



Torg Hallin (left), Dan Reed, Bob Reed and Steve Espaniola comprise Overwhelming Colorfast.

California natives borrow Seattle sound in new release

by David Z. Kanaan

The newly popular "Seattle sound" has now expanded its borders into California, but don't tell that to drummer Dan Reed of Overwhelming Colorfast.

"It's not that we hate comparisons," Dan Reed told San Francisco's BAM magazine, "but we defy categorizations sometimes...we like so many different styles of music. We play mellow songs; we play fast, punk style songs; and we play heavy, grungy stuff."

In fact, OC which hails from Antioch, a far suburb of San Francisco, has gone from a bunch of self-taught musicians to a nationally released band in only two years. They now have Butch Vig—of Nirvana fame—as their producer. In the lucrative business of rock, that accomplishment is akin to winning the California Lottery.

The band is centered around two former music store owners, brothers Dan and Bob Reed. The brothers paired with guitarist Torg

Hallin, and bassist Steve "Bean" Espaniola. What quickly followed was a demo tape honored as Demo of the Year by college radio station KUSF in San Francisco.

The Reed brothers also mention a virtual library of influence ranging from the Beatles, Led Zeppelin, or Hüsker Dü (the most common comparison) to more contemporary bands. Their wide range of listening contributes to the diverse changes and attitudes of their latest album.

One can't get over the '60's flower pop sound of Bob Reed's vocals coupled with the grunge guitar fuzz and frenzied drumming more suitable to annoying your neighbor than recording on an album. The songs melodically travel to your ears, and the absence of 'screw your mother'-type lyrics is pleasant, and avoids the traditional hard rock cliches.

A couple of songs stand out, and could possibly become fairly popular due to their unique sound, or their

familiar grunge groove. "Forrest" shows off the band's ability to explore unusual production techniques to provide a distinct mood, which, unfortunately, most of the other songs didn't have. "Coming Down" is the most diverse and moving song on the album, and hopefully the band will write more like this one. It can be called mellow, powerful or many other labels. Why? Because it's all there, with the distortion mess turned down except when necessary in the harder bridges.

Overwhelming Colorfast has most of the tools needed to become a popular band, but must stray from the grunge only genre, or they'll probably be forgotten as another "wannabe" from California.

The band will be touring around the Western U.S. for the better part of fall and play Las Vegas Sept. 30 at the Huntridge Theatre.

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