

cool@night

part 2

YEAR'S BEST

Tom Griffith, other locals put spotlight back on songwriting

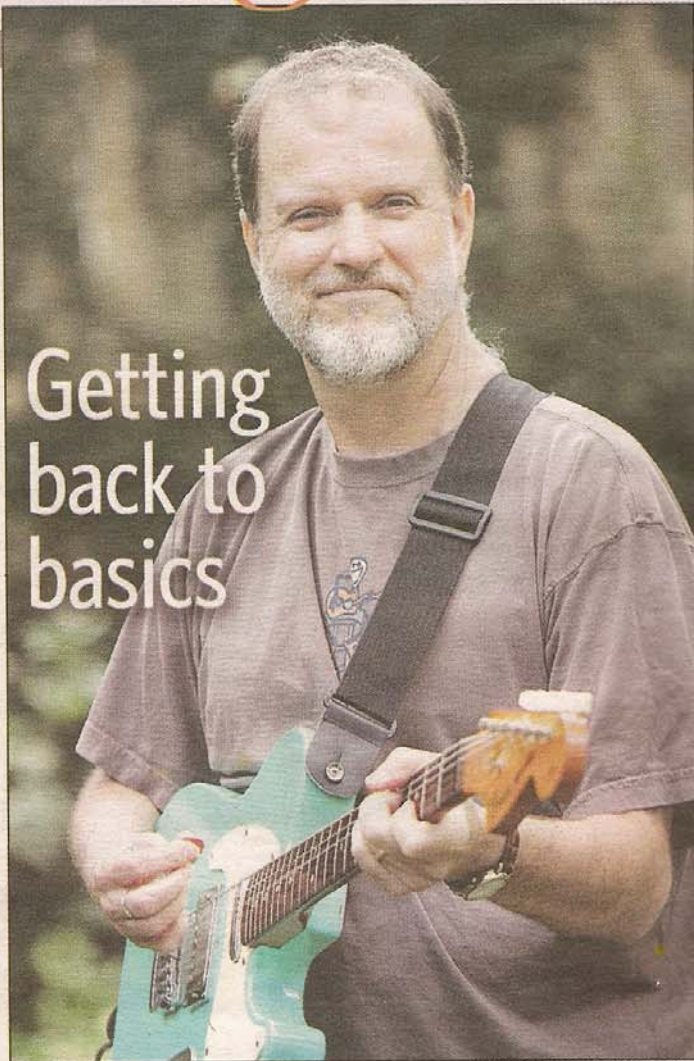


WITH THE BAND
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Songwriting came back in vogue among local bands this year, a welcome trend indeed. For several years, young bands mostly were content to create a lot of sound and fury, but in 2007, groups such as Camera-Head Shark, The Shake and The New Rivals—names focused on verses, choruses, lyrics and hooks—the classic fundamentals of rock. (Fittingly, the best songwriting of the year came from a gray-bearded classic rocker, Tom Griffith.) Rounding out the top 10 local albums of 2007 (most of which were self-released) are one excellent rapper, a weird metal-rock band and a young emo act with ideas to spare. Here's the list:

- 1. Tom Griffith, "40 Years After"** — In these funny, poignant, sometimes angry songs, various boomer characters take stock of their lives 40 years after the Summer of Love. For many it's the winter of discontent: A pacifist father grapples with a gung-ho son on "He Wants to Join the Corps"; a bitter divorcee discovers the flip side of The Beatles' "All You Need Is Love" in "No Love Is Free." Griffith's disc is like a little novel that gets better with each read.
- 2. Camera-Head Shark, "Oh You"** — Bright and bubbly with a distinctively nutty flavor, this is the most refreshing disc from Long Island in years. File somewhere between Camper Van Beethoven and Cake.
- 3. Easy Anthems, "Easy Anthems"** — Philip and Vanesa



Getting back to basics

NEWSDAY PHOTO, 2007 / BRUCE GILBERT

Jimenez have created a hard-to-define album — perhaps the best adjective is "beautiful." Tracks such as "BB Shooting" and "When R U Gunna Break?" make this a perfect rainy-day disc.

- 4. The Shake, "Kick It"** — (Unicycle). This Queens-based foursome delivers a jolt of high-energy rock with buzzy guitars, crackling snares and Jon Merkin's snarling, Billy Idol-meets-Billie Joe Armstrong vocals.

