



Futurists enjoy touring, eating

musicpreview

The Russian Futurists

With *Gloom Room* and *Westfalia*
Saturday, 27 October at 8pm
The Velvet Underground

KEVIN CHARLTON
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Few people would pass up on something as wonderful as an electro-pop dance party; fun times require dancable music, after all, and that is exactly what Matthew Adam Hart bottles up and puts onto an album. To be up front about it, The Russian Futurists are here to save any party from dull music.

Finding most of his popularity in Europe and abroad, however, has meant that for much of his musical career, Hart has been touring abroad, even though he hails from Toronto.

"I really like the travelling part of touring. The food and such. I'm really into food, so I really like to eat new things," Hart says. Also, the sightseeing is great; when you get some downtime, it's really fun to do some exploring in whichever country you're in."

From a songwriting standpoint, the Russian Futurists really consist solely of Hart. When going on tour, he has

to put together a touring band to give him a hand—which, at the moment contains three additional musicians, whom Hart is all too excited to talk about.

"We recently just added an electronic drummer, which really added a lot of energy to the show," he explains. "It gives us the opportunity to have a lot of freedom to play the songs faster or slower. Having a touring band takes a lot of pressure off of touring by yourself."

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MATTHEW ADAM HART
RUSSIAN FUTURISTS

"I've generally just been working with people that I've been friends with," he continues. "One of them is my cousin, one I've been friends with for 15 years, and the drummer is a friend of my cousin."

Although he seems eager to play with others, sometimes Hart still goes out on his own from time to time. For him, going solo is usually

a matter of convenience, even though he enjoys collaboration—remixing especially.

"In the past year, I've been doing a lot more remixes than I've ever done, and that's been a really good outlet for collaboration. I've been really lucky that people haven't sent me something to remix and said they wanted it to sound like this or sound like that," Hart says.

"Generally, people have let me do my thing. I've never had the experience where I've sent something to someone and they didn't like it. I really like the challenge, so I usually try to put a lot into it."

Although working on others' material seems to come to Hart with ease, finding inspiration and writing his own music can be more difficult. That being the case, he doesn't schedule any specific time for writing; he finds that if it's flowing, it's flowing, and since inspiration can be one of the most difficult things for an artist, he just lets it come to him.

"I find most of my inspirations in my friends and my life. I use the music, especially lyrically, as an outlet for a lot of things that you don't really want to say," he says. "I kind of use it as a journal or a diary; just the regular stuff day-to-day is the subject matter for the songs."

Louisville boys do manage to surprise with some imaginative sounds and orchestration. The sonically turbulent "Whiteflag" and "Whiteflag (Reprise)" make haunting use of tone phasers and feedback to create a barren, lost-in-space feel.

These astral quirks lie underneath the rest of the album, too, but never manage to reach the same exciting, creative crescendo as these two tracks. Other songs like "Phobos" have the same kind of experimental spirit but can't quite bring the concept to yield anything more than playful song intros and outros.

Had these ethereal melodies been explored more thoroughly, the entire record could have constituted a foray into less-travelled and much more interesting musical territory. As it stands, *Black Earth Tiger* rarely bares its fangs.



albumreview

Emanuel
Black Earth Tiger
Vagrant Records

SEAN STEELS
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Black Earth Tiger, Emanuel's follow up to their debut disc *Soundtrack to a Headrush* is about guilt, alienation, and contemplating the end of, well, everything. The record is a response to the "culture shock" the band experienced after burning themselves out on the road for three years. Coming home, only to find that home wasn't home anymore, they locked themselves in the studio for another year. Depressed yet?

The album is full of heavy,

chugging riffs, grisly screams, and chopping percussion. Anthony Brock's drumming is the highlight of the record: it snaps, buckles, and pounds, propelling the rhythm into climactic frenzies. The only downside to their sound is that it's fairly similar to other turn-of-the-century screamo acts.

Even with standard, and at times overly dramatic, post-apocalyptic imagery threatening to conventionalize the disc thematically, these

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