

Peter Himmelman to play the Shark Club

"Even though many times we find ourselves in predicaments we would have preferred to stay out of, all circumstances are full of purpose, none are random or coincidental," said guitarist Peter Himmelman. This philosophy seems to be a common thread in all of his music. Himmelman will play at the Shark Club on Monday night.

Himmelman was born and raised in Minneapolis, where his early musical influences ranged from David Brubeck to Black Sabbath. He played saxophone with the Minnesota Youth Symphony, but later switched to guitar because, "my mouth hurt." He played with soul singer Alex O'Neal in the mid '70s, and went on to play with the calypso-reggae band Shangoya in the late '70s and early '80s. Himmelman was the

guitarist and lead singer of the post-modern rock band, Sussman Lawrence, until 1986 and the release of his first solo album, *This Father's Day*.

Through all these musical changes, for nearly 15 years, Himmelman has been accompanied by the same players who form the core of the band on his new album, *From Strength to Strength*. The band members are drummer, Andy Kamman, bassist Al Wolovitch and keyboardist Jeff Victor.

Himmelman's writing has always been rooted in personal emotion and experience. But his new album contains some of the most direct and intimate songs he's ever written.

"Some of these songs are very new and written within a few months before the recording," Himmelman explains. "Some of the songs are ex-

tremely old—not as old as say, mountains and oceans, but pretty old for me. I wrote the first version of 'Only Innocent' when I was 18."

Audiences have come to expect the unexpected from a Himmelman performance. "I've devised, just by accident, a means by which I set myself up each night for either great success or abysmal failure. Normally you have a set list, a nice, tight professional show, a bit of patter between songs. I used to do that. People said, 'That's a real nice professional show, Pete.' That's about the worst thing anyone can say about you," Himmelman said.

"Now: no song lists, try not to repeat one-liners, and try to find something new each night. And each night I get very nervous."



Peter Himmelman will do his best to be different on Monday night.

HUFF

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musical style. Their songs are characterized by an innocent simplicity that is offset by Huff's poignant lyrics.

The Inflatables' style draws from their various roots. Greg Smith points to classical music as his main influence, while Jackson cites bands such as Rush and the Police as having an effect on his musical direction.

Not surprisingly, Huff points to the Beatles, whose pop song structures became a model for many bands, as an early favorite.

Like their different musical styles, each band member also had different reasons for becoming involved with music.

Smith "just didn't want a real job," and Huff said that he was forced into being a singer because, "no one else would sing."

The formation of the Inflatables came not so long ago when Huff became bored with doing his solo acoustical tour supporting his debut album, *Happy Judgement Day*.

"I got kind of bored, just playing by myself," said Huff.

Following his solo tour, which took him to New York as well as California, he hooked up with Smith and Jackson and guitarist/bassist Matt Wood.

But the Inflatables, are

more than just Mark Huff playing lead electric. Huff's guitar is still acoustic and the band is the traditional guitar, bass, and drums trio. Smith doubles on violin and bass.

"I always wanted a violin player," said Huff. "It just sounds so emotional."

While Huff wasn't worried about the extra instruments being too overbearing on his guitar-based songs, Jackson was leery.

"I was worried about doing too much. I was so busy on the drums. I have to adapt what I'm doing to fit the music," said Jackson.

The band is going into the studio next week to work on a new album.

They are also due to play a set at the Shark Club on Monday with Peter Himmelman. All four members have been playing in the Las Vegas area for roughly 10 years.

The musicians feel it's the music that counts, not how much the records sell.

"I'll listen to anything that represents music as an art form and not an industry," Jackson said.

Perhaps Huff summed it up best. Real music, he said "is honest and, you know what, it's timeless. It sounds as good now as it did 20 years ago."

LEWIN

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"This is the first time we've played together," said Baley. "We've known each other for years but haven't worked together on an intimate level. It's been love at first sight. We shouldn't have waited this long to play, but we've both been very busy."

Lewin said of his work with Baley, "I think it is a very natural and right idea.

Virko has a very loyal following. Various people know us in many capacities and we've both played several recitals with fellow faculty members. I feel we know each other musically well enough to where we are in tune with each other. I have a good idea of what he wants in a performance."

Baley said jokingly that this concert contains three of his

favorite composers. Lewin asked him which one he would do away with.

Lewin said, "I'm looking forward to playing Virko's concerto. I think it will be one of the musical highlights of the season. Even though he doesn't write easy music, I really believe in his piece and would like to see how it stands the test of time."

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