

TICKETS ON SALE THIS SATURDAY JANUARY 21 AT NOON!

Q101 WELCOMES...

SmokingPopes

**SATURDAY
MARCH 11**

**6:30PM
ALL AGES**

**SUNDAY
MARCH 12**

**10:00PM
18+OVER**



NEW LIVE DVD+CD
IN STORES 2/28/06

M METRO
3730 NORTH CLARK ST
773-549-0203 / METROCHICAGO.COM

Tickets available at all TicketMaster locations or the Metro Box Office (located inside the Metro Store at 3728 N Clark St with NO SERVICE FEE) / Charge by phone: 312.559.1212 / ticketmaster.com

METRO



3730 NORTH CLARK ST
METROCHICAGO.COM CHICAGO
773.549.0203

NEW SHOWS ON SALE THIS SATURDAY, JANUARY 21 AT NOON:

--- SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 6PM, ALL AGES ---
THE LEAGUE OF CHICAGO MUSIC VENUES PRESENTS...
THE HAWK WINTER MUSIC FESTIVAL:
A CELEBRATION OF CHICAGO'S MUSIC SCENE...
JT & THE CLOUDS
CAMERON MCGILL & WHAT ARMY
KATIE TODD BAND / BRAD PETERSON

--- SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 6:30PM, ALL AGES --- **Q101**
--- SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 10PM, 18+OVER ---
Q101 WELCOMES...
SMOKING POPES

--- MONDAY, APRIL 3, 7PM, ALL AGES ---
CLAP YOUR HANDS SAY YEAH

--- THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
MATES OF STATE
MARIA TAYLOR / SATURDAY LOOKS GOOD TO ME

--- FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 7PM, ALL AGES ---
EISLEY
SIMON DAWES / BRIGHTEN

--- WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 6:30PM, ALL AGES ---
SILVERSTEIN * SPITALFIELD
STRETCH ARM STRONG * WITH HONOR

--- THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 6:15PM, ALL AGES --- **REVOLVER**
REVOLVER MAGAZINE WELCOMES...
THE BLACK DAHLIA MURDER * THROWDOWN
THE RED CHORD * AGONY SCENE

--- FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
RJD2 * ACEYALONE * BUSDRIVER

--- TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 8PM, ALL AGES ---
MILLER GENUINE DRAFT WELCOMES...
MOENIA

--- WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 7PM, ALL AGES --- **101.9 THE MIX**
THE MIX WELCOMES...
THE FRAY * CARY BROTHERS * MAT KEARNEY

--- SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 6:30PM, ALL AGES ---
ARMOR FOR SLEEP * BOYS NIGHT OUT
CHIODOS * ACTION REACTION

--- SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 8PM, 18+OVER ---
NADA SURF * ROGUE WAVE * INARA GEORGE

--- FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
OF MONTREAL

--- SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 4PM, ALL AGES ---
YOUNG CHICAGO AUTHORS PRESENTS...
LOUDER THAN A BOMB 2006: 6TH ANNUAL CHICAGO TEEN POETRY FESTIVAL

--- SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 7PM, ALL AGES ---
METRO/JAM/EMPTY BOTTLE PRESENT...
ARCTIC MONKEYS * THE SPINTO BAND

--- FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
ROBERT POLLARD

--- FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
--- SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
BUILT TO SPILL

--- FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 6:30PM, ALL AGES ---
HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE * RYAN'S HOPE * THE SKYRITER * 2*SWEET

--- SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 8PM, 18+OVER ---
REBEL RADIO WELCOMES...
MARAZENE * THE INFAMOUS * WET ANIMAL * SMOKE * SOUND MOB * NDX

--- SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 6:30PM, ALL AGES --- **Q101**
Q101 & VERIZON WELCOME...
HARD-FI * ASSASSINS * THE VILLAINS OF VERONA
DJ SETS BY JARRETT (OF WALTER MEEGO)

--- THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
THE SLEEPERS * THE ASSEMBLY * THE ITS! * MUSICAL OUTFITS

--- FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 6PM, ALL AGES ---
THE KILLER * BLOOD IN BLOOD OUT
LEFT HAND PATH * IN DYING DREAMS * DEAD ON

--- SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 6:30PM, ALL AGES ---
WAX ON RADIO * HANAIEI * THE FELIX CULPA * DIALOGUE

--- SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 6PM, ALL AGES ---
BAYSIDE * PUNCHLINE
THIS IS ME SMILING * MADINA LAKE * SULLIVAN

--- FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
GORAN IVANOVIC GROUP * ANDREAS KAPSALIS TRIO

--- SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 6PM, ALL AGES ---
INEPT * THE ALPHA COUPLE * THE WAITING GAME
THE TRANSLATION * THE MID-SUMMER DERBY

--- WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 7:30PM, 18+OVER --- **93XRT**
93XRT WELCOMES...
BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB
ELEFANT * THE MORNING AFTER GIRLS

--- SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
CHICAGO DROP II CD COMPILATION RELEASE PARTY...
ABSTRACT GIANTS * SMALL CHANGE
DYNAMIC VIBRATIONS * VERBAL KENT

--- WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 8PM, 18+OVER ---
SAINT ETIENNE * VENUS HUM

--- FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 9PM, 18+OVER ---
THE LEAGUE OF CHICAGO MUSIC VENUES PRESENTS...
THE HAWK WINTER MUSIC FESTIVAL: A CELEBRATION OF CHICAGO'S MUSIC SCENE...
STARS * THE ELECTED

Tickets available at the Metro Box Office (located inside the Metro Store at 3728 N Clark Street with NO SERVICE FEE) or at all TicketMaster locations / Charge by phone: 312.559.1212 / www.ticketmaster.com



The Meter

themeter@chicagoreader.com
www.chicagoreader.com/TheMeter



Emmett Kelly

YVETTE MARIE DOSTATINI

The Long Layover

Guitarist Emmett Kelly liked Chicago so much he never finished his trip.

By Bob Mehr

Drag City producer and head of staff Rian Murphy is usually sparing with compliments, but mention guitarist Emmett Kelly and the floodgates open. "Oh yeah, what a star that kid is," Murphy says. "His feeling for the music is really deep, and his playing is—I don't want to say mature beyond his years, but I'm constantly surprised at how polished and classic his sounds are."

Kelly has lived in Chicago only since late 2004, but in that short time the 25-year-old has established a reputation as one of the city's fastest-rising talents. His elegant and lyrical playing reflects influences as diverse as 60s Brit folkie Steve Ashley and postpunk virtuoso Nels Cline, and since his arrival here he's accompanied several respected songwriters, including Azita Youssefi, Edith Frost, and Beth Orton.

For the past few months Kelly's also been playing in the Boogie Band, an indie all-star lineup that specializes in rock, blues, and R&B covers (it has a weekly gig at the Big Horse), and in the spring he'll release his first proper album as the Cairo Gang, a name he's used for bands and solo projects since high school. His swift embrace by the Chicago music community has been something of a vindication for him—he's dedicated most of his life to the guitar, and until now he's had little to show for it aside from some off-putting industry experiences in the late 90s.

Kelly was born in LA into a musical family, the middle child between two sisters. His father drummed with a late-60s London psych group called the Majority—much of their output is collected on the recent RPM reissue *Rainbow Rockin' Chair*—and met his mother, an Italian-American from Detroit, while they were both playing percussion for an itinerant hippie band in Amsterdam in the early 70s.

Kelly started playing guitar at ten, and though he'd grown up listening to his parents' classic-rock albums, in junior high he graduated to harder stuff like the Dead Kennedys and Crass. "I was huge into punk," he says. "Then I heard Sonic Youth, and that totally rearranged my head." He started the first Cairo Gang, a noisy shoegazer band, while in high school in Reseda, California. His next group, Prophet 5, was offered a development deal after just one show—Zomba Records, a major indie that owned labels like Jive and Silvertone, wanted to see what it could make of the group. "We were kids," admits Kelly. "We

got in way over our heads."

Jeff Blue, the A and R man who signed Prophet 5, had been almost single-handedly responsible for the rise of nu metal, cultivating acts like Korn and Linkin Park. "I dunno what he was thinking getting involved with us," says Kelly. "We were into Slowdive, Spiritualized, and old Verve. And he wanted to make us into Third Eye Blind or something." The band had only cut a few demos when Blue left Zomba for a job at Warner Brothers. Prophet 5 sat out the rest of their contract and broke up soon after.

Itching to get out of LA, Kelly enrolled at Boston's Berklee College of Music in fall 1999. "Me and my friends had access to the rehearsal room, and we'd go in there and drop acid and jam for hours and hours," he says. "We'd go on these musical journeys, just exploring all of these crazy sounds."

In 2001, after saving up a few hundred dollars, Kelly dropped out of school and flew to Europe, where he kicked around for several months. "Just basically being a bum and doing street music," he says. He

returned to the U.S. in October and spent the next two years bouncing between LA, Brooklyn, and Port Townsend, Washington. For a short time he was a songwriter for a Hollywood film-music company, and in 2002 he used some of that money to make an eclectic CD-R of solo sketchbook recordings as the Cairo Gang. In fall 2003 he moved into a downtown LA warehouse space, where for the next year he worked on several projects—two more Cairo Gang discs, a duo LP with psych-folk multi-instrumentalist Nick Huntington called *The Surf the Sundried* (released by Attacknine last summer), and several albums of material with singer-songwriter John Webster Johns under the name Charlemaignes.

In fall 2004 Kelly decided to head back to New York, and on his way stopped to visit his older sister in Chicago. "And I never left," he says. "I was exposed to all this cool music everywhere and I immediately met a bunch of awesome people." Among them was Azita Youssefi, former front woman for Bride of No No. "I was drunk at a bar and we were talking," he says. "She said

she was looking for a guitar player. I started to play with her and she totally whipped me into shape."

"He was already in shape, man," says Youssefi, laughing. "He's just an unbelievable player. I can't imagine anybody with ears not wanting to play with him." Kelly toured with Youssefi in January 2005, and after he introduced her to his roommate, writer Brian Torrey Scott, she composed and recorded a suite of songs for Scott's play *Detail From the Mountain Side* with Kelly on guitar. The set will be released by Drag City in early February.

Kelly's work with Youssefi quickly led to further offers. In spring 2005 Rian Murphy asked him to appear on Edith Frost's album *It's a Game*, and his dreamy country guitar colors six of its tracks. In August former Wilco multi-instrumentalist Leroy Bach set him up with a Colorado gig backing Beth Orton, and he and Bach have both been rehearsing with her this past week for a January 24 appearance on the Letterman show.

Bach and Kelly also started the Boogie Band, a loose outfit that includes Youssefi, performance poet and vocalist Marvin Tate, bassist Matt Lux of Isotope 217, and Tortoise drummer Dan Bitney. Tate and Youssefi occasionally contribute originals, but most of the group's material is by the likes of Muddy Waters, Bobby Womack, and Bobby "Blue" Bland. "The whole idea is to play dance music," says Kelly. "To make something for fun and kinda remember why we're all playing in the first place."

The Cairo Gang is now a full band again as well, with Bach, drummer Ryan Rapsys of Euphone and Ambulette, and Born Heller bassist Jason Ajemian. In March the first official Cairo Gang single will come out on the New York indie Narnack Records, followed in April by the full-length—some of which was drawn from one of the albums Kelly finished in LA. (He plans to release the other LA disc himself.) Kelly toured in October with Narnack labelmates OCS, and he expects to spend plenty of time on the road in 2006.

That's not to say he's still afflicted with his old wanderlust, though. Now that he's found a home among sympathetic musicians, Kelly seems ready to settle down. "I feel really lucky I ended up here at all," he says. "I won't be leaving Chicago anytime soon." ☐

The Treatment

A day-by-day guide to our Critic's Choices and other previews

friday20



Astronomer

THE ASTRONOMER Multi-instrumentalist Charles Kim—the architect behind the deeply cinematic Pinetop Seven and Sinister Luck Ensemble—adds his vocals to the mix in his latest group, the Astronomer. But on the band's eponymous self-released debut, his pedestrian singing lacks the supple, atmospheric quality of his guitar and pedal steel, diluting the effect of the spectral music: Kim played nearly everything on the record, and the songs have a gentle, hovering beauty, but on the whole they sound lifeless. Hopefully he'll get a spark from the musicians joining him here: Steve Dorocke (pedal steel), Jason Toth (drums), John Abbey (upright bass), Jeff Frehling (accordion, guitar), and Tim Joyce (banjo). This show is a release party. The New Messengers of Happiness open. ►► 10 PM, Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, 773-227-4433, \$8. —Peter Margasak

BOUND STEMS These tuneful local indie rockers recently released their second EP, *The Logic of Building the Body Plan* (Flameshovel), a teaser for the forthcoming full-length *Appreciation Night*. Which label will release the LP is still up in the air: as Bob Mehr reported back in November, the Bound Stems have attracted the interest of major indies like Domino and Barsuk. After hearing *Body Plan*, I understand why—it's 26 minutes are chock-full of enthralling high-octane arrangements, left-field hooks, and superb musicianship (drummer Evan Sult used to play with Seattle cult favorites Harvey Danger, of "Flagpole Sitta" fame). Though the band seems certain to put its John Hancock on another label's contract before too long, the new EP is still a feather in Flameshovel's cap—and taken with the Chin Up Chin Up records, maybe even the start of a new Chicago "hard-pop" sound. This show doubles as a release party for the second issue of *Make*, which includes work by *Reader* contributor Adam Langer, among others; admission includes a copy of the magazine. I Need Sleep and Ramona Cordova open. ►► 10 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, 773-276-3600 or 866-468-3401, \$8. —J. Niimi



Bound Stems

ERWIN HELFER See Sunday. ►► 9:30 PM, Rosa's Lounge, 3420 W. Armitage, 773-342-0452, \$12.

HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE This local quintet, which features members of Rise Against, Shai Hulud, the Hope Conspiracy, the Killing Tree, etc, etc, is so posthardcore it's like hardcore never happened. The chugging songs on last year's *Lost in Landscapes* EP (HeWhoCorrupts Inc.) have an angular grandeur and an unpunk kind of priggishness—the music's crisply recorded and almost coldly perfect—but front woman Emily Schambra defiantly commands the top of the mix with her humanizing wail. There are only a few wobbly moments where I thought I was listening to At the Drive-In fronted by Pat Benatar covering "Kashmir." The band's working on a full-length. Ryan's Hope, the Skyriter, and 2*Sweet open. ►► 6:30 PM, Metro, 3730 N. Clark, 773-549-0203 or 312-559-1212, \$9. —Monica Kendrick

JON LANGFORD The combination of Jon Langford and the Museum of Contemporary Art calls up some fond memories for me—I'll never forget the Mekons' 1997 MCA presentation of *Pussy, King of the Pirates*, which was one of Kathy Acker's final performances. This time around Langford's staging an autobiographical multimedia piece, *The Executioner's Last Songs*, which is partly inspired by the trio of anti-death penalty albums of the same name he's released with the Pine Valley Cosmonauts. He'll be joined by (among others) Sally Timms, violinist Jean Cook, and bassist Tony Maimone, who's best known for his work in Pere Ubu but has also done some Mekons time. In March Langford will release his third solo album, *Gold Brick* (ROIR), a biting and wistful collection of sweet Americana—he's still pretty jaded, but his jarring continued on page 6