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**L**ike a camper van about to set out on a cross-country expedition, the Motorpsychos is a band that's fueled up, geared up and ready to roll, with passengers as vehement as caffeine-charged teenagers prepared to tackle new territory.

The band members, who have only been traveling together since March, are

**The Good Little Girls** release party, with Motorpsychos, Hedra, Corpus Christi, and Submachine, starts at 10 p.m. Sat., Jan. 6, at the 31st Street Pub, Strip District. 391-8334.

paving a new road in the city's music scene and definitely enjoying the ride. Pittsburghers Pam Simmons, Tom Venturino, Amy Bianco and Rachel Cassidy make up this four-part ensemble that collectively describes itself as "all balled up dark punk with a twist of metal."

The group, whose name was inspired by the 1965 Russ Meyer film *Motor Psycho*, could easily be tagged as a typical girl band, but its sound is more than just estrogen-charged angst or premenstrual punk. Perhaps the difference lies in the masculine hands of Venturino, the drummer. His lurid movements provide a strong backing for Bianco's vigorous bass line, which combines well with Cassidy's shut-up-and-listen vocals and Simmons' stylistic guitar playing, which complete a sound that Venturino describes as "progressively aggressive."

"I like what happens when you mix girls, Gibsons, Marshalls, and too much eyeliner," Simmons says, referring to her classic hard rock guitar setup.

Simmons, Bianco, Venturino and Cassidy are unique in their offerings to the band and to each other. Their eclectic influences and backgrounds add to their collective efforts. Cassidy and Simmons previously played together in Go to Helen, and Venturino came from the band Bombay Café. While Simmons loves to spend time with her daughter, Lilly, Bianco finds inspiration in cold-blooded creatures like her tarantula and reptiles. The group's musical influences include artists such as Danzig, Rush, Sepultura and L7.

"We've felt out where each of us is coming from," Bianco says. "We're blending together."

The band has been able to establish a democracy of songwriting and hopes to record a CD later this year. The four delegate their individual skills into one collaborative musical piece. Like a production line, each person produces his or her own part of songs such as "Insane," "Filthy Prick," and "Princess Insecticide." The process begins with Simmons, who comes up with a chord combo. Bianco and Venturino then create the bass and drum components. After those parts are perfected and recorded, Cassidy takes the song home to versify, spawning



**Motorpsychos**

lyrics like, "I live for the 40 ounce/ Always drinking more than she counts."

"Sometimes I listen to a song and it'll give me a feeling," says Cassidy.

Through her raw voice and arcane lyrics, Cassidy's goals are simply sung. She wants "to inspire others and broaden people's perspective of a woman's place in rock and roll," she says.

The pride of playing a song they have given birth to together is evident on stage. The abrasive, synthetic vibe of guitars and drums, topped with the fiery voice of a raging vocalist, seems like a dream straight out of punk rock heaven. Bianco describes this reverie as "in-your-face" and admits that sometimes the energy level is so high that the audience may need to take a step back. The band's force may be a little surprising

to first-time spectators, but it is likely to surpass any expectations one may have of the cute, new girl band.

"We are consciously aware that this whole thing is a package," Simmons says. "Visuals, sound ... we're conscious that it's a performance."

Their performance has impressed Bobby LaMonde, front man of the Science Fiction Idols. He finds difficulty in trying to pinpoint the type of music the band generates because all of the elements add up to more than a mere riot grrl band. He says the sound is "hard and heavy with some stomp behind it."

"[Motorpsychos is] flat out the premier hard rock band in Pittsburgh," Lamonde says. "Heavy and tight, and very interesting." 