

## VUEWEEKLY

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### **ROOT DOWN**

By JENNY FENIAK

... Sat, July 24 “Folk-hop” act Canary Mine began as a solo project for James Lanbro of the Wack MCs. But it didn’t stay that way for long. Lanbro soon invited his old friend (and the other half of the Wack MCs) Carl Welch to add some drums and vocal harmonies. It wasn’t long before Lanbro’s roommate Mim Adams became a permanent part of the act—and then the only logical move left was adding bass player Joe Arnup.

“We all met in Hamilton going to different music schools,” explains Lanbro. “I went to jazz school with Mim and Carl and I dropped out and then I went to sound school for a bit with Joe and we graduated and that’s how it all started.”

Now living in Toronto, the foursome began work last fall on their debut album, Bitter, Better, Happy, Horny, which arrived in stores in mid-May. The disc traffics in humorous rap-based tunes which layer harmonies atop an almost scat-like base. Tracks include “Rock Song,” which combines memorably expletive-laden lyrics with a simple 50s rock rhythm, and the almost operatic “Tech-E” which begins with the lyric “Meet the computer, he talks to me” delivered in an over-the-top falsetto.

“We do have serious songs,” explains Lanbro, who deeply respects rapper Notorious B.I.G., but admits his voice is closer to Hank Williams.

“But we definitely like having fun and making people smile and laugh. Both Carl and I have played on the Second City stage in Toronto and we’re interested in improv comedy on the side, so that definitely comes through in our live show and in our music.”