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
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Monday, February 27th, 2012

## Dance the Night Away

# Scud Mountain Boys at Lee's Palace in Toronto



 [Frank Yang](#) Even in this age of band reunions run amuck, the returns of some outfits to active duty seem highly unlikely. Maybe the animosity between the principals is too deep for even the biggest prospective paydays to put aside, or the prospect of being regarded as a nostalgia act rather than active, vital artist is too unpalatable, or maybe the band's audience wasn't all that big the first time around and their legend hasn't necessarily grown enough in the interim to make it seem worthwhile.

Any and all of these could reasonably have applied to early '90s alt.country outfit [Scud Mountain Boys](#). A falling out, the specifics of which have grown vague, left it so that singer-guitarist Joe Pernice hadn't spoken to the other three in some fourteen years, Pernice had since established himself as a successful bandleader via [Pernice Brothers](#) and solo artist, and though the Scuds certainly had their devotees, their name wasn't exactly topping anyone's list of dream Coachella headliner reunions. And yet last Summer, following the death of a close mutual friend, Pernice decided to reach out to his former bandmates and revisit the old material – net result, a string of live dates along the east coast in early 2012 that wrapped up, for the moment, this past Saturday night at Lee's Palace in Pernice's adopted hometown of Toronto.

Any question about the vibe of the night was answered with the band's stage setup, carried over from their original incarnation – a kitchen table set up in the middle of the stage, adorned with a small lamp and surrounded with comfortable chairs. It was both symbolic, hearkening to the band's beginnings sitting around a kitchen table playing music together, and practical, giving them a place to put their drinks. And with regards to my earlier comments that no one was waiting for this reunion – that's not to say that it wasn't welcome; a few hundred locals were out for the occasion, and some were louder and rowdier than the band themselves.

Being more a fan of the Pernice Brothers' ornate pop than the Scuds' country leanings – relatively speaking, just to be clear – I've always preferred the more produced third album [Massachusetts](#) to their sparser, earlier records *Pine Box* and *Dance The Night Away* (collected and rereleased as [The Early Year](#)) but hearing the earlier material was a great reminder that those simpler recordings still contained some great, great songs. And also that as much as history has framed the Scuds as Pernice's old band – and he was great, having shaved for the occasion and looking a lot like Elvis Costello, and still a hilarious onstage personality who despite planning to become a Canadian citizen this year, hadn't forgotten his Boston roots (“Pogge or Rask?”) – the others were far more than just a supporting cast. Drummer Tom Shea was deft on mandolin for the front half of the show before taking up behind the drum kit, bassist Stephen Desaulniers' voice has more of an innate twang than Pernice's honeyed vocals and guitarist Bruce Tull's leads offered a great balance of emotion and melody.

The 90-minute set was actually more dynamic than a show anchored around a kitchen table might have implied, the *Massachusetts* material almost rocking out (thought still seated) and main set closer “Cigarette Sandwich” coming across particularly rollicking. But perhaps most importantly, given the history of the band, everyone onstage seemed to be having a grand time of it and that spirit carried over into the audience, including former Pernice Brothers and current [Sadies](#) drummer Mike Belitsky. He was texting taunts at Pernice during the encore, causing him to crack up whilst trying to sing the somber Cher cover of “Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves” (the table was also good for holding mobile phones). A hilarious end to a wholly entertaining show, and if that ends up being it for the Scuds reunion – there are no more dates on the sched and Joe will be turning his attention to the new Pernice Brothers record due out this year – then it went out on a high note.

[The Washington Post](#) has an interview with Pernice about getting the band back together.

**Photos:** [Scud Mountain Boys @ Lee's Palace – February 25, 2012](#)

**MP3:** [Scud Mountain Boys – “Grudge Fuck”](#)

**Stream:** [Scud Mountain Boys – “In A Ditch”](#)

**Stream:** [Scud Mountain Boys – “Sangre de Cristo”](#)

Both [The Line Of Best Fit](#) and [DIY](#) crash Stephin Merritt's hotel room to record [Magnetic Fields](#) video sessions, while [NPR](#) has new album [Love At The Bottom Of The Sea](#) streaming in full before it emerges next Tuesday. They're at the Sound Academy on March 30.

**Stream:** [The Magnetic Fields / Love At The Bottom Of The Sea](#)

[Spin](#) solicits a list of [Sharon Van Etten's](#) favourite things; [The Ottawa Citizen](#) also has a chat.

[Frankie Rose](#) – whose CV takes her through such acts as Crystal Stilts, Dum Dum Girls, Vivian Girls and The Outs – has released her acclaimed debut under her own name alone in [Interstellar](#) and will bring it to The Shop Under Parts & Labour on May 2.

**MP3:** [Frankie Rose – “Little Brown Haired Girls”](#)

[Beirut](#) has released a new video from last year's delicious [The Rip Tide](#). Hear it, and others like it, when the band are at The Sound Academy on July 19.

**Video:** [Beirut – “Vagabond”](#)

[Baeble Music](#) has premiered a new video from [The Wooden Birds](#), taken from [Two Matchsticks](#).

**Video:** [The Wooden Birds – “Long Time To Lose It”](#)

[Drowned In Sound](#) chats with [Andrew Bird](#), whose new album [Break It Yourself](#) is out March 6 and now streaming in full at [NPR](#).

**Stream:** [Andrew Bird / Break It Yourself](#)

[NPR](#) welcomes [Nada Surf](#) for a *World Cafe* session. They play The Opera House on April 4.

[Spin](#) interviews James Mercer of [The Shins](#). Their new album [Port Of Morrow](#) comes out March 20.

**You might like:**



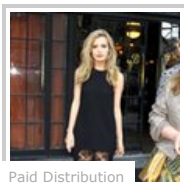
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#### Contests

-  D'Angelo @ The Sound Academy  
Ends May 22, 2013
-  The Postal Service @ The Air Canada Centre  
Ends May 26, 2013

#### MusicList

- Ólafur Arnalds  
[\*For Now I Am Winter\*](#)
- Rachel Zeffira  
[\*The Deserters\*](#)
- Savages  
[\*Silence Yourself\*](#)
- Chromatics  
[\*In The City\*](#)
- Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds  
[\*Push The Sky Away\*](#)
- Widowspeak  
[\*Almanac\*](#)
- Caitlin Rose  
[\*The Stand-In\*](#)
- Suede  
[\*Bloodsports\*](#)
- British Sea Power  
[\*Machineries Of Joy\*](#)
- Young Galaxy  
[\*Ultramarine\*](#)

#### BookList

- **Haruki Murakami**  
[Pinball, 1973](#)
- **Robert Burley**  
[Disappearance of Darkness: Photography at the End of the Analog Era](#)
- **Patti Smith**  
[Just Kids](#)
- **Caitlin Moran**  
[Moranthology](#)
- **Muriel Barbery**  
[Gourmet Rhapsody](#)

#### FilmList

- **Kaspar Astrup Schröder**  
[Rent A Family Inc.](#)
- **Daniel Dencik**  
[Expedition To The End Of The World](#)
- **Cheryl Dunn**  
[Everybody Street](#)
- **Peter Berg**  
[Hancock](#)
- **Nikolaj Arcel**  
[A Royal Affair](#)

#### ShowList

- **[The Postal Service](#), [Mates Of State](#)**  
Air Canada Centre  
*June 11, 2013*
- **[NXNE](#)**  
Toronto., ON  
*June 12-16, 2013*
- **[Toronto Urban Roots Fest](#)**  
Garrison Commons  
*July 4-7, 2013*
- **[Bob Dylan](#), [Wilco](#), [My Morning Jacket](#), [Richard Thompson](#)**  
Molson Amphitheatre  
*July 15, 2013*
- **[Björk](#)**  
Echo Beach  
*July 16, 2013*
- **[Pet Shop Boys](#)**  
Sony Centre For The Performing Arts  
*September 25, 2013*

#### BlogRoll

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- [A Good Day For Airplay](#)
- [A Music Blog - Yea?](#)
- [Aquarium Drunkard](#)
- [Bradley's Almanac](#)
- [Brooklyn Vegan](#)
- [Cover Me](#)
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- [Largehearted Boy](#)
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