

# MUSIC

## Making It Last

### The Remnants piece together some uncommon rock

By Maggie-Margret

In a place like Miami, it's not unusual to find supermodels frolicking on the beach in thong bikinis, vapid celebrities doing shots at the club *du jour*, or cops hassling drunken drag queens. One of the things you won't find very often is a true-blue rock band. For whatever reason, the screamingly loud, amazingly talented, and relentlessly gigging groups are few and far between. Until now, that is. **The Remnants** have stepped in to fill the blanks in the area's musical résumé.

The Remnants are, well, remnants of a sort. Bassist Dominic Sirianni, guitarist Jim Potts, and drummer Russ Moore were all members of now-defunct groups like the Pin-Ups, Avarice, and the still-functional cover band the Hooples. Two years ago, the boys met Cynthia DuVall while she was singing at a coffeehouse with a person named "Trash." They knew right away that voices like DuVall's are rare: beautiful, bluesy, dirty, soul-drenched, and loud. Judging by the connection they now share on-stage, it's clear something magical happened the first time they played together. Sirianni puts it all in simpler terms: "We all were around each other, and we just decided to give it a try."

I've learned from experience that interviewing local bands is actually really easy. You ask the basics, the one outgoing spokesman of the band answers, the rest of the band stares at their shoes, and it's a done deal. Interviewing the Remnants, however, is like trying to juggle a litter of puppies. The band members have strong personalities that make even the most generic questions fresh.

Over the past two years, the Remnants have played more gigs than most groups play in their entire careers. From Tobacco Road to Ray's Downtown, they've defiled almost every stage in South Florida. I'm guessing there must be some kind of pathological condition involved, because everyone shares the same gorgeously naive motivation. "It certainly isn't for all the money we're making," says Potts, voicing a unanimous sentiment, "so I guess it's all for the love of rock 'n' roll." Amen.

Musically, the Remnants have concocted a ballsy blend of their influences: bands like MC5 and the Stooges



The Remnants: Leftovers don't always suck.

#### THE LOWDOWN

**Who / What:**

The Remnants

**Details:**

10 p.m. Saturday, December 11. Admission is free. Call 561-330-DADA.

**Where:**

Dada, 52 N. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach.

and icons like Johnny Thunders, James Brown, and Prince. Raucous and belligerent, soulful and pained, their stage show is exhausting to watch and a thrill to behold. In the dozen or so Remnants shows I've been to south of Broward, I've heard the same thing coming out of people's mouths time after time: "What the hell are they doing here?"

In the shallow landscape of Miami-Dade County, where techno jams and breast implants flow like wine, the Remnants stick out like "a turd in a punch bowl," to quote one of my favorite '80s movie lines. I've often wondered what kept them in sunny SoFla myself, so I put the question to Sirianni.

"I've built a life for myself in Miami," he answers. "Plus, I hate the cold. South Florida is cool because although the scene is weak in some ways, it's really cohesive and interesting in other ways. It's a musical Galapagos."

No Remnants show would be complete without the ritual hazing of human punching bag and formerly mustachioed Sirianni. Besides the music, one of the most entertaining things about their gigs is DuVall's relentless insulting of Sirianni. I wondered if it had ever gone too far, if someone had ever been pushed into an amp or lost an eye on a mic stand.

"It hasn't gone far enough I think," DuVall says. "Dom is good-spirited about the whole thing; plus, he likes getting his ass kicked. I think that speaks volumes about his sexual orientation. Plus, he smokes those clove things now. Need I say more?"

Sirianni's take on the issue is slightly different. "One time I broke a bottle over Cynthia's head on-stage and she blacked out a little," he remembers. "But it was in a totally collegial spirit. And I question my orientation daily."

For a band that's so full of good, old-fashioned, rock 'n' roll swagger, it's surprising how humble and downright fun each of the members is. When I ask about their aspirations as a band, I expect to hear things like, "We're gonna take over the world, man!" Instead, I get answers that are practical, even self-effacing. They're all just looking to find a home on a small label, make enough money to support a small tour, and play out every chance they get at any place that will let them.

The Remnants recently finished recording a seven-song EP appropriately titled *A Few Evenings with the Bastard*. Produced by none other than the infamous Rat Bastard, whom DuVall describes as "a great guy," the EP will be released on vinyl only, packaged with an extra CD of bonus tracks for good measure. My prediction is that the hottest holiday gift this year will be a record player. At least for me. Mark your lists.