

'Roustabout' brings a variety of music to the local scene

By Jessica Savrock
For Blue Weekly

From international pop stars to local legends, Roustabout! has introduced many nonmainstream groups to the State College music scene. Two up-and-coming bands are on the agenda for tonight's show at The Darkhorse.

Oppenheimer

Members: Rocky O'Reilly, guitar, keys and percussion; Shaun Robinson, vocals, guitar, keys and percussion

For more information:

www.oppenheimermusic.co.uk

www.myspace.com/oppenheimer

Next show: 8 p.m. today,
The Darkhorse Tavern

From Dublin to The Darkhorse, duo eager to play college town

Tonight, Ireland-based duo Oppenheimer brings its electronica sounds to Roustabout! and will rock the crowd with its approach to indie pop. The combination of guitars, keyboards, loops and harmonies packed into two-minute songs offers a refreshing synth-pop experience.

"I once saw us described as 'blip-pop,' which I thought was really charming," said Rocky O'Reilly, who plays guitars, keys and percussion for the duo. He is joined by Shaun Robinson, who lends his talents in vocals, guitars, keys and percussion.

Oppenheimer's debut, self-titled album, released in June, has already proved successful in the States. Since its formation in 2004, the band has scheduled American tour stops from Massachusetts to New York City to State College, and has played at the famous South by Southwest music festival in Austin, Texas.

"We are really happy with the response from American college radio, which has been really supportive," O'Reilly said. "We reached No. 36 in the CMJ Radio 200 chart this summer, which we did not expect."

According to O'Reilly, the group's songwriting inspiration comes from traveling, seeing new and weird things, meeting people, experiencing life and being happy and sad.

"I think we want the music to be the equivalent of those little moments in life that hold with you forever, that make you feel something, that take you back to a time and a place where you can smell the air and feel the exact emotion," O'Reilly said. "All my favorite

albums do that, but at the same time they soundtrack my present situation, too."

Oppenheimer has signed by Bar/None Records, which helped to produce the debut album.

O'Reilly said he and Robinson are looking forward to performing in a college town.

"Our image of American college or teen life is mostly based on movies like 'Revenge of the Nerds' and 'Dazed and Confused,' so it better be exactly like that!"

Shapiro

Members: Jeremy Teter, piano and vocals; John Granofsky, drums and BGVs; Carl Shapiro, bass; Nathan Granofsky, guitar and BGVs

For more information:

www.shapiropeople.com

www.myspace.com/shapiro

Next shows: 9:30 p.m. today,
The Darkhorse Tavern

It's all relative: Shapiro sheds light on familial musical talent

Hailing from the hills of Virginia, Shapiro brings evidence that musical success can be a family affair.

Named after bassist Carl Shapiro, the only member of the band not related by blood, Shapiro is known for playing rock stylistically similar to Ben Folds Five and Radiohead.

"Shapiro is made of trained musicians playing fresh rock, all while having fun," drummer John Granofsky said.

Shapiro's Arabic translation means "pretty good," he added. "So we like to say Shapiro is 'pretty good.'"

Their EP, "You Are Alone," was originally released in February 2005 with five tracks and was re-released this summer with a bonus track. Since the album's release, they have been successful in becoming recognized. They have played two years in a row at the Mid Atlantic College Radio Conference (MACRoCk) and have gained more than 46,000 plays on their Myspace page. They also have plans to enter the recording studio this winter with producer John Painter, who has worked with groups such as Ben Folds Five and Fleming and John.

"It was an honor to have Painter approach us about working on our first full-length album," Granofsky said. "With his help, we are hoping to deliver a full-length record that shows the quality and originality of our band."