottest Moist band around right now. **Sex Police, Bicycle Face**,

and **Metal Flake Mother** will make up the Moist/Baited Breath Showcase at La Terraza on Saturday from 2-6 p.m. **But SCOTS**, who will play at the Cradle Thursday night, apparently tore up the South By Southwest Showcase in Austin, Texas, so big things are probably in store for their show. This swamp-rock-boogie band just released *Too Much Pork for Just One Fork* on Moist Records. It's down-home southern fun with groovy beats.

Finally, **Dillon Fence**, currently Chapel Hill's greatest hope for national status, will play Saturday at midnight. Spiraling upward with no ceiling in sight, Dillon Fence have utilized hard work and present successes that are beginning to pay off. The band is currently working out a deal with Mammoth Records.

People who confuse Dillon Fence for the Connells' sidekicks are sadly mistaken. The group's music is the perfect blend of R&B funk and assertive, shiny, melodic pop. Even disco lingers in the deepest roots of the song structures, under the heavy wall of sound. Look out for new faves like "Sugar Cane," "How Did You Get So High" and "Playful." "Daylight," a staunch rocker and a live favorite, has finally been released as the opening track on *DemoListen 2*. Look out for a strong live show, a packed house and a full-length album in the fall.

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