

# DEMO TAPE O' THE WEEK

## SOMA HOLIDAY

An overnight camping trip to South Park? A weeklong tour of 11th Street nightspots? A fascinating immersion in urban gentrification? *Soma Holiday* describes none of the above. It's the band that takes its name from a drug in *Brave New World*, which I'm sure I would have read if my parents had unchained me for more than an hour a day while I was growing up.

As for Soma Holiday, they manage to play no-frills guitar-driven rock without sounding ham-fisted or, even worse, bland. The first cut, an instrumental simply titled "NBJ," throbs with power chords reminiscent of a revving monster truck, the same sound that loosens much unwanted phlegm when simulated in the

back of someone's throat. It's catchy, grinding stuff and serves well to highlight the lead guitar flashes that permeate the other two songs on the tape as well.

"A2F" and "Faded Trees" feature the often double-tracked vocals of Michelle McTamane. Her low-key voice fits into the mix rather than grabbing the aural spotlight, a scheme that gets some positive results, especially at the end of "Faded Trees." Following a short, head-trippy guitar solo, McTamane's extended high-pitched moans, together with the last bit of frenzied guitar work, whip the song into a frothy lather. A fine way to end a tape, I must say.

For more info, write Runlikehell Productions at 2269 Chestnut, Ste. 143, SF 94123 or call (415) 771-5290.

**ALEX LASH**