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## **Gogol Bordello brews a heady mix of styles**

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TROY - Gogol Bordello ramped up for another round of their encore, fiddle strings flying, the accordion pumping, guitars hollering along with the topless, wild-eyed lead singer, and two girls in tight white pants and pointed black hats banging away on percussion.

Near the stage, 100 people whirled like ecstatic dervishes.

The band calls their music Ukrainian Gypsy punk cabaret, and if that doesn't conjure up anything beyond a confusion of sound, that's OK, because the mass jumble comes out as one heck of a party on the receiving end.

The New York City-based band mixes traditional Eastern European and Gypsy music with punk riffs and bass lines into something beyond categorization but constantly danceable.

This band of veterans realize that club audiences don't want to just hear music, they want to be entertained, and that punk can be protest art in the best, rawest sense. During the first song, frontman Eugene Huntz took his twitching mustache into the audience, dancing through the crowd, occasionally wrapping an arm around a woman, putting the microphone to her lips and encouraging her to scream, loudly, on cue. During the encore, he dumped a worn fire bucket over the microphone and pounded away with drumsticks.

No instrument is safe with him. An acoustic guitar, often the sign of slowed tempos and emotional lyrics, with Gogol Bordello instead becomes another instrument of

mayhem, twirled and banged instead of strummed. There were acoustic guitar-fiddle battles, fiddle-accordion duets, bass solos and accordion solos.

The two women with the band danced and pranced onstage, banging drums and flinging T-shirts into the audience from slingshots made of thick rubber bands.

Before the show, the band milled in the audience, mostly undetected.

While Gogol Bordello's set, which ran until 1 a.m., felt over with too soon, opening band Blase DeBris's felt interminable. The three guitarists crunched their chords in loud, lovely sync, but the singer all too often sounded like he was wailing to a completely different song. Public Access took the stage for a few songs before them.