

Music

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This week's SHORT TAKES

The Thieves

ROCK

I love Oxford's **The Thieves**. *Love*. The trio brashly bashes sweaty pub-style rock 'n' roll that is refreshing despite its classic roots. Not only did the British keep rock music alive when most Americans forsook it for Hollywood, but they seem to still hold it in a higher regard than we do. The Thieves' guitarist Hal Stokes blames/thanks alcohol.

"We start drinking at a lot younger age than you do," he says via cell phone from the back of a van rolling through Bowling Green. "I don't mean in the sense of going out and getting hammered — which we do — we go out to bars younger so music gets into our lives a bit quicker."

When Stokes and his mates were 14, a sympathetic club owner would sneak 'em in the back, slip them some cider, and let them watch the band. "That was our Saturday night," he says. The Thieves have relocated to LA — "the worst city for fresh, new music," according to Stokes — where they have launched an all-out tour offensive zig-zagging the map for all the young rockers who now wanna sneak in to catch them.

The Thieves play Wednesday, August 24, at The Bug Jar, 219 Monroe Avenue, 454-2966, at 8 p.m. Tix: \$5. 18+

— Frank De Blase