



Holiday head digs melancholy in his own space

MATT GILES

There are a number of facts about Californian laptop pop act Her Space Holiday that should surprise Australian audiences.

The first is that the band is just one guy who occasionally enlists backing players to prop up his drum machine, computer and guitar. The second is that the guy, Mark Bianchi, started his musical career in a couple of prototypical emo bands, Indian Summer and Mohinder, who are antipodean to his more recent tender bedroom pop. "That's still the most impactful time I've had in music. It was the first time I went touring or recorded," Bianchi says. "But I have no real connection to that music anymore, ever since I got into melody by listening to my sister's records."

The third is that, despite being almost completely unknown in Australia, Bianchi has recorded and

performed as Her Space Holiday for about 13 years. Initially, it was a part-time project in addition to his full-time work running his own label, Audio Information Phenomena, but in 2000 he signed to Tiger Style, a New York label that also represents James Chance and the Album Leaf, and turned full-time.

"When I was playing in those hardcore bands, I got burnt out by touring and rehearsal, then a friend gave me a sampler and I started making my own music and sending it out," he says. "It was a personal recording project that turned out well. It's strange, I had no expectations starting out and now I'm going to Australia."

Two years ago, he almost ended the new project. As he once was with hardcore, Bianchi became burnt out by electronic music. Encouraged by a friend to return to live

instrumentation, Bianchi produced his ninth album, last year's XOXO Panda and the New Kid Revival.

Due to its live sound, it was different enough from his past records for Bianchi to adopt a new artist name, that of the record itself, for its release in Japan. By the time it was released in the US, however, he had decided to stay faithful to his roots.

"I realised I'd always developed in different creative bursts, whether because of listening to music or reading books," he explains. "When anyone does anything, they reinvent themselves."

Her Space Holiday performs with Japanese backing band 4 Bonjour's Parties at the Beck's Music Box on Wednesday, supported by Japan's Tenniscoats. Tickets are \$35 plus booking fee from BOCS and perthfestival.com.au



Space man: Mark Bianchi does his own thing.