

Eamon McGrath expands sound and band for next Lethbridge show

Written by Richard Amery

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Toronto musician Eamon McGrath returns with a new album “Tantramar,” a whole new new sound and a brand new band when he returns to The Owl Acoustic Lounge, Nov. 9.



“It’s a totally different band from the last time I was in Lethbridge. I’ve got Tom Murray on bass from Old Reliable and Pal Joey, and Derick Anderson on steel guitar and drummer Connor Ellinger from Jesse and the Dandelions,” McGrath noted.

“It’s reflective of the new album,” he said adding the goal on this tour is to be able to replicate the album as closely as possible on stage.

“For people who have been listening to me for a while it makes sense, because this sound has always been there. There are more layers and it’s more atmospheric. It’s more interesting and it’s different,” he described.

“So this record just goes further in that direction which was already there,” he said.

“So I wanted to bring a band who can play a lot of different styles of music. There’s more emphasis on steel guitar on this album,” he continued.

“I come from the DIY punk scene. Before, I’d write an album, and live I’d turn the songs into loud punk rock songs. So there would be two different experiences- live and the recording. So that came naturally. On this album I’ve taken a less punk rock approach to things,” he said.

“The record translates really well to the stage and people really seem to like the more interesting, more esoteric sound. It’s been a really good experience,” he said.

He credited record label Saved By Vinyl for their support.

“They were really well respected in the late ’90s and ’00s, but closed up. They re-formed just because they wanted to put out my records, which means a lot. That’s been really flattering. So things couldn’t be better,” he said adding they have been really supportive of his new musical direction.

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He noted Canada has a lot of diverse musical scenes.

“ Everywhere is so much separated by geography. So it’s all different, in Toronto there’s this pressure to have more of a commercial, pop sound. it’s different in places like Edmonton, where nobody expects to make a living making music, so they can do what they want because there isn’t that pressure. So you get a lot of different sounds,” he said.

He is touring with Hamilton rock band the Dirty Nil which makes for an interesting contrast with McGrath’s new sound.

“They are a DIY rock band and they’ve been fantastic. It’s great how that just happened,” he said.

Admission is by donation. Local alternative rock duo Cope will be opening the show.

— *by Richard Amery, L.A. Beat Editor*