

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

My Sister Ocean

With Portal and Superbeing

Friday, 17 November at 9pm

Sidetrack Café

\$7 at door

A duo featuring only bass and drums, self-proclaimed "alt-pop punk rock" provocateurs My Sister Ocean are back at the Sidetrack this week for a second round after releasing their CD *Beautiful Failures* there earlier this summer. The band says that the album's title was inspired by Orlando Bloom's character in Cameron Crowe's film *Elizabethtown*, ironically, a movie that, while featuring visually appealing cinematography and a cast worthy of *People* magazine, ended up being a box-office bomb.

Kool Keith

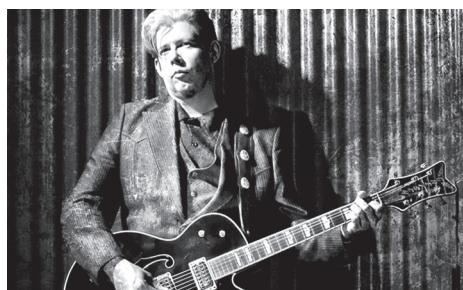
With Kutmasta Kurt and Weezil

Sunday, 19 November at 8pm

Starlite Room, 18+

Tickets at door

The only man who can take on Diddy as king of alternative monikers, Kool Keith brings his underground hip-hop to the surface this Sunday. Known separately as Dr Octagon, Dr Dooom, Rhythm X and Mr Gerbik, Keith has been part of several projects in his days on the hip-hop scene. Known as a major player in the revitalization of the genre, Keith has begun a revolution with such classic releases as *Spankmaster* and *Dr Octagonecologyst*, the latter noted for its loose raps and inventive skits filled with non-sequiturs, a linguistic element this entertainment writer knows nothing about.



Big John Bates and the Voodoo Dollz

With The Igniters and The B Movies

Tuesday, 21 November at 9pm

Sidetrack Café

\$10 at door

As any feminist would tell you, it's crucial to refer to women as dolls when describing modern burlesque troupes. The high-profile Pussycat Dolls (the burlesque ensemble, not the pop group) helped pioneer this rejuvenation in the art of theatrical striptease and the Voodoo Dollz continue their legacy, even adding a Z to increase their flair. They dance to the vibes of Vancouver rocker Big John Bates' swaggering rockabilly swing, creating a spectacle that both Brian Setzer and Gloria Steinem could enjoy.

Jim Byrnes

Wednesday, 22 November at 9pm

Sidetrack Café

\$12 advance, \$15 at door

After nearly 25 years in the television and music industries, St Louis native Jim Byrnes would have quite a story to tell. Well-toured in Canada and having defeated Bryan Adams in 1996 for a coveted Juno, Byrnes is once again bringing his folksy blues rock across a nation that loved him enough to shun our own country's golden boy. But perhaps we Canucks should be wary. On his new album, *House of Refuge*, Byrnes has a song about meeting Che Guevara, a somewhat popular communist, in a dream. As well, Byrnes not long ago provided the voice for the French mayor of Paris in the TV movie *Madeline*. These signs point to only one possible conclusion: blues musicians in the US are trying to subvert Canadian freedom.

JONN KMECH
Sounds the same on the phone



Fawning and fussing

Raising The Fawn has had its share of brouhahas, but things are finally starting to tone down

Raising The Fawn

With In-Flight Safty and Mico

Thursday, 16 November at 8pm

The Powerplant

PAUL BLINOV
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Raising The Fawn is a band fraught with frequent changes. The atmospheric-rock trio is in the middle of a Canada-wide tour promoting their latest album, *The Maginot Line*. The fourth release in the band's almost decade-long career, it features the most stable lineup the band has seen. But even now, there's still the occasional misstep.

"We're a little bit behind schedule getting in. If [my phone] cuts out, just call the number back," John Crossingham instructs over a crackling cellphone. But Crossingham is used to setbacks; the early years of Raising the Fawn were filled with them.

Originally Crossingham's one-man band, Raising the Fawn has gone through a multitude of band members since 1997 in order to arrive at their final cast: Crossingham on vocals and guitar, long-time collaborator Scott Remila on bass and keys and Dylan Green rounding it all out with percussion. For now, though, Crossingham seems very comfortable pushing forward with this particular musical combination.

"Over the past couple of years, it's been the same band, so by now it feels like a band. But it took a while for it to get settled," Crossingham explains. "There were a few times I thought we had the band, but then it sort of fell out from underneath us. It took a lot of perseverance and sticking to our guns. But once it came together, I think we knew we felt that this [lineup] was going to stick for a while, and it has."

"It feels pretty good," he continues. "I think

we communicate pretty well, and I think that the three of us understand how to fit together as a group and not tread on each other's toes. There's a lot of space to work with, so it's pretty easy."

But before the final roster had gelled solid, Crossingham was attempting to pull together a band to tour Raising the Fawn's second album, *The North Sea*. However, due to the lack of a stable group of musicians to tour with, the album went unreleased for some time.

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JOHN CROSSINGHAM

"The North Sea didn't actually take a longer time to write and record—it just took longer for it to get released," Crossingham says, thinking back on the chaotic time. "The members leaving really slowed it down. [Recording company] Sonic Union didn't want to release the record without a band to tour it."

The North Sea finally found release in 2004, and during the ensuing tour—where Green joined up as a drummer—Raising the Fawn became the band they are now. Crossingham seems genuinely excited about their new release, *The Maginot Line*,

for it's finally become a carefully crafted product of all three band members—not just him.

"In some ways, I feel like *The Maginot Line* took a lot longer to write than *North Sea*, just because we were taking a longer time writing as a group," Crossingham says. "The songs were having to go through three sets of brains instead of one primarily, at least in their gestation."

And Crossingham seems surprisingly fine with sharing the songwriting dues with his bandmates, considering that Raising the Fawn is his brainchild.

"There were some days when I was more resistant than others," Crossingham muses. "But for the most part, it was just a matter of allowing that songwriting to come together as a band instead of just sort of myself. So the more that I personally make way for it, the more Scott and Dylan fill up that space."

It's worth noting that, while Raising the Fawn is Crossingham's current focus, he also plays guitar in the acclaimed indie melting pot/band, Broken Social Scene. But juggling Raising the Fawn with such a beloved, significantly more well-known act has actually turned out pretty well, according to Crossingham.

"I'm missing a big tour that [Broken Social Scene] is doing down in the States," Crossingham laments. "But other than that, I really haven't missed much activity with them. Our touring schedules have overlapped with the spaces, so it hasn't been too difficult to work. They fit together surprisingly well, so it's not as difficult as it sounds from the outside."

On the exterior, it appears that Crossingham has seen some pretty unstable days with Raising the Fawn, but he doesn't seem to care now that things have finally begun to fall into place.

"Right when you called, I got a Yahtzee on my hand-held game," he laughs. "Everything works out in the end, I guess."