



MOTOYA NAKAMURA/THE OREGONIAN

Urban Scout

Creator of the Nuclear Winter Formal

Big-bang theorists

The end of the world is nigh! Wanna dance?

It is with this disposition that Mythmedia, a self-described group of "pre-emptive post-apocalyptic" who embrace and celebrate the end of civilization, last weekend launched the Nuclear Winter Formal, a fundraiser for the group.

The event was held in the stark, cold, unfinished space next door to Backspace (115 N.W. Fifth Ave.), in what was really just a long, rectangular, brick box with a stage at one end and free beer at the other.

Mythmedia's underground movement consists of people who believe that civilization will collapse in the next 100 years, and features everyone from artists to inventors and scientists.

A press release for the event read, "This year's lineup is killer, just like the genocides, famines and ecological destruction inherent in civilization!"

There you go.

Painted head-to-toe in yellow and orange to symbolize nuclear fallout, Peter Bauer, the executive director of Mythmedia who goes by the moniker Urban Scout, said, "Agricultural

civilization has a little under 100 years left."

Bauer, 23, wearing only a loincloth and a camouflage cap, with a fake pistol tucked into the back of his loincloth, refuses to let the doom and gloom of a nuclear winter dampen his spirits.

Other attendees included folks in all sorts of costumes, including several wearing gas masks, a dude in a bloody, ripped-up suit and post-apocalyptic lasses looking to go out with a ka-boom.

Performing at the formal were the Hunches, a punk rock band; Hillstomp, two guys playing melancholy rock, who were quite good; and The Alberta Street Clowns.

According to Bauer, the purpose of this formal is "to promote the idea of Mythmedia."

"We would like Mythmedia to be an art collective of people creating art that deals with the collapse of civilization," Bauer said. "At the same time, we want to show people that during the collapse many will die, like 6 billion people. I may not survive the collapse of civilization, but I want to support

new ideas and changes that people can do now to create a Noah's Ark that will last through that collapse. So, right now, we're starting with media and action."

The formal also featured a post-apocalyptic costume contest, with gas masks, "Mad Max" DVDs, survival kits and a computer as awards.

Cash raised from the fundraiser was earmarked to fund the creation of Mythmedia's Web site, its quarterly print publication and a scholarship fund for low-income people to attend programs — such as myth-making workshops for artists, and post-apocalyptic survival summer camps for homeless teens — which is sure to include how to test roadkill to see if it's fresh.

"Most predators and scavengers are not a very good meal," Bauer said. "Stay away from opossums."

Bauer, a man who practices what he preaches, admits that the last roadkill squirrel he ate was not good. Apparently, it needed to be marinated.

On the Web: www.mythmedia.org

— Joshua Sommer
Special to the Oregonian