

# Michael Flynn

## ON THE BRINK OF SUCCESS

By PATRICK AUGUSTINE  
FOR THE GAMECOCK

It's more than a bit ironic that Charleston-based songsmith Michael Flynn admits that the soundtrack to 1983's "The Big Chill" is one of his early influences. After all, the Motown-heavy compilation that paved the way for every thematic movie score since served as the backdrop to a script about children of the 1960s who are coming to terms with the death of their idealistic youth. While Flynn's 2004 release "No Disassemble" deals with the perils of growing up and is replete with themes of love gone sour and death, its creative architect is still chasing his dream of making a living singing the songs he's written.

Growing up in Greenville, Flynn went to the College of Charleston before attending the well-respected Berkeley College of Music in Boston to further his abilities on the ivories — a skill his parents began cultivating when he was in third grade. At Berkeley, Flynn received both honors for his songwriting and began to chafe against the academic setting he found himself in. Eventually moving back to Charleston, he took with him collaborator Josh Kaler, who has played either drums or guitar for his friend ever since. They collaborated on Flynn's debut "Music for the Flood," which was the thematically expansive result of his d a m e d - u p songwriting and a r r a n g i n g sensibilities, and hinted at the much tighter

2004 recording. "No Disassemble" was written and recorded during a year in Charleston, and shows the movement Flynn has made away from the academic confines of the music establishment and into the emotional deep-end of personal experience. Flynn said that while "Music for the Flood" was written from a narrative perspective, "No Disassemble" lacked the filter that kept him from putting himself more fully into the compositions.

Recorded primarily in his bedroom, the album never ducks into the muddy instrumental depths that were the hallmark of "Music for the Flood," nor does it sound like the lo-fi effort of a beginner or an indie snob that's grown too big for his britches. Instead, Flynn uses room noises and a veritable palette of Casiotone electronic flourishes and handclaps to accent the piano, guitar and drum lineup that would otherwise be unremarkable. Sounding like a product of the IDM revolution in pop instead of a child of grunge that similar-sounding North Carolina native Ben Folds was, Flynn's literate writing and inherent sense of timing work together on "No Disassemble" to result in an understated masterpiece. Feeling never gets left behind in exchange for musical flourishes, though, and tracks like "The Sea is Never Full" and "Streamlined" show Flynn knowing when to leave out elements or extend instrumental passages in a way that is atypical of the current

crop of independent artists.

"You're in Luck" finds Flynn announcing to a past love that "I know the way to your heart, you're in luck," tempting her to return to a convenient relationship. On the album's most evocative track, "Don't Let Them See Me Like This," a hollow percussive line drives the moody organ and soaring guitar that punctuate Flynn's narrative of a hospitalized love one and the helplessness he feels watching their suffering.

Although Flynn has yet to garner the critical acclaim or regional following that are stepping stones to widespread success, the building blocks are in place. "No Disassemble" is waiting for a major label to snap it up and repack, leaving the artist and his entourage with little to do other than tour incessantly to support better promotion efforts.

When many artists dream of their faces on MTV or singing to sold-out stadiums, Flynn remains a bit more modest in admitting that his five-year plan is to make a living doing what he is now, just hopefully

◆ Please see FLYNN, page 9



PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK



### ■ JUNKIN'

Continued from page 7

liver."

During its first season, "Junkin'" filmed an episode in Columbia at the Barnyard RV Park and Flea Market where Bird bought an antique bartenders guide for \$1 that later sold for \$7 on eBay. Myers purchased an old postcard for 10 cents that went for \$41.89.

"Columbia stood out as a town with a sense of humor," Myers

said. "There was a guy who chased us with some troll dolls."

"I bought an old Dukane film strip projector at a yard sale in Columbia with an integrated record player, which is cool enough right there," Bird said. "But on closer inspection, it turned out to be a pool salesman's presentation tool from the early '60s with a great bunch of pictures of chicks and dudes enjoying their new pools."

As for the future of "Junkin'," Bird and Myers are optimistic about what might lay ahead for

their unique television show.

"Looking back over our many episodes, I truly believe the show is getting better all the time," Bird said. "It was something no one had ever done before, and I'm curious and excited to see where it all goes."

"I'd like to go junkin' in Calcutta," Myers said.

"Junkin'" airs weekdays at 10:30 p.m. on Turner South.

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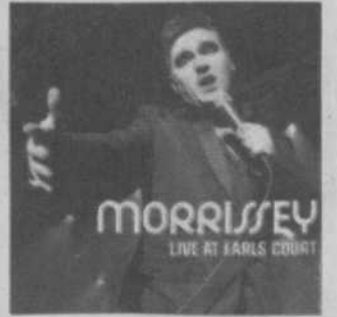
## New Music

for the week of March 29



"Winter Pays for Summer"

Glen Phillips



"Live at Earl's Court"

Morrissey



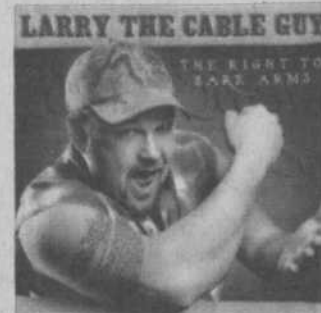
"Guero"

Beck



"The Bravery"

The Bravery



"The Right to Bare Arms"

Larry the Cable Guy



"Everglow"

Mae



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Stereophonics



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