

# Shapiro comes back to the 'Burg

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**C**arl Shapiro smells like money.

Or so he says, as he climbs the stairs of the Harrisonburg house he shares with his bandmates in indie rock band, Shapiro.

"I smell rich," Carl, 23, declares to John Granofsky, meaning he smells bad.

"You smell rich?" Granofsky, 21, replies.

"I mean, I reek of dollar bills," Carl says.

The band isn't rich (yet), but they're a few steps closer to fame and fortune. Shapiro will unveil new songs and fresher versions of old tunes at Guzman's on April 13, their first show in Harrisonburg since September.

After spending nearly every weekend of the past year touring college campuses and party towns, the band caught a producer's ear in Nashville.

John Mark Painter, the producer behind Ben Folds Five and Sixpence None the Richer, invited the band to come down to the country capital and record a little rock music.

The band, comprised of John Granofsky, Carl Shapiro, Jeremy Teter, 22, and Nathan Granofsky, 19, spent two weeks in Nashville this year recording their music in Painter's studio.

They crashed in a huge house belonging to a friend of the producer and had their first taste of excess. Remembering it now, Nathan Granofsky, the lead guitarist who looks like a rock version of Harry Potter, animatedly tells a story of how the owner is

## 'Burg show

Shapiro will play Guzman's on April 13. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. and the cost is \$5. The show is for all ages.

the type of guy who built a pool house, but doesn't have a pool.

"Thirty-foot ceilings, beer taps on the counter," he says. "It was crazy."

Recording in a real studio was a radically different experience from recording their EP, "You Are Alone." "The EP was real bootleg, do-it-yourself," John says. "It was recorded in 19 different places."

Locations included school auditoriums and Jeremy's girlfriend's closet. What's the difference between recording in a closet and recording in a professional studio?

"Professionalism!" says Carl, laughing.

Painter convinced the members to pare their songs down to the essentials. "He hears what you're trying to do and gives really small suggestions that make a big deal," Carl says.

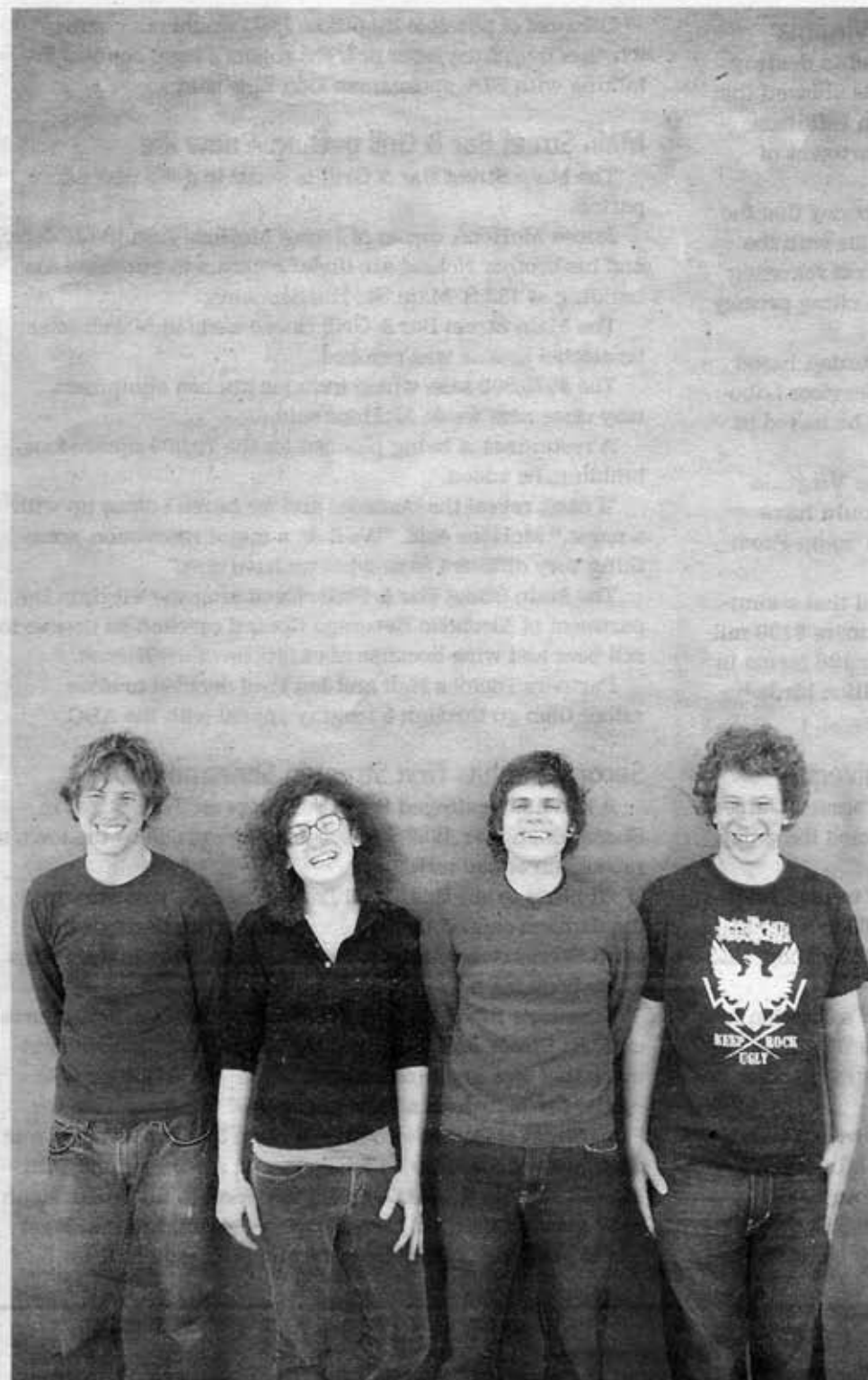
"It was humbling," John says. "He could play every instrument 100 times better than we could ... and probably will!"

Painter's influence extends to their sound, which they say is more "listenable."

"We're playing songs differently," John says. "We're thinking more through our songs. They're simpler, more dynamic."

"It's more coherent," Nathan agrees.

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Courtesy photo

From left, drummer John Granofsky, 21, guitarist Nathan Granofsky, 19, singer and pianist Jeremy Teter, 22, and bassist Carl Shapiro, 23, will be back in the city to play their first show in Harrisonburg on April 13 since recording an album in Nashville.

# Europe, Japan may be next stop for the band

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Older songs, like "L.E.A.V.I.N.G.," were changed so significantly the band isn't sure fans will recognize them. And fans who come to their April 13 show will hear new songs they definitely won't recognize.

The show will be a homecoming of sorts; the band hasn't played Harrisonburg in eight months, although three members work in the area and John is an English major at Bridgewater College.

"We've toured almost every weekend," John says.

"We're weekend warriors," Nathan adds.

But no city's crowds can compare to the fans in the 'Burg. "The best crowd is Harrisonburg," Carl says. "Partly because we know everybody."

"It's been too long," Nathan agrees.

As for the unfinished record, the band hopes to head south to Nashville again after John graduates next month. They

hate saying too much about the future after that; they are wary of predicting if they'll shop the album to record labels when it's completed. Painter has suggested possibly releasing their album first in Europe or Japan, but they have no idea if that will happen.

"If you can get that crowd, you're free to do what you want in the States," John says. "But we've learned that until you see a contract, nothing's for sure."

They've learned not to get their hopes up, he says. Too often they have heard of record executives and managers in the audience, only to have nothing come of it.

"Now we're just going to play music and hope for the best," John says.

Their short-term goals are supporting themselves and paying the rent. Their long-term goals?

"Paying the rent on a mansion," John says.

"Four mansions!" Nathan says.