

# THE 2015 PDX POP NOW! YEARBOOK

A LOOK AT EIGHT OF THE SUPERLATIVE ACTS PLAYING THE ANNUAL LOCAL MUSIC FESTIVAL.

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**Valedictorian: Vinnie Dewayne**

They don't call him the St. Johns Scholar for nothing. His rhymes aren't brainy in the Wu Tang-y, thesaurus-exploding sense, but his gift for raw, honest storytelling puts the 24-year-old at the head of his class. Last year, Dewayne was the festival's most valuable guest star, popping up in every hip-hop set and damn near swiping the show out from under the main performer each time. With his long-awaited The St. Johns Scholar mixtape finally on the verge of dropping, he now has the podium all to himself. Expect him to make the most of it. 11:20 pm Friday.

**Best Power Couple: Chanti Darling**

As if they didn't have enough going on individually—he fronts the ecstatic soul-punk outfit Magic Mouth, she's prepping another album of futuristic electro-R&B—Chanticleer Tru and Natasha Kmeto decided to team up and kill the game even further. In Chanti Darling, Tru lays his gospel-fired pipes over Kmeto's bubbling synth production, kicking out smooth, moonlit dance jams every bit as undeniable as the music they make separately. There's never been a better reason to hang out under a bridge past midnight. Midnight Friday.

**Class Clowns: White Glove**

Not so much the hammy, starved-for-attention kind of clowns, the members of White Glove are more like the sarcastic kids in the back of the class with their feet up on the desk, aiming hummable, ultra lo-fi spitballs at the poseurs, trust-fund brats and, most memorably, the city of Portland itself. On "Division Street," the band laments the condos and fancy restaurants replacing the neighborhood's meth houses and weed dealers, and plead for the survival of the Oregon Theater. Sometimes, jokesters are the ultimate truth-tellers. 4:50 pm Saturday.

**Most Likely to Get Caught Smoking a Doob in the Bathroom: Holy Grove**

Rapper Myke Bogan lit up PDX Pop Now's first-ever onstage joint last year, but it wouldn't be surprising if a blanket of pungent haze settled over the audience the moment Holy Grove rips into its first song. Playing faithfully sludgy stoner rock—highlighted by the bluesy belting of singer Andrea Vidal—the band sounds like how the interior of a '70s conversion van smells. Who needs a fog machine when you've got riffs this smoky? 10:50 pm Saturday.

**Big Men on Campus: Cool Nutz and Mic Crenshaw**

Every young rapper in the city owes a debt of gratitude to Cool Nutz and Mic Crenshaw. Doing hip-hop in Portland is not easy, and these dudes have stuck it out since the '90s, fighting the battles that have allowed the culture to gain ground. But neither MC has simply retired into the cozy life of cultural ambassadorship. Both are still making music, much of it as vital as that from back in the day. Give up your lunch money in tribute. Or, at least, pencil their sets into your schedule, and throw them hands up. Cool Nutz plays 12:10 am Sunday. Mic Crenshaw plays 8:50 pm Sunday.

**Best Hair: Coco Columbia**

Even when posing in pasties, the first thing you notice about Coco Columbia is the eruption of light-pink waves flowing from her head. (She looks a bit like Daryl Hannah in *Splash*, which, given the mermaid theme of her press shots, probably isn't a coincidence.) It gives her a vaguely mystical appearance, as if she just walked out of the forest or rose up from the bottom of a lake, and the look fits the music—a starry mix of jazz, soul, hip-hop and pop that's familiar but at the same time of another world entirely. 9:30 pm Sunday.

**Most Likely to Move to a Shack in the Desert: Roselit Bone**

Though singer Josh McCaslin wrote much of Roselit Bone's debut album while living in the isolated woods outside Coos Bay, the imagery on *Blacken & Curl* is the stuff of a dystopian Western: dust blankets the landscape, the ravens are the size of dogs, and death comes slow and hot. The music, played by a 10-piece band augmented by trumpets, flute and pedal steel, enhances the dry, desiccated feeling, blending the cinematic sweep of Ennio Morricone with the twang of classic country and a sense of creeping malice that would make Nick Cave giddy. Bring water. You're going to feel parched. 7:20 pm Friday.

**Most Likely to Succeed: The Last Artful Dodgr**

Or should we say Most Likely to Surprise? In 2013, the Last Artful Dodgr dropped 199NVRLND, a lush, kaleidoscopic mixtape that exists on the same trippy spectrum as Chance the Rapper's *Acid Rap*; she even rhymes in a similarly pinched, sing-song flow. It was criminally slept on locally. Well, consider this your wake-up call. New music has been slow coming from her, so take the opportunity to catch up and act like you were down from the jump when the next release blows her up for good. 6:10 pm Sunday.

**SEE IT:** PDX Pop Now is at AudioCinema, 226 SE Madison St., on Friday-Sunday, July 24-26. Free. All ages. See [pdxpopnow.com](http://pdxpopnow.com) for complete schedule. **WU**