

PUNCHWkd!

SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE

No old tunes at showcase; it's original music only

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SOUTH BEND

Michiana club owners fear bands that play original music and audiences that shun them. Consequently, their bookings are rare and music fans usually have to travel out of town to hear homegrown music.

Ross Schott, a local promoter, intends to change that at least for a night—a third night in fact, with Michiana Showcase III. Saturday's show features seven area bands performing original music only.

Certainly the most dramatic of the seven bands will be 7th Floor, who will perform a theatrical rock opera titled "Soundtrack to Life."

Saxophonist and keyboardist Dave Henry, co-founder of 7th Floor, says the title sums up the rock opera's plot.

"The band started when Julie Ward (guitar and vocals)

and I met on the 7th Floor (psychiatric ward) of the LaPorte Hospital" says

played me a song she was working on called Train Song which was about wanting to kill yourself on the train tracks."

From there, Henry and Ward decided to collaborate on a rock opera about depression and recovery. As they worked, they added other members to the South Bend based band, which now includes Lauren Lane Powell on



Henry, who also plays with the Elwood Splinters Blues Band. "We didn't know each other before then but we had both considered suicide in the weeks before, and had both laid down on the train tracks." "There's a piano there (at the hospital), and one day she

vocals, Mark Neary on guitar, and Elise Mauro on violin and background vocals.

"Basically the theme of the piece is that no matter how depressed you get ... if you catch a dream and fight for it, you can take it to the top..." Henry says.