

B O U L D E R

WEEKLY

PUNKS POETS POLITICS



**JELLO BIAFRA,
THURSTON MOORE
& ANNE WALDMAN
PERFORM
FOR CHARITY**

BY VINCE DARCANGELO

5

Liberty Beat / 5
More state control
is not the cure for
health care

10

News / 10
The perils of burning
rubber

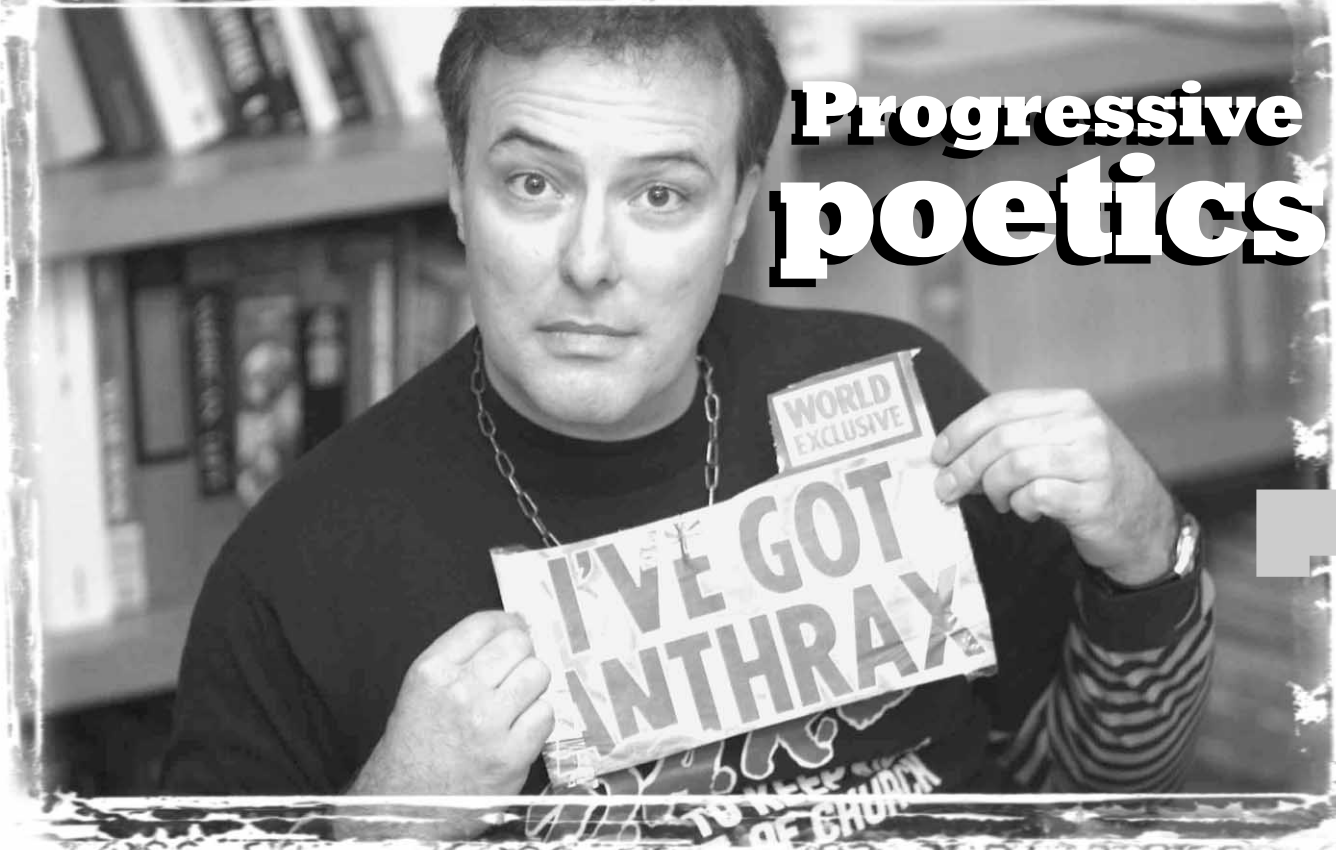
13

Hygeia / 13
Acupuncture
clinic celebrates
anniversary

buzz

<http://www.boulderweekly.com/buzzlead.html>

Progressive poetics



Art and activism
come together to
benefit migrant
workers and
Burmese refugees

by Vince Darcangelo

It was no holiday in Cambodia for Khyentse James when on Dec. 21, 2005, she drove her motorcycle into a 10-foot ditch at 90 mph, shattering her right leg into nine pieces. Though an experienced biker, she was traversing a dangerous, barely accessible Cambodian jungle in search of rarely seen temples. So remote was the location that it took eight hours for help to arrive and another eight hours to deliver James to the nearest medical facility—a facility that was unable to treat her injury. It wasn't until the next morning that she was flown to Bangkok for surgery.

More than two months later, James still wears a cast and walks with the assistance of crutches. But that won't prevent her from mixing it up on March 9 at the Boulder Theater, when three of the biggest names in the realm of art and politics—Jello Biafra, Thurston Moore and Anne Waldman—come together for **A Night of Music and Poetry for Progressive Action**.

"Just to have them all together, Jesus," says James, who is one of three Naropa

see **POETICS** Page 22

Thurston Moore

Rap sheet:

Claim to fame: Influential noise-rock outfit Sonic Youth

Prime cuts: *Sonic Youth*, *Goo*, *The Whitey Album* (as Ciccone Youth)

Also known as: A poet and collector of underground literary journals, a self-described "archivist of stapled ephemera"

What's next: Geffen/UMe will reissue two classic Sonic Youth records and Thurston's only solo record on March 14, and a new Sonic Youth release is expected later this year

Says Thurston...

On Anne Waldman

"I first met Anne when I was doing some things

with Patti Smith. I was over at Patti's, and Anne was there. I was really honored to have met her."

Triple Threat

"[Jello and Anne] are both assertive readers, and when I read I'm somewhat modest. I'm with these two real fire-brands... When I saw it was Anne and Jello, I was like, 'Man, they're just gonna tear it up. They're very articulate. Maybe I'm out of my league here.'"

Artist as Activist

"I think it's entirely important, even though I get



so many young people saying, 'What does it matter? Nothing's changing. We're still in a situation that's completely disheartening.' It does matter, because you always have to have your voice out there showing your dissent. That alone is reason enough to do it. Be a part of that community of dissent."

"It's always encouraging to me to see high-profile work being done, even something like Jon Stewart. I find it completely amazing that someone who is so articulate and uses comedy to take to task the outrageous, unethical world of the current administration. I

see **THURSTON** Page 21

inside

Page 21 / Overtones:

Hip-hop eye exam

Page 26 / High Decibel:

Sex convention blues

Page 29 / Getting it on!:

Sex holiday in Cambodia

Page 35 / Screen:

Delapa handicaps the Oscars

[buzz cuts]

Can't-miss events for the upcoming week



Flogging Molly

Thursday

Greyboy Allstars—Sax legend Karl Denson delivers the funk, jazz and good-time boogaloo with the Greyboy Allstars. Fox Theatre, 1135 13th St., Boulder, 303-443-3399.

Friday

Napalm Death—More than two decades since defining the grindcore genre, Napalm Death continues to assault America with its brash brand of heavy metal. Bluebird Theatre, 3317 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, 303-322-2308.

Saturday

Flogging Molly—Sure, they're a second-rate Aerosmith to the Dropkick Murphys' Rolling Stones in the realm of Irish rowdy, but they're the best thing going until the Murphys come back to Denver. Ogden Theatre, 935 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, 303-830-2525.

Sunday

30 Seconds to Mars—Despite being fronted by a movie star (Jared Leto) and sounding a bit too much like Gravity Kills, 30 Seconds to Mars' sophomore release, *A Beautiful Lie*, was one of the more interesting releases of 2005—and it beats the pants off the Bacon Brothers. Gothic Theatre, 3263 S. Broadway, 303-788-0984.

Monday

Rock art—Albums on the Hill branches out into the realm of fine art with this exhibition of rock photography and gig posters. Albums Alcove, Albums on the Hill, 1128 13th St., Boulder, 303-447-0159.

Tuesday

Don't Call Me—Think your job sucks? Check out some of the least glamorous gigs portrayed in the film *Don't Call Me*. Boulder Theater, 2032 14th St., Boulder, 303-786-7030.

Wednesday

Art exhibits—Experience a threesome of fine art exhibits through April 17 at the Dairy Center. The current exhibit includes photography, printmaking and a site-specific installation. Dairy Center for the Arts, 2590 Walnut

Jello Biafra

Rap sheet:

Claim to fame: Founder and frontman of the Dead Kennedys
Prime cuts: *In God We Trust, Inc.*; *Frankenchrist*; "Holiday in Cambodia" and "Nazi Punks Fuck Off"
Also known as: Poet, spoken-word artist, target of the PMRC, 2000 presidential candidate of the Green Party
What's next: Jello is currently in the studio producing the new record by French punk/electronic pioneers, Metal Urbain

Says Jello...

Going Local

"I keep emphasizing to people at my shows that even if you're fed up with the lack of choice of the two branches of the corporate party—the RepubliCrats—at the national level, local elections are where it's at. It's really important who is on the city council, who is on the school board, who the county commissioners are. Even the state library board has been politicized badly in Colorado. Owens appointed a flight attendant who knew nothing about literature except certain books that Focus on the Family wanted banned, and that's it."

"Another great one would be if people could get organized and vote in a board of regents at CU that is willing to abolish the football program to kick all the rapists off campus."

"As much as I liked watching a Coors beer baron lose, I'm not exactly jumping up and down at how wonderful Ken Salazar supposedly is. As soon as he gets into office he shepherds through the nomination of an out-and-out neo-nazi to be attorney general, 'Mr. Torture' himself, Alberto Gonzales. There's just no way you can make an excuse for that. That's just plain scary."

Going Green

"Every election, every year, more Greens get elected to local offices than ever before. It's brick by brick... Getting the ideas through is more important than recruiting individual members into the party. If a Democrat like Dennis Kucinich wants to rip off the Green platform for his own presidential campaign, great. He would have made a far better president than Bush, Kerry or the HillBillaries."

Impeachment of Criminals

"The way the Bush junta runs things, they just dare everyone to impeach him as he breaks law after law after law. At the very least, the high-falutin moral holy rollers could at least go after Dick Cheney for going hunting while drunk and shooting his buddy in the face."

The First Punk President

"I didn't ask for that [2000 presidential nomination]. Some people dug up my phone number and called me up, saying, 'We were at the New York state Green Party convention and nominated you for president. You came in second to Ralph Nader. Wanna run?' I was like, 'Hey, wait a minute, I hadn't penciled in run for president on my calendar this year.'"

Hillary Sucks

"She's scared the living daylight out of me ever since I was rudely awakened to her existence way back in '92."

"All these people decided to sit on their hands and their fat asses over all the impeachable crimes of the Bush administration and said, 'Well, we've just got to wait until 2008, because then Hillary will save us.' Those people are in for a very rude surprise."

"I haven't voted for a Democratic candidate for

president since Jimmy Carter when I was still a teenager in Boulder."

Who's Counting?

"I think preserving our right to vote and having our vote counted is a paramount issue... It's probably gotten to the point that Hugo Chavez runs cleaner elections than we do."

Freedom of Speech

"My feeling is the best way to counter bad speech is with more speech. I've argued this with right-wing feminists in the Green Party who wanted to have a ban on porn included in the Green Party platform. Granted, there's a lot of really bad porn out there, but the only way to show people that ain't cool and that's not what women are really like or what they really want or how they should be treated is education, not censorship. That never works."

"Look at the time that old Ku Klux Klan wizard David Duke ran for governor of Louisiana and was ahead for most of the campaign. What did he do in, in the end, was no matter how much he tried to package himself as a kinder, gentler white supremacist who hated welfare cheats, not black people—you know, the code word that Jessie Helms gave us—people said, 'Wait a minute. Look at this book you wrote. Look what you said about blacks and Jews in there.' Eventually he got less than 40 percent of the vote in the run-off election and was run out of national politics forever instead of being Bush's vice president or secretary of health or something. You've got to let Duke publish that crap in order to call him on it later."

Insurrection of the Wallet

"I keep telling people at my shows it's not just a matter of insurrection in the street combined with insurrection in the voting booth. Insurrection of the wallet may be the most important part of all. If somebody wants to, they can just make a vow to themselves, 'I'm not cooperating with corporations and their agenda anymore.' They can't have me, starting with they can't have my money. No more money to chain stores. No more money to chain restaurants. Keep the money with people who treat their workers better and keep the money in the community."

"It doesn't require going to a lot of meetings where people argue till dawn about anarchy or risking getting your head cracked by lawless police at a demonstration. This is a great place the individual can start."

"The thing that kind of surprises me is the huge cheer I get from audiences when I tell them I haven't eaten at McDonald's in almost 30 years. I didn't suffer for that at all. It just became too humiliating."

The Dead Biafras

"Hopefully I'll be around a good long time, but just in case, I think it's time for concerned local citizens of Boulder to campaign to reopen Pioneer [Columbia] Cemetery for the freshly deceased. I haven't decided quite what I want done with me when I die. I thought about payback to the animal rights folks and having my body made into sausages that people can sell on eBay to raise money for charity, or have my corpse simply dripping from a cage above the corner of Market and Van Ness in San Francisco to rain flesh on all the yuppies."

"I think my leading fantasy is, isn't it time Pioneer Cemetery finally got another lollipop? Not just any lollipop, not just a red one that looks like a target, like they have now. I want my lollipop to be a great big eyeball the same size as the red one, only the eyeball slowly moves and follows you as you walk by down 9th Street." **Z**

Dilated Peoples



overtones

<http://www.boulderweekly.com/overtones.html>

West coast flavor

by Chris Clark

Place a Beat Junkie next to some Evidence and Rakaa on a stage and you have **Dilated Peoples**. For the last decade this Los Angeles-based hip-

hop trio has been staying atop the west coast game with sometimes-humorous, sometimes-politically charged flavor seldom seen these days. Enjoying two fine MCs and one of the most striking turntablists to ever grace the decks, Dilated Peoples are a true example of what real hip-hop culture is all about.

After DJ Babu joined the group in 1998, Dilated Peoples solidified themselves as more than a run-of-the-mill collective. They became that group that could both rock the party and put together solid studio albums, most notably *Expansion Tour* and 2001's *Neighborhood Watch*. Although both recordings showcased a group that was well received and adored, they didn't collect the commercial success they probably deserved.

THURSTON from Page 20

find it fascinating. Does it do anything? I think it certainly does a lot. The fact that it gives hope to so many people is a payoff in and of itself that I appreciate.

Youth Movement

"People seem to have the perception of the youth culture being reliant on mass media. I don't really find that the case. I find adult culture more complacent. Even conservative youth culture is very aware of the issues and there's a lot of investigation into what the different philosophies and ideas are. I think that's encouraging."

"I think that contemporary youth culture is almost radicalized right now because of the situation. The more it becomes a voting force, the more things will change."

PMA?

"I get really fatalistic, just because I'm a dad. I see what kind of world it's going to be, and the scenario right now just seems too horrific. How many times can

With the release of *20/20*, Dilated Peoples has finally put together a defining work that will undoubtedly entertain the purists and the newbies alike.

But it's not just studio tracks that charac-

terize their quality; it's just as much about the live show. After years of heavy touring throughout the globe, Dilated Peoples have garnered much recognition because of their high-energy rhyme battles, the boggling craftsmanship of

Babu and the message they emit. What results is a blast of social and political poetics united with choice cuts of bomb beats.

Then there's the opener, Little Brother, one of the hip-hop world's newest rising stars. Since forming in the not-so-known Durham, N.C., underground less than five years ago, the trio has emerged from the muck with two young and capable MCs in Phonte and Big Pooh and a sound far removed from the typical southern rap. **Z**

On the Bill:

Dilated Peoples play with Little Brother and Defari at 9 p.m., Saturday, March 4, at the Fox Theatre, 1135 13th St., Boulder, 303-443-3399.

Respond: letters@boulderweekly.com

people who are pro-war just trip themselves up, even in buffoonery kinds of situations like shooting your hunting partner in the face? There's just no end to it."

"I do think we're caught in the hands of some weird cabal that came out of Reagan's administration. They use incredibly sophisticated devices to get to where they are as far as owning the White House and owning Congress. But they certainly don't own the country. The people own the country."

Would-be Boulderite

"I've always had romantic notions of going to Naropa and living the poet-student-teacher life, but I was a bit preoccupied with Sonic Youth to do anything like that."

What Can We Expect at the Benefit?

"I'm just gonna read some of my overgrown teenage acid poetry and then play some noise rock." **Z**

students who organized and produced the event and brought together this trinity of talent. "Jello has enough energy to fill up that room himself. And then Anne, oh my God. That's a double whammy. And then Thurston..."

She shakes her head and smiles in seeming disbelief at the list of talent she's helped assemble.

It's an impressive lineup, featuring three influential performers who embody the role of artist as activist—any one of whom could sell out Boulder's largest venue all by themselves: Biafra is a spoken-word artist and former frontman and founder of seminal punk band the Dead Kennedys. He also ran for president in 2000 on the Green

Party ticket. Moore is a poet, guitarist, singer and founder of the influential noise-rock alternative group Sonic Youth and also the founder of Protest Records. Waldman is a legendary beat poet and, alongside Allen

Ginsberg, co-founded Naropa University's Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics and still heads the school's Summer Writing Program (SWP). Two years ago her SWP class focused on combining politics and poetics, culminating with a final project involving performance activism on the Pearl Street Mall.

"I think we're just naturally political people," says Waldman. "It's part of our lives to be active and engaged and attentive... That's what certainly Thurston and Jello have been involved with, that interconnection and engagement with the world."

A Night of Music and Poetry for Progressive Action will benefit two local nonprofit organizations, Burma Lifeline and La Casa de la Esperanza (House of Hope). Burma Lifeline raises funds to help refugees who have fled to the border of Thailand to escape the violent military government in Burma. The organization was founded in Boulder in 1996 when Inge Sargent, a Shan Princess who was exiled following her husband's assassination, relocated to Boulder.

"They have all sorts of different projects that they're working on, but we really want the money to go toward lunch for orphans; medical attention for the sick; food, clothing, shelter for the refugees, the basic stuff that people need to survive," says James, who has teamed up with Burma Lifeline through Estrojam, a Chicago-based nonprofit that uses music, art, culture and education to benefit pro-women organizations that promote nonviolent social change.

James is founder and co-director of Estrojam, and it is through that organization's work with Burma Lifeline that she was in Cambodia when she had her accident.

"I went to the Burma-Thai border over the holidays and set up some meetings with the Shan Women's Action Network and different groups to figure out better ways that Estrojam could help them and

promote their cause," she says. "That experience made me want to do something with Naropa."

She started organizing a fundraiser in August of last year, but the benefit really began taking shape in October, when she teamed up with Luis Valadez, the co-editor in chief of Naropa's literary journal, *Bombay Gin*, and Dan Gaytan, the events coordinator of the Student Union of Naropa.

Gaytan works closely with the second charity on the bill, La Casa de la Esperanza, a local nonprofit assisting first-generation Mexican immigrant families in Boulder County, offering community activities and educational classes.

"The funding goes toward bilingual parent-teacher organizations, job training, computer-tech courses for the parents, having English classes over the weekend. There are also classes on worker's and labor

rights," says Gaytan, who does volunteer research on pesticide use for the organization.

James and Gaytan say that the focus of the two charities—one benefiting the needy overseas, the other benefiting the needy in Boulder County—reinforces the popular ethos of "think globally, act locally."

"One thing is happening abroad, and one thing is happening in our backyard. Think on those two levels when you want things to change," says Gaytan. "You don't want to ignore what's happening outside of the box. It's still happening. If you can reach out in any way, any way—even just thinking about it is worth something. That's just as beautiful as somebody who is out there on the line picketing, or lobbying, or writing and making music, whatever it is they're doing, just wanting to change and changing."

"If everyone was to change just a little bit, the tiniest bit, almost where you can't even see it, that would be enough," Gaytan continues. "That would be enough."

"It's that simple," says James. "Not a lot of people have the time or the capability to do some grandiose thing. What it comes down to is your communication with those right in front of you and the people that you affect on a day-to-day basis. Be present for those people around you."

That's a message that will surely be reinforced by Biafra, who grew up in Boulder—especially as it pertains to local politics.

"I keep emphasizing to people at my shows that even if you're fed up with the lack of choice of the two branches of the corporate party—the RepubliCrats—at the national level, local elections are where it's at," he says. "I know I'm preaching to the choir about local election issues in Boulder County, but maybe that's where I learned the importance of it in the first

see **POETICS** Page 23

Anne Waldman



Rap sheet:

Claim to fame: Poet, professor, "spiritual wife" of Allen Ginsberg, co-founder of Naropa University's Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics

Prime cuts: *In the Room of Never Grieve, Structure of the World Compared to a Bubble, Civil Disobediences: Poetics and Politics in Action*

Also known as: "Roving Naropa ambassador," Chair of Naropa's legendary Summer Writing Program

What's next: Anne has been awarded a residency at Rockefeller's Bellagio Center for April of 2006, Naropa's Summer Writing Program '06, a book of short plays, a book of essays

Says Anne...

Artist as Activist

"I think we're just naturally political people. It's part of our lives to be active and engaged and attentive and trying to do the job that maybe other people should be doing—like the media perhaps. Bringing attention to the notion, the role of the poet or the seer, the sense of the poet being the seer and keeping people awake and alert and seeing into the future and being prophetic. That's what certainly Thurston and Jello have been involved with, that interconnection and engagement with the world."

"A lot of attention is given to people being in the environment they're in. Know your locals. Know what's going on in your neighborhood. Be alert. Work with others, collaborate. Applied poetics—how can poetry and poetics be a skillful means to benefit others in the community."

"Naturally you're going to be responding, but you also have imagination, a sense of music, creating an atmosphere in performance. There are a lot of elements in performance. I don't think you can just reduce it to a subject matter."

"From my perspective, I've been doing this for many, many years, it's just built into the mission as I see it. You have to find work constantly. It's about imagination, language, intention. It's always challenging. Also, you try to create things that go beyond the moment as well, that can resonate to people who are not necessarily in the

same situation."

Power of Poetry

"You see human beings who are more raw, vulnerable up there. This is what drew me from an early age to poetry, especially hearing poets read out loud. I felt very touched by that human vulnerability. It wasn't a whole show with lots of stagecraft, and it wasn't a movie with all this support system. It was very low-tech, even the musicians. It's very human."

"I think that can trigger things. People see someone thinking, someone being intelligent about what's going on and with some kind of discrimination and response to the atrocities in the world. The troubles that we do have, we do have a part in. We're helping create the world we're in. Nobody's isolated from that. If you can touch some human dimension or sensibility, it can be very awakening. I've felt that that happens to me when I hear certain performers—Patti Smith, Bob Dylan."

On Jello

"In the old days of the Jack Kerouac School he used to deliver pizza."

On Thurston

"Thurston is a friend. He's a real poet maven. He's been supportive of a lot of projects here in New York working with poetry... I'm so excited. It's like family. There's a lot of nice interconnections. We've been trying to get [Thurston] out there forever. He does a little magazine that's in the spirit of the old days, handmade. It's very nice. He's a terrific performer."

While You're in the Neighborhood

"I'll be teaching a practicum at Naropa over the weekend, which is focusing on performance and activism."

"I'll be back in May when we're getting ready for the Summer Writing Program."

Holla Back, Boulder

"I'm thrilled. I think it's amazing that the students pulled it together. I hope the community will come out and support the show."

place.”

Perhaps Biafra will be preaching to the choir at A Night of Music and Poetry for Progressive Action, but the organizers say that’s quite alright with them.

“Come sing along with us,” laughs Gaytan. “It’s definitely going to be a good vibe there. I’m going to feel that vibe.”

“It’s a great opportunity to support something you believe in,” adds James. “These people who have been so influential in the past, come hear what’s on their mind right now.”

In addition to the three headliners, Denver’s DJ Yer Mom and Strangers Die Everyday, a Naropa band consisting of a cellist, a violinist, a bassist and a drummer, will perform at the event.

“Strangers Die Everyday play instrumental music that’s really rockin’,” says Gaytan. “It’s really intense, really involved. They played a Halloween show at Naropa, and it felt like a Fugazi show. Everyone was just... their whole body was into it, this communal experience.”

In addition to the music, poets Andrea Gibson and Tom Peters will speak, along with Inga Sargent of Burma Lifeline.



Burma Lifeline will also have a table with T-shirts, CDs and information about their organization.

Aside from raising funds and awareness for these nonprofits, the organizers hope to inspire others to

continue with community activism long after A Night of Music and Poetry for Progressive Action has passed.

“Our goal is for this event to inspire others to put their words and bodies on the line in the struggle for greater sanity and justice in the world while widening the space for future activism work,” says James. “There is something really powerful about these communities being brought together at Naropa to help stop suffering and show how truly interconnected the larger world community really is.”

It’s also an opportunity to enjoy the work of three legendary performers and dance to an evening of music. Broken leg or not, you’ll find James right in the thick of the action.

“I begged them to let me get the cast off for the show,” she says. “I might just fall over a couple times that night, so just don’t mind me.” ②

overtones

<http://www.boulderweekly.com/overtones.html>

Shredding the yellow snow

by Gene Ira Katz

On the Bill

The Beautiful Girls and the Yellow Snow Tour play at 8:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 8, at the Fox Theatre, 1135 13th St., Boulder, 303-443-3399.

Respond: letters@boulder-weekly.com

First off, The Beautiful Girls are not a female band. In fact there are no women in the group at all. “Where we grew up [in Australia], anybody that played in a band played heavy music—either punk or hardcore or metal or whatever,” says frontman Mat McHugh. “I wanted to pick a name that was the exact opposite of all that macho posturing and the associated tough-guy band names. And a beautiful girl was just about the sweetest, most-appropriate opposite I could think of.”

This reggae-flavored quartet, with their sensible songs and roadhouse rough edges, has been stirring up serious notice Down Under since coming onto the scene in 2002. The Girls will be showcasing their latest release, *We’re Already Gone*, when the Yellow Snow Tour comes to the Fox Theatre on March 8, along with the unique, dirty, down-and-out country stylings of Mishka Shubaly.

The whole production was put together

by Teton Gravity Research to introduce their film, *The Tangerine Dream*, documenting 10 years of gnarly skiing and boarding, on a rowdy road-trip through India, Turkey, Switzerland, France, Alaska, Aspen, Utah, Montana and California, with some of the most mind-boggling snow sports action ever captured on film.

As the headliners on this tour, The Beautiful Girls will finally get a chance to build a much-deserved audience here in the States. Their intelligent mixture of contemporary styles is sure to capture the ears of anyone who enjoys thoughtful lyrics set against the spare driving power of roots rock.

“I love hip-hop for its lyrics and groove,” says McHugh. “I love blues for its desperation and soul. I love dub for its bass lines. I pretty much listen to a crazy range of music and it all seems natural and beautiful to me.”

These Girls manage to blend it all together and make it work. ②

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