SPOTLIGHT



Attractive Eighties Women

By Leila Regan-Porter Photo by Leila Regan-Porter

Meet Phoebe Cates, Christie Brinkley, Kelly McGillis, Shelley Long and Kelly LeBrock. They'll be your entertainment for the evening. And boy do they entertain. The group known as Attractive Eighties Women are actually Mack Williams, Steve LaBate, Patrick Tang, Chris Bennet and Ben Arnold (respectively), a bunch of hairy Atlanta rockers who use the above names for stage only (sorry boys!). Their unique brand of "comedy-core" (a term singer Williams came up with to describe the band) has been infecting the souls of music fans all over the city, and like a rash that you can't stop itching the kids can't get enough.

What started as a one-off gig to fill a concert bill for a breast cancer fundraiser (which spawned the rocker "Mama Get a Mammogram," available on the band's MySpace page), has turned into a monster that has even infiltrated the guys' day jobs - "Lightning Bolt," a song about live action role playing, was recently featuring on Adult Swim's Frisky Dingo, a show Williams works on as lead animator.

"We never talked about it, but I just assumed that my boss heard our tremendously awesome song and decided to put live action role playing characters into the show," says Williams. "And then it was just a natural fit, that in the episode where the live action role playing characters were a big part, that we would have our song on the end credits."

Inspired by a mixture of punk rock, comedy and an awesomely bad '80s self-help video called Attracting Today's Women, the band's number one goal is to make people laugh. Their second? To make people rock out.

The band's good-time mantras stem from Williams and his lyric-writing methods.

"I write a lot more when I'm upset or sad, like any other artist in this world," he says. "I use my songs to make me feel better about whatever I'm upset about, to make me laugh at a time when I don't feel very funny."

Simplicity counts too - for Williams it's all about grabbing hold of an idea and running with it.

"90 percent of our songs start with a title," he says, regarding their catchy numbers. "Someone said once, you can't have a shitty song with a great title. If you have a good title, you're going to end up with a good song, generally."

The guys have yet to record an album or release a single record - all their money goes into their rehearsal space at Avatar Studios in Atlanta, and that money comes from their day jobs, not their gigs. Yet they have still managed to get songs like "Lightning Bolt" (the band's only studio-recorded track, thanks to Adult Swim) and "They Shoot Hipsters, Don't They?" played on WRAS/88.5 FM, Georgia State University's Album 88.

But recording an album is far from a serious priority for the band.

"It's a matter of finances and finding the right situation to do it," says Williams. "I feel like we're really a live band. I'm not really sure that we would translate to a studio outlet very well. We've talked to one guy who owns a studio in town about doing a live studio album. Getting like, 20 or 30 people in the studio with us, and putting on a show there and recording it."

In the meantime, the band makes the utmost efforts to stay true to their "There's a thin line between funny and stupid," Williams remarks some days later, following a photo shoot at a nearby Kroger. "And we like the

stupid side."