

LIFE!

For hometown boys, music is child's play

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If you came out to the Farmers' Market in Invermere last summer, you may have sneaked a peak at Maria in the Shower. And before you begin to blush, you should know you weren't the only one.

Maria in the Shower is a four-piece band that bassist Brendon Hartley describes as "a bit of everything mashed into a bit of an unexplainable genre."

The band works the sounds of jazz and blues into upbeat folk rhythms to create what might be described as the sounds of a carnival run by Muppets, and who doesn't love Muppets?

The name of the band also has sort of a connection to those furry monsters, with a bit of an edge. Referring to Maria, the long-standing character on PBS's children's show Sesame Street, Hartley tried to explain the moniker.

"It seems to have come from a few different places," said Hartley who, along with Martin Reisle come from the local area. "It has a bit of everything we do, it has a bit of risqué, a bit of child's play with the Sesame Street reference and a bit of a religious aspect to it."

Hartley and Reisle knew each other since they were 16-years-old and the band formed when the two valley musicians went on to try their talents elsewhere and later called each other up to reunite.

"We try and do a tour every three months and we like to make it through Invermere to see family and friends," said Hartley.

Shows can be everything from low profile impromptu sessions like they did at the Farmers' Market to much larger productions that involve makeup and theatrics. Their myspace site has a video of a show where they are dressed in full mime costumes and



Maria in the Shower members Todd Biffard, Martin Reisle, Brendon Hartley and Jack Garton play the Farmers' Market in Invermere last summer.

Their music has been described as "folk cabaret" and they will be playing next week in Invermere. **DARRYL CRANE/ECHO PHOTO**

makeup playing the jazz standard "Steppin' Out" but they also play songs with a more upbeat tempo including their own "The Waiting Life" that bears some similarities to folk groups like Devotchka. Whatever

they play, there is no sparing the entertainment value. Maria in the Shower plays Bud's Bar and Lounge on March 18. Tickets will be available at the door on the evening of the show.

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