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Clubber

As we wrap

By **Christian Kiefer**

Jackie Greene

Throughout the past year, this column has continued to dish out what I hope is an honest assessment of the scene. Its players--in rock, singer-songwriter, jazz, metal, alternative and hip-hop--sometimes have been put directly into the fire and other times have been lauded and celebrated. For none of this do we apologize. Instead, we march into 2004 with a clear conscience and three clear resolutions: first, to cover more hip-hop and more blues; second, to try to hit more nontraditional venues; and, third, to shake out what unknown musical styles and scenes are lurking in Sacramento's suburbs, back alleys and living rooms.

Sacramento's music scene is still staggering around as it searches, perhaps in vain, for an audience to match its golden years in the early 1990s. But there are a few indications that live music might be gaining ground. This is, in part, because of a few clear visionaries on the local scene. Take, for example, the efforts of **Charles Twilling's Anodyne Entertainment**. Anodyne is the primary booker of the **Capitol Garage**, and it has managed, throughout 2003, to bring some of the very finest in national independent music to town. 2004 will see the venue moving to a new, larger location built specifically with live music in mind. Bravo.

The Sacramento jazz scene has seen something of a resurgence, at least in terms of visibility. The **Northern California Modern Jazz Association** (especially guitarist **Glenn Hair** and vocalist **Vivian Lee**) have focused the jazz scene with a series of Sunday-afternoon shows at the **Stockmarket Lounge and Grill** on Folsom Boulevard. On the younger side, guitarist **Ross Hammond** continues to bring jazz to younger audiences by organizing shows at all-ages, youth-oriented venues such as **The True Love Coffeehouse**.

A few musicians have proved particularly noteworthy in 2003, but none so much as **Jackie Greene**. Under the stewardship of local label **Dig Music**, Greene has netted opening slots with some top-notch international recording artists, including B.B. King, Daniel Lanois and Huey Lewis, and has performed at the Newport Folk Festival. Dig has taken a few other bands

under its wing, so music fans should be keeping their eyes on the likes of **Honeyspot, Victory Gin** and **Looking Star** in the new year.

Also important in 2003 has been the activity of local label **The Americans Are Coming (TAAC) Recordings**. Not only has TAAC been active in releasing CDs by such acts as **Low Flying Owls**, the **Proles**, **Frank Jordan**, the **New Strange** and **Call Me Ishmael**, but it also has managed to create its own fundamental, recognizable sound. All accounts indicate that TAAC will continue its work well into next year, with early 2004 releases including a CD from **Spider Legs** and an electronic-music EP featuring **Tycho, Dusty Brown** and **Fruitbat**. Well done.

Lastly, for every musician who has continued to play despite the club-DJ dance craze, ear-melting corporate alternative rock and audiences more interested in getting lit than in listening to the music, I salute you, as should everyone else in this town. The rewards are few and far between, and there is no reason to play out there other than the sheer love of performance, of making music, of creating art. Ladies and gentlemen, when the day comes that Sacramento is recognized as the great, artistic town that it so desperately desires to be, we'll have you to thank. Lead on into the new year, and, for better or worse, I'll be right there with you the whole way.