

Martin Firestein  
RFL

# The Challenger

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John Barleycorn

Harper College



Music  
&  
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# Jamming in the Northwest Suburbs

By Lyndi Schiff

It seems I don't get enough. I had no idea how varied and diverse a music scene in the Northwest Suburbs. I've been to numerous places that would be considered musical venues, but I also wanted to find some new scenes. After some extensive web browsing searching various terms, I discovered that there are music venues ranging from piano bars to nightclubs all through the Harper College area. While it would be impossible to cover every musical venue in the Northwest suburbs, even a brief survey reveals endless variety.

The most common music venue styles in the Northwest Suburbs are those that feature DJs. That's convenient for Harper College students, many of whom like to go and dance to today's pop hits. Most of these venues have their live music Thursday through Saturday. The live music adds extra flavor to the scene and some excitement. A few of the places that have DJs are Drink, John Barley Corn, The Snuggery, and Wild Bull. The majority of these venues also have karaoke on selected evenings. I have been to each of these venues and can give some insight on why you would want to check them out.

Drink is the newest scene to the area. It is a two-story nightclub and invites DJs from Chicago-land radio stations on the weekends. Upon walking into Drink, it is obvious you will have a good time. The lights that are all neon, and the music is really loud to create a party atmosphere. It's difficult to not want to just get up and dance. If dancing is not quite your thing, there are a few areas that have large couches and tables to attempt to sit and have a conversation, although, as I said, the music is really loud. Also, since it is the new scene around it's very crowded. I found that out on Halloween, but still had a blast! Drink is probably the easiest way to get the big city party scene without the waste of gas money.

The Snuggery is known for dance nights Thursday through Saturday. They have their own

DJ who plays not only songs that are popular, but also songs on request. A couple of fun events they have throughout the week are trivia on Tuesdays, and, in the summer, pool parties on Sundays. They also host many sporting events and have food and drink specials on many of these nights. There is not much room to dance and on weekends they tend to be crowded, but the more the merrier. This place is a great time.

John Barleycorn transforms when the sun goes down. The first time I went there it was simply for a girls' day out, and this is where we decided to go to lunch. My friends all thought the place was a bit stuffy. It had no life to it, and as four college students, we felt a bit out of place. The people there for lunch were all in business suits and discussing work. At first I feared going back ever again. That was until I was invited out with a group of my friends who enjoy dancing. We went there on a holiday weekend so we could go on a Sunday night and avoid paying a cover. I entered John Barleycorn for the second time. The first floor had some life, and once we went upstairs, my mind was completely changed! There was dancing, a DJ, and the best part, no business suits! We had a fabulous evening dancing all night long.



**Drink on Halloween**

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**Wild Bull**

I have been to Wild Bull for their karaoke night and many sports events. There is always a huge range of people there; age does not usually matter, except that weekends after nine it is twenty-one and up. For karaoke night, it was fun to listen to many different songs, including the great singers, and for some humor, the not-so-great singers. I didn't have the nerve to get up and sing, nor did anyone at my table, but it was still an unforgettable evening. The more popular reason for attending Wild Bull is their sporting events. I typically go to watch the Blackhawks games. It is much more fun to watch a game with other fans who are just as riled up as you are. One waitress told me that the weekend is when the real party is. This is typically a Friday night; many UFC fights are on Saturdays. They bring in a DJ and want you to get your booty shaking on the dance floor!

There are two venues that have live rock and pop acts, which are Tilted Kilt and Chicago City Limits. I unfortunately have no insight on these two venues. I discovered that they feature live pop music as well as some rock bands. So if you enjoy dancing to live music and singing along to a band, no microphone included for you, these places are probably great to check out!

There are also some themed bars featuring live music. Themed venues are a great way to attract many different live performers. Don't worry. You don't have to dress up, but you may see some patrons and staff dressed to fit the part. Most of these places are constantly acquiring new and fun performers for all of their slots. If your band has a theme, then you'll know the exact place to audition. So whether you're in a band or just like a variety of music, here are some more places to check out.

There are two blues venues: Pinstripes and The Blues Bar. Both of these have various solo performers as well as bands for Fridays, Saturdays, and some special events. The Blues Bar is completely inspired by the Blues Brothers. In this unique atmosphere they have live performers six nights a week! So grab your saxophone and suit up to get out there! Even though they're singing the blues, you'll have a lot of fun! There is also Pinstripes, which is not your typical blues bar. They are most well known for their indoor and outdoor bocce ball courts. The most enjoyable aspect of this scene is that you can play bocce or bowl, and still listen to some fabulous live music.

Another themed venue is Ballydoyle's, an Irish pub featuring various Celtic performers. The majority of these are Celtic rock. In this atmosphere, you can escape to a different country and enjoy a new style of music. It's like getting to take a vacation without having to travel that far. Who knows? Maybe you can even get lucky and find a leprechaun with a pot of gold. The place is very nice and features many menu items native to Ireland and difficult to find in any non-themed venues. My favorite aspect of Ballydoyle's is the wait staff; I had no clue when it came to Irish cuisine. My waitress was extremely knowledgeable and walked me through many of the menu options. When I asked her about the stage I was sitting in front of she told me that I need to come and check out some of their great Celtic bands. I can't wait to go back and escape to Ireland!



**Ballydoyle**

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Ye Old Town Inn is a pub that features rock and metal bands on the weekends; however, weekdays they have a variety of different scenes. I know was confused at first by the title of the venue and the type of music they play. I was expecting something more like a saloon. It was exciting to hear that Ye Old Town Inn actually has a variety of music within their theme. Wednesday is Brass from the Past night when they play rock, R&B, Motown, funk, jazz, and swing from the 60s and 70s. It's like musical time travel. Also, Thursday is jazz night. You can dance or just listen to some tunes that can take you back to the jazz age. On the weekend, you get to participate in head banging and mosh pits while some of your favorite local metal and rock bands play. Occasionally they will even have some larger named acts for a memorable time.

The one genre of music that people might not expect to find here is country. I was determined to find a place that had the country twang and finally stumbled upon one in Waukegan. The Sundance Saloon always has live music on Saturdays and they will even teach you some country dances. Typically, the night starts with hour-long lessons and then they open up the dance floor. According to their Facebook page, even if you miss the lesson, regulars are always looking to teach newcomers. It's not all square dancing; you will also find some line dancing and other folk dances as well. Yee-Haw!

Let's not forget the venues that bring in the big name performers. Of course, you can expect to pay more than you would at John Barleycorn's or Pinstripes. The ones that are semi-local are the Sears Centre and Arlington Park Racetrack. These two places bring in music celebrities even though they are most known for sporting events. There are two more that are farther away, but bring in even larger names. These are the Rosemont Theater and the Allstate Arena. The easiest way to find out which performers will be at each venue is to check their online schedules. While these four venues are not as local, it is nice to have access to national tours.



**A Band at Ye Olde Town Inn**

It does not matter what type of music you listen to. Typically you will be able to find a venue in or near the Northwest Suburbs that plays your favorite music. So go out and explore; try a venue you never thought you would. The two that are at the top of my list to visit are Ye Old Town Inn and the Sundance Saloon. Both sound like a lively change of pace. These are two spots I never thought I would visit. But after looking at their sites and checking out their upcoming acts, I think this might just be the audio adventure I need. Maybe you can take a jamming journey of your own and share your musical memories with friends and students you know. Happy listening to everyone!



# Our Fathers Burden

By Cheryl Gistenson



**Our Father's Burden  
Profile Picture**

I pop the last bite of my McDonald's Daily Double cheeseburger into my mouth, and I gather my belongings. The band's bassist (my boyfriend), Evil Steve (Stephen to me), leads me through the doorway of their makeshift greenroom to the studio, an extension the members of Our Fathers Burden built behind Ted's house. The approximately 8 X 15 square-foot room has no windows. As I stand in the opening of the double-doors, looking from the lower left-hand corner of the room, I am confronted by a metal militia. In front of me, from left to right, stands; Chris's keyboard, on the left wall; Ted's mic stand and conga set, in the far left corner; Stan and his guitar, opposite Evil Steve; and in the far right corner, the guitar and bass amps, hugging Bob's drum set.

We all file into the jam room, including three fans (neighbors), and the band begins to set up. I sit down in a folding chair to the right of the doorway, and Evil Steve sets up on my right. Stan and Steve start tuning their instruments. Draped across the ceiling are microphones and PA systems; sometimes the band records their practice sessions.

It's 7:23 p.m., and after about 5 minutes of finagling with chords, knobs, and strings, everyone is good to go. "Evil Steve, hit the lights," says Ted. His deep, graveled voice echoes in his mic as the room goes dark. A second later, the drums become illuminated by a red and a blue spotlight, and there is

an eerie burning glow on everyone's face.

Stan strikes a note, and without hesitation, they all begin playing one of Ted's new songs, "You are the One." Contrary to what it sounds like, this song is far from a mushy love song. It chronicles the successes of a boy growing up. They work on this song for nearly 30 minutes. "I'll just feel it out," Stan says, improvising a solo. "Don't worry. I'll just mess with it until I feel it."

During their first break, everyone grabs beers and lights up. (Except Steve. He brought his own 12-pack of Coke.) The room fills with smoke, and the guys talk about what changes need to be made to the song.

"Let's do Evil Steve's song," Stan suggests next. This one seems to be a little more complicated, and the band struggles for 30 minutes on the piece. Bob doesn't get bummed out though. He keeps cheering everyone on, "That's it! awesome!" (Whenever there is a convenient moment, he fist bumps the other members.)

After realizing they aren't going to get anywhere with Evil Steve's song tonight, they move on to another one. This time, after a lengthy and intricate intro that sounds mostly like rock but with a little funk edge to it, Chris begins to rap the lyrics instead of Ted singing them. Usually, I like when they infuse a little rap into the songs, but this one isn't sitting well with me. It sounds like they placed the lyrics of one song over the music of a completely different genre. The music sounds like a heavier version of the Red Hot Chili Peppers but the lyrics sound like Eminem or Atmosphere.

"We started working on that song the day Ted didn't show up until 9," Stephen (Evil Steve) later tells me. "He told Chris to lay down some lyrics just so we could practice and we never changed it."

They stop for one more break for the night, before jamming on their older material. Bob, who may be a little warmed-up from the beer at this point, explains how happy he is with the band: "Stevo! You're the best thing that could have happened to this band."

"You're a great fit," agrees Ted. He places his drink down and grabs the mic again.

For the next 20 minutes or so, they put on

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a show. The band plays their current set list from the last two shows (Evil Steve's first with the band), so they're a lot more comfortable with this music. They rock out on one song after another, and Ted adds in his comments he makes to the audience: "Here's the only cover song we do. Let's see if you can figure out what it is," he challenges the imaginary crowd.

Because it is a school night, the band stops jamming shortly after 10:15 p.m. Now it's time for me to do my work. We all hang out in the jam room for another 30 minutes talking with each other until Ted prompts me to conduct the interview: "I'm sorry Honey. I've got to go to bed. I have to be up in four hours."

Me: Where'd your name come from?

Ted: We are (he pauses) all a burden to our fathers. It's that simple.

Me: What jobs do you have besides the band?

Stan: I'm an out-of-work carpenter. (He chuckles.)

Nah I'm a stay-at-home dad and run a liquor store.

Steve: Hey, whatever pays.  
(everybody laughs.)

Steve: (packing his gear up) I'm in maintenance.

Ted: I'm a crane operator.

Me: So, does the band interfere with work or work interfere with the band?

Stan: Work interferes with the band.

Ted: Yeah, work interferes with the band, but bills interfere with life. You gotta do what you gotta do.

Stan: If we had a choice. If we could get paid to play...

Ted: At one point we were all jobless and scrounging up 50 bucks a month to practice.

Stan: That's basically how we started the band. We had nothing going on... so we might as well start a band.

Ted: We all had jobs, but then ... slowly, one by one we lost our jobs and just started all hanging out.

Stan: Well, 9/11 f---d that sh-- up, for me anyways.

Ted: The band f--- sh-- up for me, up 'til dawn working on it.

Me: How do you do it without crashing?

Ted: We don't do any narcotics here. I don't know if



### Our Fathers Burden in action

that's a disclaimer.

Steve: Yeah, not in this element.

Me: Do any of you have kids?

Stan: I got kids.

Ted: Ted and Stan have kids.

Steve: (still in the background) And Steve.

Ted: And Steve.

Me: Do your kids get involved at all?

Ted: My two girls listen to it. I don't know how involved they really get. They haven't been to a show yet.

Stan: My kid has sound checked before. He came in while we were recording: "Chek. Check."

Me: How much time can you spend in a week to practice with the band?

Ted: Maybe three and a half hours a week, together. And my mind is constantly thinking about the band, even while I'm at work.

Stan: Yeah, there's always something, some music, in my head. My gears are always working.

Ted: I'm in my crane listening to the new songs, trying to think of words for them.

Steve: Well you know me, I've got a bass or a guitar in my hands every night.

Me: How long have you been playing your instruments?

Stan: I started at 10. I'm 38, so about 28 years.

Chris: (packing up his keyboard) I've been playing for like 5 years.

Steve: 18 years.

Bob: (exhales a long sigh) Oh, about 33, 34 years.  
Round it off, about 33.

Ted: I'm at 17. I sing.

Me: Were any of you in college, go to college at all?

Ted: I went to a community college.

Bob: I went to the school of hard knocks.

Stan: My teacher, my guitar teacher was Mr. Crowley.

*Some of you may not catch the significance of this, but to people so involved in music,--rock and metal in particular--Mr. Crowley is a pretty familiar name. There is an Ozzy Osbourne song called "Mr. Crowley" about Aleister Crowley, British practitioner from the early 1900s who is best known for his involvement in Black Magic.*

Stan: It was! Bill Crowley.

Me: Did you...

Stan: He has uh, he's got a waiting list for kids who want to take lessons with him. I practiced with him, in a room. It was this big (motions his hand circling the jam room), and I practiced in a room over an office. I practiced over a dentist's office...

*You may start to see how these guys work together as a band through their typical interaction. As usual, Ted is taking the lead and guiding things for the band,, while the rest of them add their portion and additional input to complete things.*

Ted: You wanna know our names?

Me: Sure, that would help.

Ted: Bobby T is on drums; Stan Nehoff is on guitar; your old man, obviously...



Steve: Evil Steve on bass.

(everyone laughs.)

Stan: Evil Steve on bass.

Ted: Hey, that's all it says on the Facebook. (Turns to Chris.) And how you want it in the paper? You want it Dub-C in the paper, Dub-C on keys?

(Chris nods.)

Ted: And Dub-C, you wanna drop a T3A plug? He's also in another band called T3A. So, that's like his rap project.

Me: Triple threat something?

Ted: Triple Threat Alliance.

Me: So, why is it T3A and not 3t?

Bob: That's what I said! (laughs)

Chris: It just kind of works. Sounds better that way, I guess.

Bob: I love that name man. It sounds cool.

Ted: And I'm Ted O. I sing.

Me: Is it hard to keep the band going with work and family?

Ted: Yeah. It's a relationship. You know,

Stan: It's like a marriage. It's a second family.

Ted: Yeah. You know, but Stan and I have been together for over a decade, a decade and a half now.

Bob's been with us for a little over a year.

Stan: Chris has been with us for two, maybe.

Ted: And we've been looking for Evil Steve for... three years? It hasn't clicked right since then.

Bob: He's just what the doctor ordered.

Me: Do all of you work together on lyrics?

Ted: I'd say I write about 80% of the lyrics. There's a 20% collaboration. I'll come up with the lyrics and main idea, then everybody will throw in their ideas like, 'Hey, maybe this would sound better here.' This is definitely a collaboration; there are no premdonas in here.

Steve: Except for Stan.

Ted: Stan's got every right to be a stuck up snob.

Me: And how do you book your shows?

Ted: Stan and I do a lot of the leg work.

Stan: No manager.

Me: Is that difficult, time consuming?

Ted: You know what, we really haven't... because we're still working on a headlining set list, and we've only got an hour. So we really haven't pursued that avenue too heavily. But once we do book the show, it's quite a bit of time and energy promot-

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ing the show.

Stan: Yeah, because we don't have that two-hour set, we just put together little shows with our buddies' bands, and stuff like that.

Me: the song "Born in Chicago," what is that song about?

Ted: Being born here; we're proud of it. You know, it's not New York, Boston (repeats "Boston" with Boston dialect), and it ain't California. We have a lake. Don't have an ocean, but we've got a lake. We've got cool f---ing people in Chicago. Boston people are a--holes. You know, you go to Boston and it's all old blood. Chicago people are just awesome; they do it their way. (breaks into singing lyrics) "Do it My way/My way/My way/Yeah."

(Everyone laughs.)

Me: Do you guys have anything more you want to say?

Bob: Nah, we're just a bunch of guys who get together once a week.

Ted: I couldn't do it--WE couldn't do it--without [Ted's wife] Cheri. She backs us up a lot.

Stan: Yeah, definitely.

Ted: She keeps the kids out of our hair on Wednesday nights, and she's always there if the band needs something, or if I need something. She's just really supportive, cause this really isn't her music scene.

Actually, I'd bet a thousand dollars, if we were to go to her van right now, (turns to Chris) your disc is in her CD player. She's really into T3A; that's her style of music. But, she still backs us 100%.



**Our Fathers Burden  
at open mic night**

Me: So, what would you call your music?

Steve: Awesome. (laughs) It's sort of mellow, metal, 1% funk, and a little rap. (Everyone laughs.)

Me: Do you have a process for writing music?

Ted: Feel it.

Stan: We pretty much just bring our ideas.

Ted: Sometimes I'll be like, "Stan, tell me something sad." He'll be like, "f--- that, check this out." And the next thing you know... Like the other day, we were just in here doing some old cover and ended up with You are the One. That's what happens more often than not. Stan writes a lot of the music. Lately, I would say Stan is bringing about 90% of the tunes.

*Everyone starts side conversations about writing music. I can tell that's all I'm going to get out of these guys. They thank me for getting the word out about their band. Ted goes inside, but that doesn't deter the others from hanging out for another 45 minutes. Stan and Chris head over to Stan's laptop and talk about recording programs.*

I'm still sitting in my folding chair to the right of the doorway. Chris's dad, Roger (who hangs out at all the practices) comes over to me and explains that he heard me telling the band earlier in the evening that I was writing another article about a band whose members are all the traditional age of college students. I had told them that I was going to try to portray and contrast the different lifestyles of each band. Roger proclaims, "...there isn't [a difference] because music is universal." As a person who loves music--many kinds of it--from the perspective of a listener, I can completely agree with what Roger is saying. I don't know theory, or just about anything else about music from a musician's point-of-view, but I feel such a strong energy from live bands. I know I am biased, but these guys in particular seem to ooze passion; it's in their sweat. One thing that makes me love a band is being able to feel their own love for what they're doing, and Our Fathers Burden can fill a stadium with their passion

As a matter of fact, with the streak their on, they'll be doing that soon. The band has had a string of gigs that have brought along new hoards of fans each night. If you want to join the OFB caravan, check them out at one of their upcoming shows. You can contact them through their Facebook or twitter page for ticket info.

# The Melody of Harper College

By Lyndi Schiff

Many students may wonder how they can bring their musical talents to Harper College. Numerous students played instruments or sang throughout their high school lives. They may wonder if they can continue to play at Harper even if they are not music majors. The answer is yes.

There are multiple types of music classes offered at Harper and only some of the instrument-specific classes require that the student be a major or minor. Laura, a music major at Harper, said, "I accept everyone who is in the music department, majors and non-majors included." She indicated that fellow music majors would not shun someone that was not a major as if they weren't good enough to receive the same instruction. When it comes to music classes, most classes simply need consent of the professor. The class types offered in the department are introductory, literature, theory, genre, instrumental, and ensemble.

The introduction and literature classes are offered to students to familiarize them with the basic concepts of playing music and the literature behind the music that is played. The classes are Introduction to Music, Music Appreciation, Introduction to Music Literature, Instrumental Literature, and Keyboard and Vocal Literature. Each of these classes is offered to all students interested in them, although, mostly majors and minors will be in them.



Harper music students

Theory is another type of class. It is important for students who play instruments or sing to be comfortable with the background of music. Even the first level of theory is difficult, according to Jim, a non-music major: "Music classes are not easy. Theory I compares to calculus even though I've been playing since I was six or seven." There are five levels of theory classes beginning with Theory I and ending with Theory IV. They must be taken in order like any other class sequence. No one can learn the last part of theory if they haven't learned what was supposed to come before it. The basic thing theory does is... "Provide the background to interpret and understand the language of music through the study of notation, rhythm, scales, intervals, triads, cadences, basic forms and musical terms" (Harper catalog). But that can seem like a lot of mumbo jumbo that many people do not understand until they take some theory classes. This is also a mostly major- and minor-dominated area of study.

There are three types of genre classes to introduce students to the different types of music: American, jazz, and electronic. Each of these shows students more about the variation of music in the specific genre. This brings music from around the world right to students at Harper.

There are a few instrument instruction classes that are open to all students. These are aural (vocal), piano, and guitar. These classes are offered at several levels. The actual list of instruments you can study is much longer, but unless you are a music major or minor, there will be some restrictions. The list includes flute, piccolo, oboe, english horn, clarinet, bassoon, contra bassoon, saxophone, french horn, trumpet, trombone, baritone, tuba, percussion, violin, viola, cello, string bass, harp, piano, organ, voice, and classical guitar. It's a nice long list, so anyone who plays an instrument should be able to find a home. Music Major Laura stated that it's important to like music because it can become your whole schedule: "I am in the same room with the same teacher for three classes, and when those are done most of the people in my class move to the same next class next door." Luckily she enjoys both music and the other people in her classes.

The final types of music classes offered at Harper are various ensemble classes. Basically, you

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can get with some friends and play in a group, while earning college credit! That makes it sound very easy. However, there may be auditions to enter into these ensembles. Another problem that sometimes occurs is scheduling: "I was asked to join Piano Ensemble, but it didn't fit with the schedule. Fitting the classes into a non-major schedule is difficult," said Jim. Ensemble classes are one credit hour each and require permission from the instructor to enroll. These classes may be repeated up to four credit hours. The ensembles offered at Harper are Concert Choir, Wind Symphony, Jazz Ensemble, Spectra, Steel Band, Guitar Ensemble, Piano Ensemble, and Symphony Orchestra. The course catalog does not say much about these classes, but ask a music major and you will get more information about the various styles of ensembles.

If you have the time, something many of us are lacking, consider picking up an instrument or belting out a tune and being a part of the musical world at Harper. For all you know, you may miss your instrument as much as I now realize I miss mine. Who knows? Maybe I'll start playing at Harper with you soon.



**Harper music students**



## Hangin' Out With The Family

By Cheryl Gistenson

"You want us to just start this over?" asked Hubert, only three minutes from the end of our twenty-nine-minute-long interview. "We can be like, 'Yeah, we like Blink 182,'" he sneered.

Then Carter joined the joke: "I met Hubert at a party, and he was playing all these Kings of Leon songs on an acoustic guitar."

Now, don't go running to the iTunes store to find these two artists thinking they've influenced the band Go Hang. These statements were just a grain of salt in Go Hang's deep, dark ocean of sarcasm. Twenty-three-year-old Frontman Carter Schultz and twenty-two-year-old Guitarist Hubert Marciniac nearly drowned me in young-adult, rock-star angst. For a half an hour, we sat at a table near a small cafe in our very own college, where Carter recently completed a degree and Hubert is in the Honors Program. The two touched on subjects ranging from Plato's *The Republic* to the logistics of testing cosmetic products on animals-- pigs to be specific.

And eventually, I did find out some of their influences. They had a wide range of interests including Carter's favorite band, Nine Inch Nails, as well as singer Fiona Apple and composer Antonio Vivaldi.

"Why do you like the band?" Hubert asked randomly.

"I like the screaming and heaviness," I responded.

In his car that day, Hubert had an album by The Germs, a punk band whose singer intentionally overdosed on heroin back in the eighties. They also mentioned Hank Williams, Portishead, and Nirvana. (Is there ever an instance in which rock is being discussed and Nirvana DOESN'T come up?) "We have a lot of people who say it's obvious that we listen to a lot of Nirvana," admitted Carter. "Which gets annoying because I know it sounds like that, but it's not quite the same."

So, how are they different from Nirvana? Hubert thinks the difference is found in the actual way each band composes its music. "If you strip

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### Go Hang in action

away the distortion and throat wrenching cries, the music of both bands is left sounding like a well-thought-out, musically sound piece,” stated Hubert. “The difference is buried deep within that purity; the actual chord progressions, leads, melodies, vocal harmonies, and patterns.”

“[Kurt Cobain’s] focus was kind of narrow,” added Carter. When he listens to Nirvana, he doesn’t see any evidence that Cobain branched out musically, through exploration. “I think he’s a better songwriter than a guitarist,” Carter continued. “His solos sound so random, like he’s just screwing around on the frets. If I were demoing a solo for the first time,” he said, “I’d know enough about the music to be able to piece something together.”

Indeed, Carter uses his understanding of music theory to write all of Go Hang’s music and their lyrics. Even though he graduated from Harper with an Associates in Arts in 2010, Carter still plays the upright (or classical) bass in Harper’s orchestra. He explained, “I plan to come here and be obnoxious, like I am now, a couple times a year.” (This simply means that he and Hubert are going to have boisterous conversations and talk randomly to students in the halls--the stuff of rebels.) Carter said that when he isn’t working (He had to move a washing machine on this particular day.), he’ll typically spend a day just lying around. From the moment he wakes up to the moment he goes to sleep, Carter has music on the mind, either someone else’s song, or an

idea for a song. “It just keeps playing over and over again, and it won’t stop,” explained Carter. “Which is why I have to do what I do.”

He’s been doing it for a long time now. A lot of the material Go Hang is currently producing stems from pieces Carter wrote when he was in his early teens, even the band’s name. Carter, now twenty-three, explained that “Go Hang” is the moniker he chose for his collections of poetry from his teenage years. He wanted something that was simple, but could be interpreted in many ways. He especially likes the darker connotations one can get from the name.

In fact, the band has capitalized on those dark implications in a song called “Gohanggone-hung.” The title implies a sort of “been there; done that” message. As Hubert tapped a little diddy on the table, he explained the song to me. (If you want to stay afloat, now’s a good time to put on your life-jacket.) “The song screams of a time of desperation in a time of desperation; so it’s like doubly desperate.” It’s about a suburban boy who hates boys from the suburbs. Hubert continued, “but even if he kills them all, it won’t change the fact that he’s a boy from the suburbs. So he doesn’t even know who he is anymore!”

“Do you write about your experiences at Harper?” I asked Carter.

He chuckled and told me he felt that using college as an inspiration could only be taken at a surface value. “I try to go for more of a kind of personal, introverted subject matter,” he explained. “Although, once in a while I’ll meet a pretty girl, and I’ll get some stupid little diddy out of her.”

“Does this thing pick up double meanings?” Hubert quipped, pointing to my voice recorder.

“But can’t you extract a personal and introverted perspective from what happens to you at school?” I asked.

Hubert agreed, “It’s weird for an experience not to give you some sort of material,--if you react to it--if you take the time to think about what’s happening.”

He broke it down like this: “The world didn’t get here through mercy and friendliness; it’s all dark, and sometimes you gotta shed a light on the dark-

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ness to see how dark it really is. 'Cause there's a lot of corpses in there, in the dark. Go Hang brings the light to the corpses."

Speaking of corpses, the band's bassist, Kyle, who I caught up with over the phone, noted death metal (Cattle Decapitation) among his influences, and he also mentioned the progressive rock band Dream Theatre (one of my favorites). He's been playing an instrument for fifteen years. At age nine, Kyle started playing the double bass in his school's orchestra. Four years later, he picked up the bass guitar and joined a jazz ensemble.

Because Carter writes the band's songs, Kyle and the rest of the members have a little more time on their hands to do other things. For instance, Kyle participates in league bowling. He also has a part-time, weekend job at a local grocery store. It's near University of Illinois at Chicago, where he is a senior studying accounting. He still loves to play music, and during school, Kyle practices about five hours a week. Normally, he is able to practice twenty hours when there's no school.

Hubert is also pulled away from the music by life. He said he practices "So very much not enough, very sparse. I become distracted easily."

I think being easily distracted was a requirement in order to join the band. As I began to ask Carter how often he practices, he asked me, "When they use pig faces to test out makeup, do you think they do it the way you're supposed to make up a woman's face, or do they just, like, slap some on there and make sure they don't get hives?"

I could see my time was almost up. The student studying at the table next to ours let out a little burst of laughter, and the guys turned their attention to her. "Oh, I'm sorry," Hubert offered. "We must be loud and distracting."

She insisted that they hadn't bothered her a bit. Carter also apologized for being obnoxious.

Hubert had to study for a test that he had to take an hour later. "Wait, I have three more quick questions," I pleaded. "How do you book your shows, do you have any preshow rituals, and how



**Go  
Hang  
in  
action  
again**

do you know each other?"

"We have a very nice female friend do it. She's sort of our manager," explained Carter.

"And she's got a degree in communications," Hubert added. "Carter and I knew each other in high school, but we didn't hang out then. Carter knew Kyle from high school too. Sometime between 2007 and '08 I went on my version of a beatnick road trip. Long story short: I stayed at the apartment where Carter was living."

Hubert stayed with Carter for about two weeks, during which they were "raving drunk in the streets and denouncing the plasticity of our surroundings," explained Hubert. "Billy Miller, the drummer, and I were friends in high school. But not so much outside of school."

Billy also went on a self-finding trip. He found himself spiritually, dropped out of college, and is now focusing on the music. (Unfortunately, I was not able to catch up with Billy to get his first-hand account.) Billy, Carter and Hubert got together one night to jam, and things took off from there. "We had a good experience and became a depressed trio of musical alcoholics," explained Hubert. "Eventually we accepted that we were Go Hang."

Neither Carter nor Hubert answered my question about a preshow ritual, so I asked Kyle when I spoke with him: "Just beer." (Did you expect something else?)

Finally, before we split, Carter informed me that I am now part of the family. He got up and said, "Just don't stab us in the back, and the family will take care of you forever."