

The Forecast is Good

Rane appears likely on Dec. 27

By Thomas Pizzola

The holiday season always brings with it certain guarantees. For instance, the malls will be filled with angry, miserable shoppers desperately searching for that perfect last-minute gift. Also, the lights will go on in Constitution Plaza, giving those who work in the city a reason to stay before they flee to the suburbs after the working day is done. And for the past five years, you could always bet that **Rane** would play a special holiday show somewhere in Manchester.

Well, this year is no different. The malls are still filled with angry shoppers, the lights are on in Constitution Plaza and once again Rane will be putting on their annual holiday show at Cheney Hall in Manchester on Dec. 27 with some excellent local acts in support. But this year the band plans on doing something different to make those in attendance feel extra special — they will be releasing three new CDs of Rane material entitled *The Hope Seed* and *From The Vine Vols. 1 & 2*.

And it's been a long time coming. The band's last CD, *Camelopardalis* came out in 2000, and since that time the band has undergone some major changes in personnel and how they conduct business. Original drummer Travis LaMothe left the band earlier this year and was promptly replaced by Bruce Menard. The band also installed a studio in their recording space, which allowed them the opportunity to record on a more flexible schedule.

While all these are worthwhile reasons to delay any band's recorded output, the band, which is comprised of vocalist/guitarist Alan Veniscofsky, bassist Dan Prindle, guitarist Ryan Bowman and percussionist/keyboard player Kurt Rinaldi, along with Menard on drums, looked at it as an opportunity to start anew and really let their creative juices flow.

"We set no guidelines as to what we could artistically do," says Veniscofsky, adding that the band had been writing material for the better part of 2003, so when it came time to record they had more than 30 songs. Instead of pairing it down to 10 or 12 songs, they decided to record three CDs. They were able to cut costs by recording and producing the CDs in-house.

The band is quite pleased with the results. Veniscofsky says that the three CDs each represent different aspects of the band's musical personality. *The Hope Seed* shows the band working in a more standard pop format, while *FTV Volume 1*, showcases the band's acoustic leanings, and *Volume 2* goes into a more prog rock direction.

The band has really made a giant step forward in terms of songwriting and craftsmanship on these three CDs. The songs are moody, atmospheric and at times reminiscent of a more earthy Pink Floyd, running the gamut from shimmering pop confections, to chilled-out ambient soundscapes to jazzy folk and back again. It's a highly accomplished work, one that could have easily fell into the realm of self-indulgent drivel, but doesn't, due to the expert playing from all members of the band. The band has really outdone themselves. They have managed to stay true to their sound, while pushing it into new and exciting directions.

The Hope Seed and *From The Vine Volumes 1 & 2* were definitely worth the wait. Let's just hope the band doesn't make us wait another three years for their next batch of recordings. Although if the results are this good, then guys, take your time.

Now that the new records are out, the band plans on staying busy for the rest of the year. They will be embarking on an extensive tour, and possibly releasing an EP of experimental music early next year.

Filthy Kleen plays Sully's Pub in Hartford on Fri., Dec. 26. **Kate Callahan** plays the Main Pub in Manchester on Sat., Dec. 27. **Lost City Angels, Nothingmore, Crime Lab, One Track Mind** and **Uncle Bob's Stolen Monkey** play the Webster Underground in Hartford on Mon., Dec. 29. **Cosmos** plays LaBoca in Middletown on Wed., Dec. 31. **The Silent Groove** plays Sully's Pub on Wed., Dec. 31.

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On Sale This Week

The Allman Brothers Band. March 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26 & 27. Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway New York, NY. (212) 307-7070 or Ticketmaster, (212) 307-7171. www.ticketmaster.com

Liz Phair. April 3. Roseland, 239 West 52nd St., New York, NY. (212) 777-6800 or (212) 777-1224.

My Morning Jacket. Jan. 26, 8:30pm. \$12/adv., \$15/door. Iron Horse Music Hall, 20 Center St., Northampton, MA. (413) 584-0610. www.ihcg.com

Olu Dara. Jan. 4, 7pm. \$16.50/adv., \$20/door. Iron Horse Music Hall, 20 Center St., Northampton, MA. (413) 584-0610. www.ihcg.com

Wynton Marsalis. April 27, 8pm. \$25-\$45. The Calvin Theatre & Performing Arts Center, 19 King St., Northampton, MA. (413) 584-1444. www.ihcg.com



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Rane will introduce three new CDs at its holiday show.

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