

SUMMERFEST

# Jaill breaks onto Big Gig

Local band  
signs with  
mega-indie  
label Sub Pop

By **BOB PURVIS**

Special to the Journal Sentinel

For years, Milwaukee psych-pop outfit Jaill seemed destined to a life sentence of half-filled barrooms, self-released records, lineup flux and do-it-yourself everything.

"Jaill spent six years pretty much headed in the wrong direction, either sideways or barely hanging on," said singer and guitarist Vinnie Kircher, who started the band with longtime friend and drummer Austin Dutmer in 2002.

But eight years and several bass players later, the band has signed with mega-indie label Sub Pop, which will release Jaill's major-label debut album, "That's How We Burn," on July 27. The band performs at 3 p.m. Thursday at Summerfest's TheCoolTV Rock Stage, and is touring this summer with buzzed-about Brooklyn rockers the Hold Steady, who headline the U.S. Cellular Connection Stage at 10 p.m. Thursday.

The release caps a productive couple of years for a band whose smart, catchy tunes were sometimes overshadowed by the musicians' seemingly unrivaled ability to not give a darn.

"I guess that's why it feels to me like a lot of people even in our own town had never even really heard of us, because for so long we didn't really care," Dutmer said. "We kind of just did things at our own pace and just for their own merit."

Despite putting out a handful of its own records, the band struggled to get the same amount of attention as other, more self-promoting local acts.

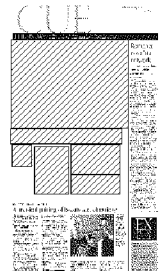
"It was always the kind of thing where you just didn't know, because if nobody is coming to your shows or whatever, obviously you're doing something wrong," Kircher said. "You can't be mad at anybody but yourself. But it just doesn't make sense some-

## IF YOU GO

**Who:** Jaill

**When:** 3 p.m.  
Thursday

**Where:** The-CoolTV Rock Stage



times.”

### Record making

Yet with a stellar new batch of songs that would become its 2009 record, “There’s No Sky (Oh My My),” and a suddenly stable lineup featuring Andy Harris on bass and Ryan Adams on guitar, the band decided to

Please see **JAILL, 4E**

## Psych-pop rockers make deal

ratchet up its efforts.

“There was more of a focus than there has ever been,” Dutmer said. “This time we actually cared about people listening to it.”

After mailing the record to labels around the country and touring for the first time with an album to promote, **Jaill** saw the tide start to turn when taste-making indie label Burger Records asked to release the album.

The good times kept rolling when the band was approached by Sub Pop’s

head of A&R, Tony Kiewel, after a Seattle tour-stop in October. By Thanksgiving, they’d signed a two-record deal with the label that has claimed acts from Nirvana to the Shins.

“They’re a great band, great guys, and they’ve made a killer album. I’m psyched for the rest of the world to find out,” said Kiewel, who stumbled onto the band via a music blog and bought a record through their MySpace page.

### Flew to Seattle

Sub Pop flew Jaill out to Seattle earlier this year to play at the label’s 22nd birthday bash.

“It was awesome,” Dut-

mer said. “They flew us out to Seattle and treated us like rock stars for the first time in our lives. Put us up in a hotel and bought us lunch. “It doesn’t necessarily feel better knowing that every other decision is being made by someone else. But they’re going to do it way bigger and better than us, so I can’t complain. No more trips to Kinko’s.”

A taste of the new record hints that the band’s change of fortune hasn’t brought on any drastic changes in its sound. “Everyone’s Hip,” the first single, is laden with head-bobbing riffs, Dutmer’s hyper-drive drumming and Kircher’s wry — and at one point Spanglish — lyrics.

“It sounds very much like a Jaill record, and we’re happy about that,” Dutmer said. “We didn’t try to make this epic, flowing, 900-hours-in-the-studio kind of opera.”

Kircher said all the positive changes are still sinking in.

“I guess I’m kind of realizing it was a one-in-a-million chance that it worked out like we hoped it would. I guess that’s super-duper rad.”



MICHAEL GOELZER PHOTO

Jaill members Austin Dutmer (from left), Ryan Adams, Vinnie Kircher and Andrew Harris have signed their psych-pop sound to a major record label. Sub Pop flew Jaill out to Seattle earlier this year to play at the label's 22nd birthday bash. "It was awesome," Dutmer said.