

## Model Citizens . . .

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"The album pretty much was all recorded before I even had a band . . . We had only been together for two weeks so I wasn't sure the Model Citizens were going to be anything, but I wanted the record to be long term. If I had a band called the Model Citizens and we made the records and (the band) fell apart in a month, that doesn't help your advertising much," O'Kane said.

The band has been together eight months, and through that period, the increasing influences of the individual members can be detected.

"To a certain degree we love to have little parts in each song where we improvise . . . like a few bars where everybody has a certain thing to do but they can mix it up," O'Kane said. When there are two or three people giving input on a song, the product is better than doing it alone," O'Kane said.

"I can play a little bit of everything, enough to make an idea and formulate it. I'm not a virtuoso in any sense . . . I can be a good singer when I'm concentrating, but I'm not that great of a musician. I'm not as good a musician as the other guys in the band so I think as they get more confident, the band will be more self-propelled," O'Kane said.

The Model Citizens' relatively quick popularity has left some critics and basic music-goers curious as to what the Model Citizens' attraction is.

"There's a hook. When I write a song I can't help it — I want to go for a hook; a little hook part that people are gonna stick in their heads — that's all there is to it. That's what I mean by a pop song — there's a hook in there. Some people criticize me for that. There's like two fashions in modern music: those against the hook and those for it. I'm not against it or for it. It's just something that comes out when I write," O'Kane said.

"When I write a pop song I just mean the melodies are accessible. I'm not trying to write something too bluesy or too funky because it just never works out for me. My best songs are songs that really have a pop melody to them," he said.

"I really like to sing a popular melody, but the rhythmic kind, like we do a funkier bass line and real traditional rhythms on the drums and congas that kind of makes for a mod sound. It seems like an effective way to deliver the kind of songs that I've been writing and still get people to dance," O'Kane said.

There seems to be a myth that artists

are immune, or at least should be immune, to the capitalistic system. Everybody needs to earn a living yet musicians are served extra criticism when that is their goal and they reach it. Maybe there are two types of musicians: those that are in it only for the music's sake and those that are in it as a profession.

"I'm all for (profit) to tell you the truth, because I work hard on (music). I think of it only in terms of I need to eat cheeseburgers and eat at Arturo's Taco Hut twice a week," O'Kane said.

The Model Citizens have latched on to a sound that is pleasing and enjoyable to a diverse crowd of people and are at this time taking some heat for their popularity.

"Since when is 'popular' a four-letter word? That's how it's gotten . . . If the Model Citizens are successful, it can only be good for Lincoln, in every way. I want to be popular, that's all there is to it. I write songs and I want as many people as I can to hear them. If that's a bad thing — I'm guilty of it," O'Kane said.

Their first album has done well, O'Kane said. At this point they've broken even on it and have some albums left to sell. They are starting to work on another album now. They have also hired an agency in Milwaukee to book them around the Midwest so that they

can expand their sound, but they still plan on playing in Lincoln.

"I think lately we've changed a lot since we started and we're gonna change a lot more in the next couple of months, some sound-wise, but also just in the way we're approaching what we're doing. I think we're just going to be a lot more confident about what we want to play. We're starting to know what it is. It's not going to be mish-mash of all the things that we initially wanted to get in there," O'Kane said.

"The problem right now with the Model Citizens is that we haven't even played together a year. At times our instrumentation fuses together and it's because everybody is not quite sure yet how they want to make the sound . . .

If you come and see us right now and catch us on a good night when we really sound great, you can tell — it really clicks. Right now it happens one out of three times and I want it to happen two out of three times and eventually all the time," O'Kane said.

While the band seems to be striving for perfection, it has not lost sight of the need to have fun.

"Nothing is going to go over unless you're having a good time," O'Kane said. This attitude is infectious and is one of the pleasures of seeing them live.

## Record shops . . .

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The downtown store offers clothes and gifts as well as albums. Not a bad idea since most of the non-music items won't be found in the city.

If you're in the market for some gifts or clothes and want to pick up some music, the downtown Dirt Cheap is your store. You may end up shelling out a little more for your records, but as long as you're there . . .

For the most part, the same thing goes if you happen to be doing some shopping in East Park and an album is on your list of things to pick up. If, however, you find a steep price on the album, you don't need to feel obligated to buy it there rather than head back downtown.

Pickles' two locations offer the best prices in town. You'll find that \$5.98 is the norm in both stores. The prices of the black music selections may be a little bit higher, but they still are around the lowest in town.

The difference between the two stores is the selection. At the downtown location, 220 N. 10th St., one finds music, music and more music.

Pickles sports the best and most extensive selection of imports in the city. While the 237 S. 70th St. location lacks a little in its import options, price-wise they are definitely at an advantage over their Gateway and East Park Plaza competitors.

A word must be said about the selections carried by most of the city's department stores. Prices are quite a bit higher and the selection probably is limited to the top 10 or 15 albums. The decision is yours.

So, after all of this, it comes down to a couple of things. One is the fact that for the most part, prices among Marlowe's Dirt Cheap and Pickles are competitive. Dirt Cheap's downtown store offers books, clothes and gifts while just down the alley Pickles houses the best import section and prices in town.

On the other hand, Marlowe's can allow you to pick up something without worrying about the crowds in the malls or downtown.

It boils down to where you are at the time, how much you're willing to spend and what you are in the market for. Just remember, you do have some choices.



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