

LIBRARY SCIENCE

Library Science makes live electro post-dub psychedelic disco slo-dance music with flashing lights and customized video.

The group consists of three members: Mildred Pitt (bass guitar, samples, drum machines), Peter Lynch (guitar, trumpet, synth, glockenspiel), and Courtney Barnebey (synths, melodica, samplers).

Library Science has two albums out through Happi Tyme Records, High Life Honey (2004) and The Chancellor (2007).

Live, the band's genre-bending multi-tasking performances chew through manifold influences, all the while plastering the screen behind them with a vivid rainbow of phrenetic homemade animations. With three-and-a-half miles of cabling, 2413 LED indicators and one \$25 smoke machine, this band knows how turn a complicated wiring diagram into a compelling live experience.

In the last year, Library Science has played over 25 shows, sharing the stage with Girl Talk and Dub Trio and playing the Pop Montreal Music Festival.

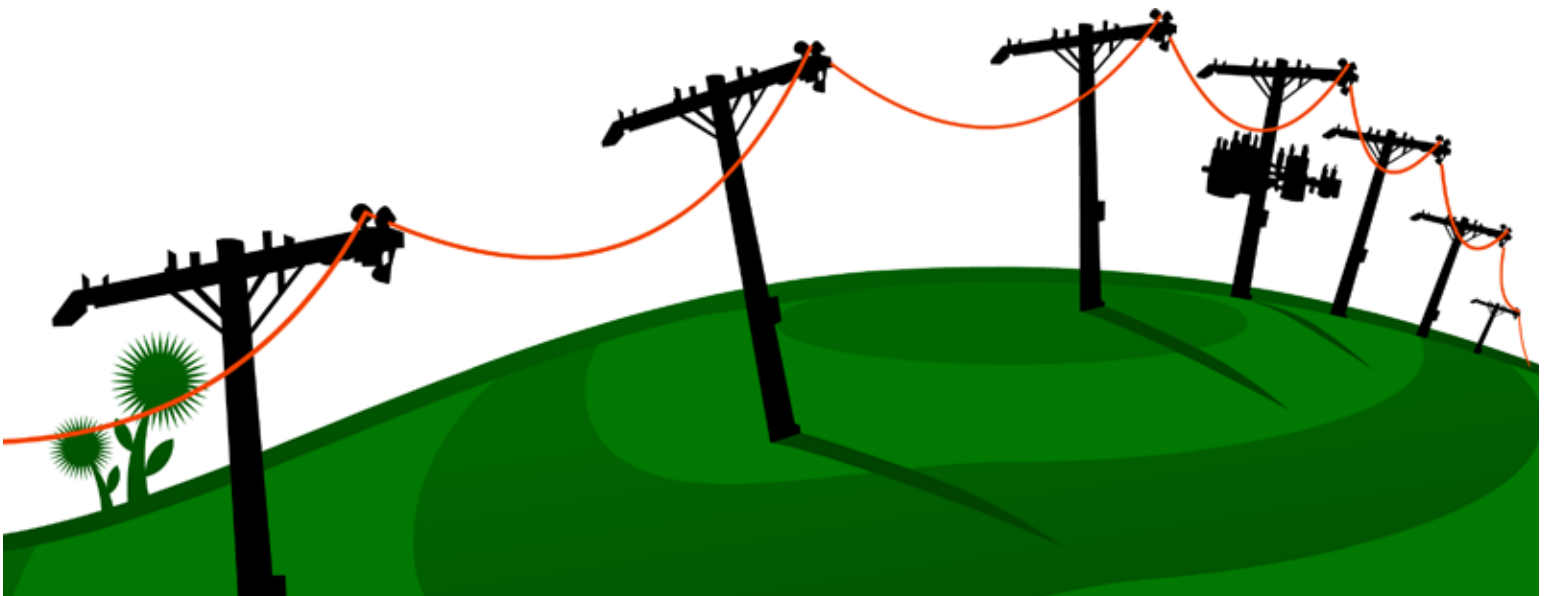
Mildred Pitt is also a member of The Bran Flakes, a popular sampling/collage band who have released five CDs, remixed songs for Topsy and Jean-Jaques Perrey and have appeared on over 17 compilations. They have played live shows around the U.S. and performed at the I.D.E.A.L. festival in Nantes, France.

Library Science website (and myspace page):
<http://www.libsci.com>
<http://www.myspace.com/libraryscience>

Video used in live shows:
<http://www.youtube.com/libraryscience>

The Bran Flakes website (and myspace page):
<http://www.thebranflakes.com>
<http://www.myspace.com/thebranflakes>

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VISUAL DUB

August 29th, 2007
by JOEL HARTSE

POST ROCK AND DUB : Library Science drops some synaesthetic beats

Usually when people say music sounds "cartoony," they mean it's big, dumb, and sloppy, full of kiddie melodies and sappy lyrics. Seattle's Library Science, which plays an experimental, electronic offshoot of dub reggae, is not that kind of cartoony. There's something about their music, though (and entire aesthetic, down to the wacky album art) that is utterly visual.

It doesn't hurt that both the band's leader, Andy Arkley, and his bandmate Courtney Barneby (joined by Tony Sacco and Peter Lynch on every instrument imaginable) are visual artists by day. "We bring our own video projector and a screen" to live shows, Arkley explains. The band tours with an artist who "triggers and builds these videos live while we play, like a video sampler."

Arkley, who goes by the inexplicable pseudonym Sir Mildred Pitt, spoke about the band's visual inspiration from his home in Seattle. "A lot of times when we're creating songs, we come up with a visual idea of where we want the song to go," he says. "'At this part it's like you're falling, and birds would be flying and an airplane would fly by.' Some sort of visual imagery would come along as we're creating the song. That's how a lot of our songs are."

This explains how the band comes up with titles to the compositions on their latest album, *The Chancellor*, which they just released on their own Happi Tyme Records (also home to another of Arkley's projects, the Bran Flakes). *The Chancellor* is full of songs that are as offbeat and playful as their titles, from the slinky "Porn in the Woods (A Bygone Era)" to the somber "The Saddest Video Game in the World." But it doesn't explain how they became a group of nerdy non-Jamaican dudes playing reggae.

"The original idea was we were inspired by dub music," Arkley says. He was looking for another outlet besides the sound-collage experimentalism of the Bran Flakes and his pop-oriented project Twizzle. The Library Science was driven by music like "King Tubby or Scientist or Lee 'Scratch' Perry," he says. "We went down that direction a little bit, but we didn't want to be a straight-on reggae band or roots reggae band. We're changing into something a little bit more eclectic. We're not about the red, yellow and green and the marijuana and Jah."

In fact, the Library Science probably has as much in common with electronic post-rock bands like as they do with reggae. Their first album, *High Life Honey*, was firmly rooted in dub and heavy on melodica (that keyboard thing you blow into, sounds like an accordion), but with the experimental spirit they've expanded on *The Chancellor*. Think of M83 with a rock-steady beat.

"Doing what we want to do — when I try to define it, sometimes it gets a little complicated for me," Arkley says. "Some of the new music we've been doing is a little dancey and disco-ey, like the Clash's *Sandinista* — a little more ska'd up than a straight-on pop song or something." Of course, since its members play bass, keyboards, melodica, guitar and trumpet (often trading instruments, often playing more than one at the same time), the Library Science's eclectic instrumentation itself kind of precludes the possibility of a "straight-on pop song."

"Live, there's me playing bass and a keyboard bass," says Arkley. "And then we have Peter, who plays guitar and trumpet and xylophone and keyboard, switching instruments on almost every song — and Courtney playing melodica, Casio, synthesizer and a sampler, and he's switching between those instruments the whole time. A lot of the stuff we recorded has, like, 10 parts in it — we have to figure out which one of the parts we're gonna play."

The Library Science doesn't have a drummer — beats are provided by a machine — which simplifies things a little, considering the amount of gear they have to lug everywhere. "It's kind of a strange setup, but we have two big tables with all the instruments on them, switching the whole time." Arkley adds. "I'm the most traditional, just playing a bass all the way through. The bass lines have to be real steady."

Their Spokane stop is the first on their cross-country tour to New York. It's the band's first major cross-country tour, although they did do the West Coast a couple of years ago. "We just hope our band makes it across the U.S.," Arkley says. If they can make it through the cartoony landscapes of their own music night after night, they should be OK.



[NERD DUB] Imagine the Borg intercepted some Sandinista!-era Clash outtakes and started an inspired band of its own (you know how the Borg rolls: assimilate this, assimilate that). It might sound like Seattle's Library Science, an outfit that plays the only music I've ever heard that warrants simultaneous knife hits and ecstasy ingestion! I don't usually listen to what a band says about itself, but LS is right: They might melt you.

Library Science, Jed Arkley, Cates & DPL
Mississippi Pizza | 3552 N Mississippi Ave.,

I wish there was more of a reggae scene here in Seattle (big ups to Stephen and Zion's Gate Records), but at least we have a kickass dub band pumping out low, slow, extra-spacial vibes. They're called Library Science and they're our Band of the Week.

I fiend for this kind of music, the kind that evokes massive distances and alien landscapes but always thrums along on a sensual, almost subliminal beat. For all its reverb-heavy darkness, there's something innately playful about the stuff, especially so with Library Science. They've got all the requisite dub flourishes--bubbly bass lines, barely-there chinka-chinka guitar, ethereal melodica, kinky electronic dalliance. But Library Science puts their own spin on the classic form in ways that aren't easy to describe. It's obvious they've got a reverence for the innovators, but there's a dissonant, electro feel. They throw in unexpected, weird sounds and samples--toy xylophone melodies, wheezing accordion drones, heavily buzzing guitars--that make this stuff totally unique.

They've got a couple gigs coming up--August 11 at Central Saloon, August 30 at Rendezvous--and word is they're terrific live.

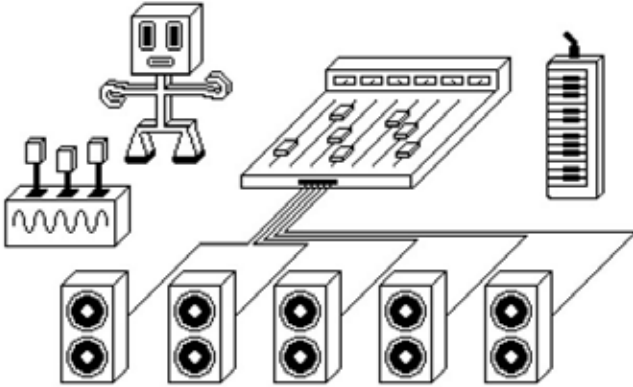
- Jonathan Zwickel, Music Editor

LIBRARY SCIENCE

The Sounds of Science

Roaming the stacks with Seattle's Library Science.

by Michaelangelo Matos



It is natural human instinct to hush your voice in the middle of a conversation when a cop walks by. Even if you haven't done anything wrong, it's easy enough to fall into a kind of half-sci-fi, half-conspiracy-theory sense that maybe you have, but just aren't aware of it yet—especially if the cop is looking right at you. So when a cop passes Andy Arkley and Peter Lynch during a conversation with me, they lower their voices, which aren't especially loud to begin with. They can't be, since Arkley, Lynch, and I are at the downtown library, chatting amiably amongst the stacks.

Arkley and Lynch are used to putting sudden hushes on the noise they make. They play in a dub band called Library Science, which is the reason they're downtown the afternoon after the Fourth of July—to do an interview in the new library's science section. (Rim shot.) As it turns out, though, they're more accustomed to applying the dropouts to their music, both in Arkley's home studio and onstage. As Arkley explains after we've abandoned the company of hardbound, Dewey-decimal astronomy guides and physics lectures for some chairs near a window, "Live, most dub bands just play, and someone at the mixing board dubs them out—adds echo or drops the instruments in and out of the mix or whatever. We do it a little more D.I.Y.—we have our mixers onstage with us and dub ourselves out while we're playing. It's kind of difficult to do both at once."

Arkley is accustomed to multitasking. "The last surviving member" of his employer's tech force, he's also made a name among sampling geeks with his main musical outlet, the Bran Flakes. Both projects are highly playful, from conception on down. Lynch and Arkley even adopt pseudonyms for Library Science—Arkley's is Mildred Pitt, Lynch's is th'g'rd'n'r. (Live, the band is rounded out by drummer Tony Sacco and synth/melodica player Courtney Barnebey.) But the two bands are resolutely different. Bran Flakes albums like 2001's *I Don't Have a Friend* and 2002's *Bounces!* are frequently kitschy sound collages, drawn from cut-out records, that have as much in common with *They Might Be Giants* as with DJ Shadow or the Avalanches. Library Science's recently issued *High Life Honey* (released, as the Bran Flakes CDs are, on Arkley's label, Happi Tyme) is less overtly goofy, but there are frequent whimsical touches. Though Arkley places Lee "Scratch" Perry a notch below Scientist, King Tubby, and Mad Professor in his personal pantheon of the great dub mixers, his frequent use of oddball sound effects (the last minute of *High Life Honey*'s "Dummy Pants" resembles a dubbed-out episode of *Ren & Stimpy*, minus the dialogue, while "High Life Honey" is festooned with up-and-down vrooms that recall traffic noise) and try-anything attitude have more in common with Perry's work than with the more straightforward Tubby and Scientist.

Which isn't to say that Arkley or Lynch (who also plays with the Melody Unit) considers Library Science a dub band in the roots sense, despite a name that echoes the in-the-laboratory names of the early dub masters. "There's a surprising amount of dub in the Pacific Northwest," Arkley says. "But we're not really a roots-reggae band—it's more like we're using dub technique, but with our own music." Still, the one-drop rhythms that underpin much of *High Life Honey*, most notably the title track and the constantly shape-shifting "What Time Is Science?," as well as the appearance in nearly every song of the melodica (the instrument of late, great dub musician and producer Augustus Pablo) fit the disc into the music's tradition fairly neatly. What's perhaps oddest, considering what a nonlinear form dub is by nature, is that *High Life Honey* is in many ways a more straightforward album than the Bran Flakes' albums, which flit from sound to sound in an appealingly ramshackle way. If Library Science consistently upends their own groove, they always comes back to it, too.

UP & COMING: this week's music picks

LIBRARY SCIENCE

(Rendezvous) A quartet of Cascadian Caucasians cranking out dub is not usually the kind of thing that sets our pulses pounding. But Library Science undercut presumptions against such a potentially wack scenario by delivering the dubadelic goods, as heard on the strongly resinated High Life Honey (Happi Tyme). The best dub disorients and makes you feel as if you're floating on a raft while a reggae band's slo-mo skanking, bass-bin-shattering emissions get tweaked by a geezer baked to his dreads on Jah's strongest ganja. Library Science are approaching that ideal.

DAVE SEGAL

PARTIES LISTINGS

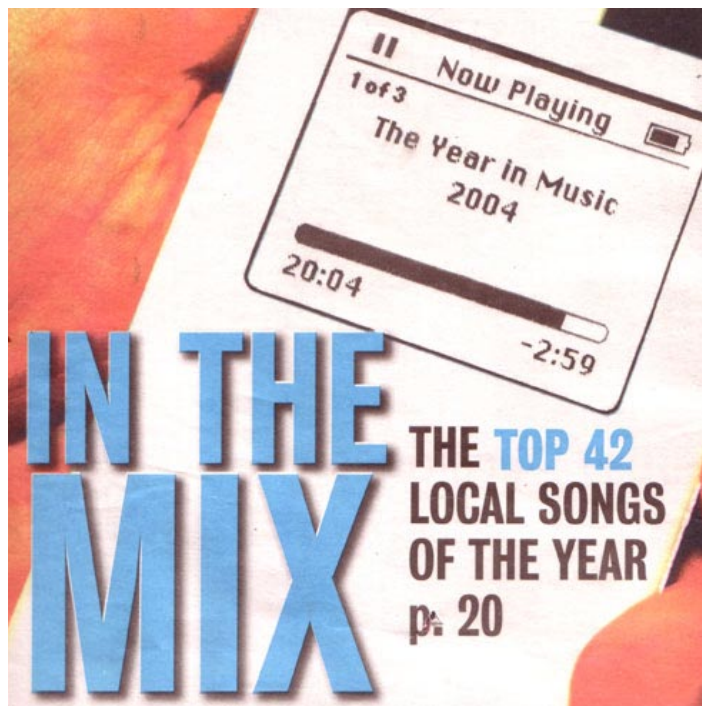
LIBRARY SCIENCE

You can tell Library Science love and respect dub, but realize they'll never please genre purists, so they feel no pressure to try. Their debut disc, High Life Honey (Happi Tyme), reveals a band enthralled with dub's use of reverb, melodica, and blunted rhythms. You can tell this music's American-made (probably under the use of ganja), exuding a playful, experimental aura that's perfectly in line with dub's original spirit. I bet Lee Perry would smoke down with these dudes. The Hideaway, 2219 Fourth Ave, 441-0464, 9 pm-2 am, 21+, \$6.

SEATTLE WEEKLY

December 29 - January 4, 2005

Top 42 of 2004 #2 on disc two



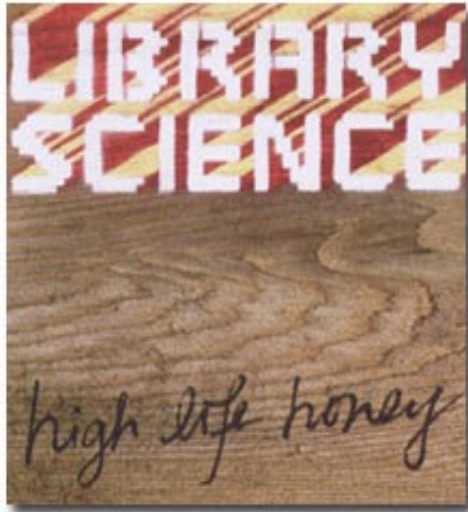
THE TOP 42 LOCAL SONGS OF THE YEAR p. 20

2. Library Science, "What Time Is Science?" (High Life Honey, Happi Tyme) 4:10. "We're not really a roots-reggae band—it's more like we're using dub technique, but with our own music," Library Science's Andy Arkley told SW this summer, but this song digs a pretty skanking groove. True, you wouldn't mistake the sleepy vocals that seep in halfway through for anything but white dudes from the U.S., and the rhythm is more tentative than most JA-brand dub. But "What Time" is ace wooze nonetheless—no surprise, really, if you've ever tried the weed in this town. MICHAELANGELO MATOS

88 90 92 94 96 98 100 102 104 106 108

LEFT OFF THE DIAL

Music For You, Not Them...



Library Science: High Life Honey

The long-awaited Danny Elfman dub-reggae record has finally surfaced after years on the shelf. Actually, that is not true. Elfman never made a dub record but the Library Science debut High Life Honey is just as creepy as most albums Elfman releases. For this reason, I conducted a psychological experiment to report on the effects of records made by Seattle dub aficionados (who thankfully do not have Anglo-dreads) in relation to the records released by their Caribbean counterparts. High Life Honey starts in a standard manner with “Angry Li'l Stumpy” which is the right tempo for my participants to begin crushing their herb to begin the process of rolling their spliffs. The drums and bass are timed precisely while the horns and xylophone chime in at just the right moment, which is what gives the record that Edward Scissorhands vibe. It took about

five minutes to get the roll-ups done properly and dried while the aptly titled “Fun” quietly lingered in the background. The spliffs were about to be lit at the beginning of “Dummy Pants,” but my participants reckoned that the tune is a little too “COPS: KINGSTON,” so we had to move right along to “What Time is Science.” This song is airy enough to allow the room to get cloudy so we could get to work. From this point on, every song speaks to the next, and believe me, this is not the ganja talking. During my clinical study, I refrained from the collie weed, because I had to make sure that my participants did not reach for the King Tubby record featured in the control group. My findings were that while the entire control group finished the test by passing out, while the experimental group got properly irie. The only side effect was that as a whole, the experimental group experienced feelings of government paranoia with some fears of paper bag monsters that were chasing them. This fear seemed to stem during the tracks “Science is Bad” and “Work,” which are – in terms of dub effects – nutrient rich. The experimental group also expressed feelings of pain that are associated with Chinese water torture. This resulted from the water drip sounds sprinkled throughout the record. The fear was so real to them, because the sounds were actually recorded as the water dripped from a leaky faucet in the studio where High Life Honey was recorded. Nevertheless, the experimental group continually laughed and tried to dread their hair throughout the duration of High Life Honey. The laughing was welcomed, but the attempts at dread-making gave me no choice but to administer electric shocks to their wrists.

As for a conclusion concerning Library Science as a band, I have found that this outfit respects its classic dub influences but the traditional notion of making dub music does not consume them. The music found on High Life Honey is part of the genre that Library Science calls “art geek dub,” meaning everything is played live but is then processed through a myriad of music geek equipment. This type of gear includes but is not limited to tape echoes, spring reverbs, and analog phasers. In short, you will not find this record sold in the New Age music sections of Whole Foods, Wild Oats or Fresh Fields. The Library Science process is in direct opposition to the orthodox method of simply re-recording a reggae track as an instrumental later to be released as a b-side accompaniment to a standard reggae song with vocals. Regardless of all the minute details, the final product is worth giving a try. I would tell you to ask members of the experimental group, but they all left happily with copies of High Life Honey in their hands. We can only hope that they got rides in cabs or walked home.



Library Science

"High Life Honey" CD

Happi Tyme Records

Genres: dub,
instrumental, electronic

Happi Tyme
Box 21104
Seattle, WA 98111

Sep 13 - 19 2004

"Please sample our music and transform our work, even for commercial purposes. Distributing verbatim copies is accepted, unless for profit. Do not use for advertising."

Library Science is exactly the type of band I love. This record has been put together for The Bran Flakes' Happi Tyme label (named after an old children's record label, I think - I saw an old copy of "Peter and the Wolf" in a thrift store at one point.) But it isn't the type of found sound adventure you might expect - instead, it's space-dub. That's right, this is melodic, live-and-electronic dub music - sometimes funky, sometimes introspective - that never ceases to amaze and entertain me. I'm not the biggest fan of their genre, but their spirit and songwriting don't fail to impress.

High Life Honey is a fine disc, and it highlights Library Science's skill at blending freeform, performed dub with electronic samples and squiggly electronics. The songs flow well together, and produce a very melodic, moody feel - from start to finish, this album is spacey and mysterious. "Angry Li'l Stumpy" and "Work" are whimsical instrumentals that can easily get stuck in your head. Other tunes are a bit more groovy ("What Time Is Science?," "Mi'kyn's Revival Suit"). Fortunately, all of these songs are very compatible, and together they create a very playful, infectious album.

86%

Matt Shimmer

[Vitals: 12 tracks + 1 hidden, distributed by Illegal Art, released 2004]

<http://www.indieville.com/reviews/libraryscience.htm>



For a completely different dub sound, check out Library Science's High Life Honey. Created by Mildred Pitt of The Bran Flakes and members of The Melody Unit, High Life Honey is rife with bizarre sonic wrinkles. The production is not as slick as Sofa Surfers and there's no hint of hip hop. It sticks closer to the classic dub template, but takes a sometimes humorous lo-fi approach, adding in instruments like harmonica, flanged fuzzy guitar lines and analog synth sounds. Like a different hallucinogen, the listening experience is giddy and eccentric, and the morning after is a woozy one. Who needs drugs when you have Library Science!