

Telepathy

Do-it-yourself oddcore.

BY STEFANIE KALEM

stefanie.kalem@eastbayexpress.com

There's a whole lot wrong with the music industry these days. What was once a glittery, diverse magic machine now seems more like an ailing stripper, plying the same old schoolgirl and rough-boy acts again and again. So what do you do when your music, and the music of your friends, doesn't even remotely fit into any of the existing pigeonholes? According to Patrick Cress, you make your own case. Odd Shaped Case, the collective that Cress and his band, Telepathy, belong to, was started by friends of Cress' back in 2001. "The idea of the label," he explains, "was to be able to promote ourselves as a small local label that pretty much doesn't get any attention from any of the bigwigs. The idea is to have a co-op of all of these local bands to help distribute our music and also, with all of these great bands together, we have a little bit more clout in the music community as well."

The cooperative effort now has fifteen bands in its oddly shaped stable, including some of the best and the brightest that the Bay Area avant-jazz, cabaret, and Balkan scenes have to offer. Six of these bands will be performing at a two-night showcase this week at the Jazz House (3192 Adeline St., Berkeley). Thursday night's show features the Toids, Telepathy, and Gubbish, while Friday night's bill comprises Married Couple, the Pickpocket Ensemble, and the Odd Shaped Case Ensemble. "You have some adventurous jazz going on those nights, you have some Balkan Gypsy-influenced bands going on both nights," Cress says, "and that pretty much sums up the label, all and all." He continues: "I really believe that, in the face of all of these major record companies falling on their faces, I believe that this is going to be the next big thing. To have something like this, with a small community of musicians all working toward one goal, I think it's going to be very important in the near future." Both shows start at 8 p.m., and tea from Far Leaves will be served. Visit OddShapedCase.com or call 415-846-9432 for further details.

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