

Endangered Ape on the Road Again

Written by Richard Amery

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Local band Endangered Ape have been literally making a lot of noise around Lethbridge lately. Known for the craziest 20 minute shows in the city, they are frequently playing the GCBC Lounge in Henotic they are also constantly on tour. Their latest with bass and drums duo Amelia Earhart, begins today. It will go to Halifax and back.

“It's three weeks long and we're playing every day. We lucked out,” said Endangered Ape bassist and songwriter Paul Lawton, waiting for people to arrive for an April 24 show in the GCBC Lounge, adding they will hook up with numerous bands along the way including the The Hot Blood Bombers in Regina, the O'Veids in Montreal and the Stolen Minks in Halifax.

“I can't think of a better way to spend a vacation than three weeks in a van with friends playing a show every day,” continued Lawton who also teaches at the university. It winds up in Lethbridge with a “mammoth” rooftop show at Henotic, May 18 featuring eight local bands and six out of town acts including The Necessities, Holy Vapour, The Creationists, Amelia Earhart, The Moby Dicks, Endangered Ape, Feral Children, Skeletons, The Pine Tarts, The Wicked Awsomes and Sharp Ends who play the Mammoth Cave Fest.

In the meantime Lawton is enthused about the band's new EP, “Ape Shall not Kill Ape,” which is 13 minutes of cacophonous guitar/keyboard/ drum and bass based noise rock with a heap of energy— just like the live show.

“Even I wouldn't want to hear my band for a whole CD,” Lawton laughed describing Endangered Ape's music as being “lo-fi” or garage rock and punk.

“It's not about slick production, it's about getting it on tape. We recorded it ourselves. It's old school recording recorded live off the floor. It's a really crazy sound. Our neighbours hate us,” he said adding Endangered Ape is a reaction to manufactured orchestral pop and underground indie music dominating the music scene today.

Endangered Ape has been playing in various formations since 1998, but started taking their music career seriously last year. Not too seriously, though. Lawton said the music has to be fun to play or there is no point doing it. The band also includes vocalist and frontman Adam Munro, guitarists Kent Aardse, Evan Van Reekum and Jeff King, keyboardist Jane Edmundson and drummer Ryan Grieve.

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“We definitely don’t take it too seriously. We have a lot of fun. Adam will get into the crowd and take off his shirt. This is a garage band, we have no pretense of being anything more,” he said.

The show included solo performances by Lawton, Kent Aardse as well as Evan Van Reekum, punk band the Myelin Sheaths and Amelia Earhart (James Stewart and Ryan Grieve) who reminded me of Winnipeg based bass/drums duo Duotang who were popular in the '90s. Amelia Earhart has their own EP release party, April 28 at Mojoes.

They really filled out their sound with minimal instrumentation played well.