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The Seedy Seeds (from left): Mike Ingram, Margaret Darling and Brian Penick. Their sound is "simple pop-folk with an electronic dance beat." / Provided

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Written by Rick Bird Enquirer contributor

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Entertainment Music

The Seedy Seeds continue their quirky good fun, Gary Burbank gets back to his roots and Peter Mayer figures it's time to remind us what he's done. Those are some of the recently released CDs from local musicians:

The Seedy Seeds, 'Verb Noun'

Here's how the Seedy Seeds have grown a sound: Take an accordion, guitar, occasional toy piano, banjo, plug in an iPod, then add some lovely infectious harmonies with slightly metaphysical lyrics. That's the formula for the band's unconventional electric-folk sound.

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To hear samples or purchase these CDs:

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In other words, it's a sound that's hard to describe, even when you hear it. In fact, band members Mike Ingram, Margaret

aging hippie having trouble with a generation that prefers "Red Bull to pot." But he faces old age with life's true love, his "candy flower," and all is well.

All proceeds from the CD benefit Play It Forward, the charity Burbank established four years ago to help Cincinnati area musicians faced with unexpected financial hardships.

Burbank will be performing and signing CDs at 4 p.m. Saturday at Joseph-Beth Booksellers in Norwood.

Peter Mayer, 'Collection'

Peter Mayer is little known outside local music circles. He hasn't had a working band in more than a decade, with appearances limited to pubs and open mic nights. Consider this CD - a retrospective of Mayer's career - an introduction to a musician who has quietly made inventive progressive pop music in town for 30 years.

Mayer calls the 14-cut CD his "greatest nonhits package." The collection includes the sonic "Made in America," which did become a small regional "hit" when it appeared on a WEBN Album Project in the early '80s and also got video treatment on Channel 19 (currently posted on YouTube). The techno-pop number holds up well. Originally a comment on impersonal repetitive factory work, it now plays as a poignant take on the plight of the American worker.

Mayer's band, Big Pictures had a solid run in the '90s as one of the leading art rock groups in these parts. Songs from the period on the CD include "Playing it Up," the infectious "It's Just the Energy" and "Enough is Enough," a haunting commentary on how TV news panders to tragedies.

There are three new tunes, including Mayer's bluesy opus "Long, Long Way to Go" and "Where My House Used to Stand," full of searing guitar, organ and otherworldly wailing. It is a song where Mayer mixes images of his idyllic suburban Chicago boyhood home with those of 9/11 devastation.

Mayer has created a signature sound over the years with a consistent formula that takes a hooky melodic chorus and spices it up with interesting instrumentation, often with industrial-strength guitar muscle. Call it "beat rock" or "progressive pop," but few in town have done it better over the years. Mayer's "Collection" is one of those retrospectives that hardly sounds dated playing as solid contemporary art rock.

Peter Mayer performs Tuesday at Allyn's Café, Columbia Tusculum.

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