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Rock Scene

Lockgroove finds the key

Lockgroove's debut full-length, "Sleeping on the Elephant Fog" (Krave), shimmers with melody and subtlety. In its live shows and on its 1997 EP ("Rewired," also on Krave), the Boston band lends toward sonic explosions and improvisation. "Fog" uses those elements in decent measure, but the disc is driven by acoustic guitars as often as by feedback or sheer velocity. (Lockgroove's closest spiritual kin is probably Spacemen 3, a band that also dealt in hypnotic, head-tripping swirls of sound.) "Fog" is ambitious without being pretentious. It's the work of five guys in love with songcraft and multilayering. Three of the five sat down to discuss the disc: identical twins Martin Rex (drums, vocals, guitars) and Ryan Rex (vocals, guitars), and Adam Brilla (guitars). Dan Finn (keyboards) and David Goodman (bass, vocals) weren't on hand.

"Fog" represents months of sweating it in the studio. Unlike "Rewired," which was recorded using live takes in a few days, this one took a year. Martin speaks of 13- to 15-hour days.

"It was like climbing a mountain—horrible the whole time, but I knew it was good," he says. "For the next two or three years, this is



Lockgroove has a lot to celebrate at its CD-release party at T.T. the Bear's.

going to be the most creative time in Lockgroove. Everyone's got tons of ideas spewing out of them."

The Rex brothers have been spewing ideas together for a decade. By the time they started Lockgroove three years ago, they'd written piles of songs.

They wrote the bulk of the songs on "Fog" (David Goodman is the other writer). Despite the disc's masterful sweep, the Rexes

like to build from a simple core.

For instance, Ryan recorded "Wait for the In Between," an airy acoustic beauty, using a Radio Shack microphone. In an hour.

"Generally, Ryan would do something on the eight-track,"

Martin says, "and then he'd record again, and then I'd record it with him, and then we'd record it as a band." So all five band members don't hammer things out together from start to finish. The result,

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617-733-0771

says Brilla, is that "Dan and Dave and I pretty much only knew the live versions for a long time. It's taken all five of us some time to get used to working together in the studio."

Then there's the "Black Sabbath/Dark Side of the Moon"

headphone test that they'd occasionally use to get their brains in synch. Turn the lights out, give each member per and paper, and a time counter. Then they'd put on headphones and jot down precise points at which they detected flaws. For the 20-minute mind-warper "Never Satisfied," each band member came up with a list of the 15 things that bugged him.

"To make [Never Satisfied] sound live, we had to totally mix it," says Ryan. "When you listen to it, it sounds live. We recorded it live, but it took nonstop planning to get where we wanted it."

Lockgroove opens for Luna at Axis March 23; its CD-release party is March 25 at T.T. the Bear's.

RISING TIDE Singer Suzanne St. Amant's voice is throaty but smooth, a fine centerpiece for Violet Tide's agreeable pop. The band celebrates "Rady" (Burning Blue Records), their second CD, March 24 at the Common Ground.

—AMY FINCH

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LOCKGROOVE

Sleeping On The Elephant Fog

On its epic full-length debut, Lockgroove weaves a mesmerizing tapestry of sounds that occasionally recalls the Jesus And Mary Chain, Spiritualized, Syd Barrett and even fellow Bostonians Jack Drag. The opening "Safer Side" is indicative of this aesthetic, establishing a quiet psychedelic groove that's overtaken in intervals by a wash of guitars. The resulting effect isn't unlike floating serenely in the ocean before being dashed upon the shore, only to be pulled back by the tides to have the process repeat itself. The vocals are mostly of the hushed variety, almost as if singer Ryan Rex was trying not to wake someone in the next room during the recording process. A more likely scenario is that he didn't want to shake listeners from the trance induced by Lockgroove's music, a mix of droning psychedelia and catchy instrumentals bolstered by trippy organs and keyboards. Observing that these guys have a pop sensibility probably leans toward overstatement, but believe that *Sleeping* isn't some amorphous mass of sound. Lockgroove clearly possesses the ability to get into your cranium for an extended, hypnotic stay. [Krave, 442 3rd Ave, Ste 18, NYC 10016]

—Matt Ryan