



Americana music hits The Corduroy Road at Melting Point

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One wouldn't think the genre of Americana is underrepresented in Athens - this is, after all, the South.

But due to the increasingly indie-rock-oriented music scene, roots music has fallen by the wayside in recent years.

Local group The Corduroy Road, scheduled to take the stage at Melting Point tonight, is aware of the current trend but remains unflinching in its devotion to the Americana style.

"The presence of roots music is more limited than it once was," said Dylan Solise, guitarist and singer for the band. "There's not a whole lot of people that play the same music as we do."

Drummer John Cable, a junior from Thomasville majoring in history, said, "We all listen to everything, but our common ground is in Americana - which means we bring a lot of different styles to the table, but it all meets back right there."

As one might expect, The Corduroy Road's foundation in roots can be traced to Kentucky, where Solise and banjoist/singer Drew Carman first joined forces as a duo.

"It started out just the two of us, banjo and guitar," Solise said. "But we'd been looking for some rhythm accompaniment, and we'd had some bass players and drummers audition, but nothing really worked out."

Solise and Carman met Cable via his former band The Cubs. Cable in turn introduced the duo to bassist Tim Helms. "Before, when it was just [Carman] and myself, we had to carry the whole thing ourselves, and it felt at times a little hollow," Solise said. "But now we've got [Cable] and [Helms] behind us for extra creative input." Helms and Cable have been playing together for seven years.

"The way we operate as a band allows [Cable] and me to take our own interpretation of what [Carman] and [Solise] have already laid out and put fresh ears behind it," Helms said.

According to Cable, he and Helms bring touches of jazz, blues and rock to The Corduroy Road's alternative country sound.

"They provide the skeleton of the song, and we try to add whatever meat we can to that and give it a full-band feel," he said.

The four musicians' individual talents have culminated in a six-track self-titled EP, which will be available for free at tonight's show.

"It's pretty balanced - [Carman] and I generally write the same amount of songs," Solise said. "But [Carman] really focuses on capturing a certain energy in his songs, whereas I'm more concerned with the melodies and the lyrical structure."

The Corduroy Road is already planning a full-length release for January, which will be helmed by legendary producer John Keane (of R.E.M. and Indigo Girls fame) and released via Mule Train Records.

"Once we figured out Mule Train was interested, we decided to make what we recorded into an EP and do a full-length LP once we're under contract with them," Cable said. "We aimed to replicate our live sound on the CD because that tends to be the more exciting route - the live show is what people tend to fall in love with."