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The beginning of indie folk-pop buzz band The Head and the Heart can be traced back to an open-mic night two years ago in Seattle. None of the members were acquainted before that night, but their admiration for each other's displayed talents led them to perform together in living rooms and tiny bars.

Since then, their playful melodies and the clap-and-stomp-along energy of their live shows have led many from Seattle to dub the band its next big thing.

"It's great that Seattle is proud of us and wants to see us go out

into the world and succeed," says Josiah Johnson, singer and guitarist. "The weirdest part is knowing how other great local music isn't getting as much attention outside of Seattle. But it's an honor."

The band features Johnson and Jonathan Russell on vocals, guitar and percussion; Charity Rose Thielen on vocals, violin and percussion; Chris Zsche on bass; Kenny Hensley on piano and Tyler Williams on drums.

Listening to their self-titled debut album (Sub Pop) for the first time, it's easy to find yourself singing along before you even know all the words.

While its folk harmonies and collective "woo-hoos" encourage listeners to join in, common themes of family, leaving home and creating a new life allow people to make the songs their own.

Themes of forgiveness, hope and redemption are also woven in. All but two of the band members grew up in

church, Johnson says, but the songs don't necessarily reflect that upbringing.

"Charity and I went up until into our 20s, but it's not at the forefront of our minds at this point," he says. "Whether or not you believe in God, those are

things that are important at a deep level to pretty much everyone, and we definitely talk about those things. I hope we do them justice."

With their open-mic days still freshly in mind, each member is committed to seeing how far they can take the band—but first they need to figure out how to write songs together.

"Everything has happened so fast, and we're still honing our songwriting as a six-piece democratic band," Johnson says. "Long term, we'd all just like to keep making music for as long as we're afforded the opportunity and we'd like to grow and change doing it."

—KEVIN SELDERS



WEBSITE:
theheadandtheheart.com

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