

Byron Shaw Projex

Feed Your Soul (Embryonic Records)

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As the leader of The Jonez and Judge Roughneck, Byron Shaw has been a headliner for longer than some of its younger members have been alive--but that doesn't mean he's stopped evolving as an artist. *Feed Your Soul*, which is being celebrated at a Saturday, September 25 release party at Herb's Hideout, avoids rehashing the work of his previous groups by heading in a new direction.

No punk-funk or third-generation ska retreads here. Instead, instrumentalists like keyboard specialist Chad Aman, clavinetist Geoff Cleveland and trombonist Gary Mallory create gently jazzy,, casually engaging rhythms and melodies. Shaw joins in with bongos and laid-back singing that entwines with the sinuous warbling of Melinda Dickson and Elizabeth Rose, who was once with (another flashback) Sympathy F. As a result, tracks such as "Happy Feelings" and "I Can Relate" exude an evocative, end-of-the-evening vibe that's mellow without seeming tired.

Shaw's brand new groove may catch longtime fans off guard, but as Feed Your Soul demonstrates, change is good.

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