# Local Artist Finds Successs After 'Street to Nowhere'

By Michael Chung

or many people, change is difficult to accept. But for 20year-old Dave Smallen, change has become a way of life.

Five years ago, the Oaklandbased rock band, Street to Nowhere, was made up of Smallen, Spenser Russell-Snyder and Stefan Litrownik, then students at Bishop O'Dowd High School in Oakland.

Following graduation in 2002, the members parted ways to attend college, and Street to Nowhere became a one-member band as Smallen retained ownership of the band's name when he moved to Santa Cruz.

"(In high school), we played a bunch of local shows, recorded an extended play album that satisfied our tastes and ambitions for the moment, and went off to college," Smallen said. "Once at (Santa Cruz), I began to get serious about song writing and my tastes in music started to grow broader."

Smallen returned to the Bay Area in 2003 and recorded a threesong demo with Litrownik and Matt Radosevich, who also graduated from Bishop O'Dowd in 2002.

'Romeo and Juliet' Opens Friday at CSUEB

### By CSUEB News Service

A lively "Romeo and Juliet" will open Cal State East Bay's Highlands Summer Theatre 2005 season in the Studio Theatre on the Hayward campus of the university, located at 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd. Performances are scheduled for Friday and Saturday and July 29 and 30, all at 8 p.m. There will also be a 2 p.m. showing on July 31.

returned to college pretty bummed out that I didn't have a band to play the new material I was so excited about," Smallen said. "A friend in another band persuaded me to start performing solo and acoustic at his band's shows and I was pretty shocked to find that people actually liked what I was doing. So, I saved up and got a nice acoustic guitar and started playing around again."

Smallen's music career took off when he returned to the Bay Area in 2004 and won a "battle of the bands" competition sponsored by Live 105.3 FM. That same year, his song, "Dead Cliché," began to receive airtime on local stations, eventually giving him an opportu-

nity to perform live on air. "I then worked the summer (of 2004) as a guitar technician for The Matches on the Warped Tour, and played at small stages here and there when I could," Smallen

After the tour concluded, Smallen transferred from Santa Cruz to UCLA for a quarter before deciding to take time off to purse a full-time career in music.

"Currently, I am playing shows around the Bay Area, using musi-

Tickets for "Romeo and Juliet" are priced at \$9 for general admission; \$8 for seniors, youth, faculty and staff; \$6 for CSUEB students, and \$25 for a family of two adults and two children. Tickets can be

purchased at the university box office from noon to 4 p.m. weekdays and again starting one hour before curtain. More information is available by contacting the university box office at 885-3261.

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"(After recording the demo), I cians from various Bay Area bands to back me up, playing solo and acoustic, taking small tours and working on a full-length album with Matt Radosevich," Smallen said.

Smallen said he expects to complete his debut full-length album by the fall.

"The only other recording I really count (as an album) are the three song demos from the summer of 2003, which are on my Web site." Smallen said. "So. essentially. the album I'm working on is my

Smallen said he is inspired by a new musician every month.

"I spend a few weeks trying to figure out exactly what makes him or her so damn inspiring until someone else comes along and makes that artist look like a hack," Smallen said. "I get inspired in lots of different ways, but most of my inspirations don't make it into complete song form. I usually take situations from my own life and the lives of those around me and attempt to strain out bits of truth, humor or emotion to sing about."

Smallen lists Nirvana, Weezer, The Smashing Pumpkins, The Beatles, Bob Dylan, Rancid and Radiohead as some of his favorite artists

"(Those musicians are) the ones I always return to when it seems that music has completely lost its heart," Smallen said. "They are pretty much the only musicians that when I meet, I just can't keep

Smallen's goal is to continue to write songs, tour and record music for an established record company.

"I'm working towards (my goals) every day, but I have met so

many people that tasted success only to be stripped of it in a flash," Smallen said. "I try to get my hopes up, not my expectations, and I try to focus on the little goals that make up the bigger ones.

Street to Nowhere will perform with bands Circa Survive and Emanuel on July 31 at The Bottom of the Hill. located at 1233 17th St. in San Francisco. Doors will open at 5 p.m. and the concert will begin at 6 p.m. Admission is \$5.

For more information on Street to Nowhere, visit www.streettonowhere.com.

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\*This lecture will be repeated on August 17, Wednesday, 2:00-3:30 p.m., at the Concord Campus, Library Building, Oak Room, 4700 Ygnacio Valley Road in Concord.

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