

YES, PLEASE...

11.19/21 HOLLY RALEIGH CHRISTMAS @ TIR NA NOG/ MARBLES

Have a *Holly Raleigh Kidsmas*, the fourth installment in the annual series that finds local bands taking turns on holiday classics or trying their hand at crafting new ones, might be the most diverse yet: The Rosebuds turn Santa's rooftop activity into a steady-burning sing-along, while Mommie tumbles back toward childhood through a Laurel Canyon haze. The Atomic Rhythm All-Stars scoot through a Dixieland piece about the Gingerbread Man, while The Beast nods to Chuck Davis, unity and Kwanaaa over the svelte "The Black Candle." Thursday night at Tir Na Nog, the disc gets a free, adult-aimed launch at 7 p.m. with The Desmonds, Jubal Creech, Anthony Neff, Big Bang Boom and The Proclivities. And on Saturday, after the Raleigh Christmas Parade, Creech joins Mommie and Sandbox at Marbles Kids Museum at noon for the kid-oriented version. For more, see www.hollyraleighkidsmas.com. —Grayson Currin

11.20 AMANDA PALMER @ THE ARTSCENTER

A year ago, Palmer mothballed her band, Dresden Dolls, to pursue a solo career. Of course, that's a bit misleading, since she's joined on this tour by the horn-wielding Nervous Cabaret, and, in the past, she's toted strings to fill out her keyboard-driven tunes. Her solo debut, *Who Killed Amanda Palmer* (produced by Ben Folds), is but a pale imitation of her Weimer-informed band's catalog, thanks to its lesser songs. However, it does retain the theatricality of their cabaret-punk style, alternating between high drama and coy wit. And Palmer remains, as always, a beyond-charismatic performer. \$18/ 9 p.m. —Chris Parker

11.20 THE MONOLOGUE BOMBS (FULL BAND) @ THE POUR HOUSE

For the past four years, Scott Phillips hasn't just led The Monologue Bombs. He's been The Monologue Bombs, singing the acute city-life observations that never worked in his rock trio, Goner, over major piano chords and lonely accordion themes. At last, he's invited his friends into the fold, and The Monologue Bombs full band brims with all-stars: Brian Donohoe (Starmount, Razor Wire Safety Net) is among the area's best drummers, and Andy Kerr of The T's is one of our most whip-smart guitarists. Also in the band: Anne Polesnak of Utah! on cello, David Mueller of Birds of Avalon on bass and Hunter MacDermot of The Tourist on guitar. Expect Phillips' songs—solo, like carefully examining postcards front and back—to

be bright reel-to-reel videos tonight. The graceful chamber pop project of Caitlin Cary and Matt Douglas, The Small Ponds, opens, along with the bounding I Was Totally Destroying It. \$8/ 10 p.m. —Grayson Currin

11.20 HEAVY TRASH, ELLIOTT BROOD @ LOCAL 506



Jon Spencer's already blown up the blues, and considering his current incendiary affair with rockabilly, country might want to look

for a fire extinguisher. Spencer joined Matt Verta-Ray for Heavy Trash five years ago, and their subsequent three albums have uniformly manifested a loose-limbed energy that segues easily from mid-tempo ballads to Molotov-lobbing rave-ups. Even if his voice moves now in a decidedly more relaxed manner than while leading the Blues Explosion, Spencer still possesses a sometimes campy wail and howl. The real showstopper here, though, is the generous interplay between the two guitarists. Their latest, *Midnight Soul Serenade*, maintains the winning streak. Don't miss Canadian opener Elliott Brood, whose aching (North) Americana earned him a Polaris nomination. \$10-\$12/ 9:30 p.m. —Chris Parker

11.20 FILTHYBIRD, THE PNEUROTICS @ BROAD STREET CAFE

Greensboro's Filthybird is at once graceful and aggressive, with the spiraling piano moves of Renee Mendoza settling against the sharp-edged guitar fragments of her husband, Brian Haran. Mike Duehring and Shawn Smith provide dodgy rhythms as the platform for Mendoza and Haran's dynamic interplay, but Mendoza's alluring vocals—simultaneously sultry and sweet—are the star. The Pneurotics' husband-and-wife nucleus of guitar hotshot Rich McLaughlin and bassist Mimi McLaughlin is the older, wiser counterpoint to Mendoza and Haran's young matrimony. Their mature sound follows suit: loose jangles with tender harmonies and assured lyricism that pull from twang rock and power pop alike \$5/10 p.m. —Spencer Griffith

11.22 PARIAH PIRANHA @ THE CAVE

A surprisingly nimble queercore trio from York, Pa., Pariah Piranha is an old-school grunge act whose vibrancy and punch rescue it from irrelevancy. That's not meant to shortchange Tara Gordon: Her

HEARING AID THE GUIDE TO THE WEEK'S CONCERTS

sinewy vocals demonstrate just how few compelling female-fronted acts the style produced. Her singing isn't quite pretty (though it's certainly not as gruff/ rough as L7's Donita Sparks), but it offers a counterpart to the muscular grooves. Their third album in as many years, *People People* receives crisp, unpolished production from Tony Maimone (Pere Ubu), showcasing hearty heft that stands up nicely to repeated listens. With Teru'ah and Dead Letter. \$5/ 9 p.m. —Chris Parker

11.23 FREE ENERGY @ LOCAL 506



These five grizzled Philly kids embrace and mix the clichés of power pop and cock rock so unequivocally—the hand-claps-and-ragged riff juxtaposition of "Dream City," the bluesy guitar intro

of "Dark Trance," the cowbell dominance of "Free Energy" (no mistake: a track shares a name with the band)—you'd be excused for calling them a parody. And maybe in a way, they are. But Free Energy delivers these anthems with a devil-may-care oomph, treating these bright hooks like kids with new toys they can't wait to show their friends. Speaking of which, this is exactly the sort of band your behind-the-curve friend should be telling you about in six months. See them now. With Mount Weather, who suggest J. Spaceman climbing off the Space Needle. \$8-\$10/ 9:30 p.m. —Grayson Currin

11.25 AH HOLLY FAM'LY @ NIGHTLIGHT

Jeremy Faulkner and Becky Dawson sing secrets, warbling and whispering beneath the sheets about memories and dreams. Flute, cello and violin join this married couple to form the octet of Ah Holly Fam'ly. The Portland band's loose harmonies suggest unwound shape note singing, and the overall sound is a delicate soundtrack to the countryside that's been warped with age, evoking a more subdued *Lost in the Trees*. It's the orchestral folk version of a picnic blanket in the woods. Ohioan opens with a darker look at the roots. \$5/ 10 p.m. —Andrew Ritchey

INTRODUCING...

11.21 THE JAKE LEG @ BLUE BAYOU CLUB

When Louisiana expats Joe Tullos and Blind Melon drummer Glen Graham began The Jake Leg in Hillsborough, the main motivator was the desire to play live.

"It was like, 'Man, aren't we musicians? Don't we play music? Isn't that what the hell we're supposed to be doing with our time anyway?'" says Tullos, "Let's form a band. My mom will make the curtains!"

Next came the phone calls, with the pair recruiting Greg Bell, with whom Tullos had played in Jimbo Mathus' Knockdown Society, and Peter Holsapple, whose Continental Drifters had crossed paths with Tullos in New Orleans. Also signing on was Chapel Hill new wave vet Mark Efland, giving the outfit two drummers. "Not like The Allman Brothers. Certainly not like .38 Special," offers Graham. "More like sort of a weird kind of snake."

Tullos calls The Jake Leg "a consortium of friends," and they've got a huge backlog of Tullos' songs to tackle whenever they gather. "We all kind of play alike," he says. "All these guys are musical people. They're not sidemen. It'd be a horrible band to try to produce and direct. Which is good, I think." —Rick Cornell

The Jake Leg plays its first-ever show Sunday, Nov. 21, at the Blue Bayou Club, joined by special guest Katharine Whalen of the Squirrel Nut Zippers. Raleigh's Nick Hagelin opens. The music starts at 9:30 p.m.



SONG OF THE WEEK

There are few emcees we like to hear more than Doseone, so we'll talk to him about "You Ain't It" by his group **THEMSELVES (11.24, LOCAL 506)**. To download the song and read the interview with the band, visit www.indyweek.com.

JOHN COWAN BAND

FROM: Nashville

SINCE: 1998

CLAIM TO FAME: Pushing away from bluegrass

John Cowan's voice bridges the gap between that high lonesome sound and soulful seduction. Cowan rose to prominence as lead singer for the New Grass Revival, a group including notables Sam Bush, Béla Fleck and Pat Flynn. Together, they pushed the boundaries of bluegrass and innovated a subgenre. Over 30 years later, Cowan's voice is still clear and yearning, drawing with a touch of countrified soul. With guitar, fiddle and mandolin surrounding his electric bass, his songs use bluegrass as a framework or an afterthought. Folk Soul Revival opens at **THE BERKELEY CAFE** with its grittier, acoustic folk-rock. \$15/ 9 p.m.



LARRY KEEL & NATURAL BRIDGE

FROM: Natural Bridge, Va.

SINCE: 2004

CLAIM TO FAME: Looking back to bluegrass

Larry Keel's baritone rumbles with a timeless gravitas that is the shared voice of railroad steel drivers, traveling hoboes and modern mechanics. Rhythmic mandolin drives the songs, and vocal harmonies cry out like train whistles. The deep sound is beholden, but not bound, to bluegrass, and it bristles with excitement. Banjo solos break out between dingy verses. Keel is one of the premier flatpicking guitar players, but he'll be given a run for his money at **LINCOLN THEATRE**, as the legendary Tony Rice joins in for the show. \$14-\$24/ 9 p.m. —Andrew Ritchey

