

Rifle Nice

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The Philadelphia-based Rifle Nice formed in 2004 as an outlet for singer/songwriter Jody Hamilton's unusual home recordings, a claustrophobic batch of overdubbed keyboard voices and heavily-effected harmonies that were recorded in the daily hum of unemployment. Guitarist/key-boardist Rory Connell heard a few songs from *Driving and Remembering Driving*, one of Hamilton's self-released oddities, at singer/artist Alicia McCarthy's house and was instantly convinced that this incredibly weird and personal music should be shared with more people. Connell, a recent convert to outsider music such as Rodd Keith's song-poem masterpieces and the lost and ill-conceived sounds of other fractured minds, believed that he had found the genuine article and tracked down Hamilton over Friendster to fawn over her disarming music and convince her to start a band with him. Hamilton acquiesced and filled the band with McCarthy on shared lead vocals, percussion, and sound effects; Steve Heise and Jim Lewis—members of Philadelphia's Dragon City—on bass/guitar and drums, respectively; and Ben Daniels on guitar/bass. (Ben left Rifle Nice in 2005 to work on *A Sunny Day in Glasgow* and other projects.)

With a backlog of Hamilton's compositions to choose from, her new songs, and an increasing number of Hamilton recordings featuring her lyrics over backing tracks created by Heise, Connell, or Daniels, the band quickly developed a repertoire demonstrating its fractured origins. Rifle Nice songs cover new-wave experimentalism and psychedelic noise rock, with an eye towards both humor and paranoia. Its material has been rightly compared to Talking Heads, Brian Eno, the B-52s, and Devo.

Rifle Nice has managed to blend this eclectic mix with the ambitious rock music made by many of its peers in the Philadelphia rock scene. Its members have also played a role in many past and present Philadelphia bands including Raccoon, Elevator Parade, Mitch Fiction and the Shits, Persons, King Kong Ding Dong, The Clocks, Rarebirds, and the aforementioned Dragon City. Jody also plays solo shows which tend to serve as a breeding ground for Rifle Nice material.

The band releases its debut full-length in October, 2006. The album, *Rifle Nice*, was engineered by Bill Moriarty (Dr. Dog, Man Man, Buried Beds, Make a Rising), and features a strong overview of Rifle Nice's unique sound and vision. An EP (*Born In*)—a mix of studio, live, and home recordings—was released in February, 2006. Rifle Nice also contributed to a 2005 Plain Parade compilation of Philadelphia bands covering other local musicians; the band's medley of Ween's "What Deaner Was Talking About" and the Channel 6 ABC Action News theme "Move Closer To Your World" was acclaimed by both the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Philadelphia City Paper.



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