

## NEW YEAR Newness Ends

For those already enamored with Bedhead's minimal guitar pop, the New Year's debut album should come as a welcome surprise. The band consists of the primary members of Bedhead—guitar-playing brothers Matt and Bubba Kadane—with drummer Chris Brokaw (Come, Codeine), bassist Mike Donofrio (Saturnine) and guitarist Peter Schmidt. *Newness Ends* follows the trail of melodic breadcrumbs left behind by Bedhead's breakup, with a new element of bitterness scattered throughout. While you couldn't call the music angry, there does seem to be a tone of frustration lurking beneath the surface, pushing the innocuous melodies into high gear. Brokaw's clear-cut drumming propels the music in military fashion, and the Kadane brothers' guitars intertwine impeccably, perpetually building toward a loud conclusion even if the songs sometimes wind down peacefully. "Reconstruction" impressively announces the band's intentions early on, with a mood that falls somewhere between beautiful and menacing, evoking the obsessive tone of a gothic romance. Matt's vocals are mumbled and hushed most of the time, as per his previous band's records, but every once in a while, a lyric like "I like the way you smell of gasoline" will pop up, jolting you a bit more than any Bedhead album ever did. [Touch And Go, POB 25520, Chicago IL 60625]

—Joshua Leeman

MAGNET

THE NEW YEAR  
NEWNESS ENDS

## The New Year Newness Ends

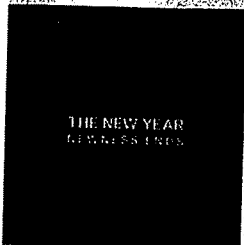
TOUCH AND GO

**Bedhead brothers in wide awake shocker.**

Texan brothers Matt and Bubba Kadane peaceably split their band Bedhead in 1998, leaving behind a handful of beautiful and quietly lauded releases. Happily, the brothers found a new name and went back into the studio last year with Steve Albini. Augmented by former Codeine drummer (and Come guitarist) Chris Brokaw, bassist Mike Donofrio and Bedhead regular, Peter Schmidt, as New Year they add vigour to Bedhead's somnambulant strumming. Catchy and darkly quirky, the songs stumble along like Lou Reed covering Pavement: "I'm lying in the foetal position/I know I never should have been a musician," laments Gasoline. More Velvets-like charm on the sing-song lament Great Expectations, where chiming guitars smother jazzy brushed cymbals. Very similar in feel to the last Yo La Tengo album, *Newness Ends* takes the muted slo-core of Bedhead to the next level, with a subtlety that's irresistible.  
Jenny Bulley

MOJO

## QUESTION & ANSWER



### THE NEW YEAR

**Newness Ends** (TOUCH AND GO) Brothers Matt and Bubba Kadane piloted Bedhead through three albums and a couple of EPs in the mid-'90s, splitting just as the band's sparse, intimate music started to connect with a maturing indie-rock audience. After three years of near-silence—a collaboration with childhood friends Joshua McKay and Kai Riedl resulted in last year's acclaimed *Macha Loved Bedhead*

mini-LP—the Kadanes are back with the New Year. And a new sound. Well, not exactly: The brothers' tonal, textural guitar explorations are intact, though set to a decidedly faster tempo and rounded out with Matt Kadane's forceful vocals. Songs like "Gasoline," "Half a Day" and "Newness Ends" speed along on an intense rhythmic highway laid out by drummer Chris Brokaw (of Come), occasionally reaching a level of noisiness uncharacteristic of the Texas-bred brothers, as on "The Block That Doesn't Exist." It's a strong first statement from this "new" outfit, made even more remarkable by the presence of the halting waltz "One Plus One Minus One Equals One," a touching nod to the Kadanes' old aesthetic. ★★★ —RICHARD A. MARTIN

**PULSE!** For a band that was never the Next Big Thing, Bedhead left quite a legacy, influencing a lot of young bands. Touch and Go is even rereleasing your three albums along with the New Year's debut. You've written, "If time is a fair judge, those records will outlive the band." Do you feel they have?

**MATT KADANE:** I hope so. It's always hard to gauge what public opinion really is. Things had always gotten

better as we had been in Bedhead, and by the end of it our shows were great. Maybe a lot of this is what we would have experienced anyway if we were still together; this would have been the fourth Bedhead record.

... But I just want everybody to approach this band as something new.

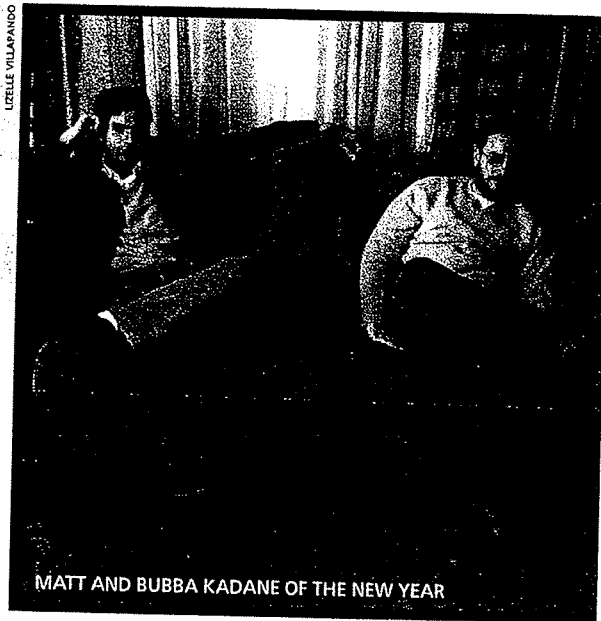
**PULSE!** The songs on *Newness Ends* continue to explore a theme you started probing in Bedhead, something like a hazy certainty about life. Is that a reflection of your having moved from Texas to New York to Boston in recent years?

**KADANE:** Probably. I also went through, well, the person I had been with for a long time and I

split up. Some of these songs might more directly reflect that than anything. In general, the one feeling that constantly drives me to want to make music is feeling kind of ambivalent about things and trying to work that out in some way with music.

**PULSE!** The New Year's first album comes out early in a new year, and yet you've got a title called *Newness Ends*. Is there as much significance to this as you might read into it?

**KADANE:** It was an afterthought, or an after-effect, that we thought the name of the record was undercutting some of the positive connotations of the name of the band. I definitely like that. The one thing I worried about with the name of the band is that it might seem more uplifting than the music is. But mostly, Bubba and I thought that this is the name we can make music under until we stop making music. —RICHARD A. MARTIN



PULSE!

**THE NEW YEAR, *Newness Ends*** (Touch and Go) The brothers Kadane led the now defunct Bedhead, and if you thought the slowed-down, understated indoctrinations of that band possessed quiet powers that magically defied their mellow first impressions, wait till you hear what Matt and Bubba are up to now. While Bedhead songs were pushed along by hushed, blended lyrics and three dueling, atmospheric guitars, the New Year--the Kadanes with Chris Brokaw (Come, Pullman, Codeine), Peter Schmidt, and Mike Donofrio (Saturnine)--give structure, story, and sonic showboating well-deserved promotions. Low, lush currents of guitar ramblings leave room for leisurely interpretation, and in those spaces many a music fan has found supreme absolution. But in the careful, staid hands of the New Year, echoes of marked, metered vocals and sturdy, distinct instrumentation allow for the same ruminations and forehead-slapping conclusions. The title track depicts the pitfalls of giddy beginnings and their almost inevitably sorrowful conclusions with hard, lyrical honesty and relentless rock. The Kadanes sing out their sagacious parallels, "This house is like a bankrupt museum," while the guitars churn with persistent ambition. When the rhythmic charging takes a break and becomes quiet for a tension-building minute, the rug is pulled sharply backwards. The song ends, quick and loud; and it's clear that leaving you naked, cold, and shell-shocked on the linoleum floor is actually an act of generosity.--Laura Learmonth

## SEATTLE WEEKLY

### THE NEW YEAR

#### Newness Ends

Bedhead, Saturnine and Come members collaborate on this superb LP.

Bedhead, Saturnine and Come members collaborate on this superb effort.

When brothers Matt and Bubba Kadane put their band Bedhead to sleep in 1998, slowcore lost one of its best. With bassist Mike Donofrio from Saturnine and Codeine drummer/Come guitarist Chris Brokaw on drums, the Kadane siblings have resurfaced under the name the New Year.

Their debut CD, *Newness Ends*, may surprise those unaccustomed to the rare occasions when Bedhead would increase the tempo beyond a crawl. Okay, so "Great Expectations" and "Simple Life" can barely lift their heads off the pillow. Textbook slowcore, right? Well, the forceful, bright "The Block That Doesn't Exist" and the hard-driving, intense "Carne Levare" inject an element of indie-rock energy into the album that pits a Versus-style vibe against a late-'80s Sonic Youth crunch.

Even on these faster tracks, the Kadanes maintain matter-of-fact vocals that ground the tunes and keep them from getting overexcited. Recorded by Steve Albini, *Newness Ends* walks this line perfectly. (Touch And Go, POB 25520, Chicago IL 60625) *Eric Bensef*

### THE NEW YEAR *Newness Ends*

(TOUCH AND GO) "Killing and forgiving aren't the same/I can see the causes and assign the blame/As soon as I stop shaking I'm a mess/But I can't control these things under the stress." No, it's not a quote from a raving psychotic in an existential Sartre novel, it's a line from a song by The New Year, a sweetly folksy quintet made up of ex-players from Come, Codeine and Bedhead. Of course, nothing on The New Year's debut CD is actually sung as much as it's spoken, albeit with lightly trembling drums and high-note bar chords in the background to give it the impression of normal music. The truth is, it's much better: honest lyrics that are actually audible, pleasant instrumental riffs that even your mother could hum along to. Think Velvet Underground without the heroin, or Slint without any of the loud songs. This is *nice* music, plain and simple—and it works well. *Newness Ends*? Here's to hoping it lasts, at least for one more record. DAN ELDRIDGE

## RESONANCE



### The New Year

*Newness Ends*  
(Touch and Go)

**W**e have been dancing gleefully on the mass grave of indie/alt-rock for years now. But oddly enough, many of us critics are (or soon will be) lauding the New Year's debut, *Newness Ends*, a clear-cut example from that largely moribund genre.

You can thank Matt and Bubba Kadane, late of cult band Bedhead, for it. As the New Year, the brothers (with a new rhythm section) have taken songs that reportedly would have made up the fourth Bedhead full-length and cranked up the tension and the volume. And they've ensnared the whole thing in their trademark elliptical rhythms and cranky nonrock meters—only two of *Newness Ends*'s ten songs are in 4/4 time, with the rest in 3/4 and 5/4. It's an exhilarating mess of guitar-rock songs, the best of which maintain an air of intelligent, introspective boy-outside intimacy (which the Kadanes

perfected in their former band), even as they explode into electric crescendos of six-string angst.

In his customary role as lead vocalist, Matt half-sings, half-mumbles with an endearing, artless voice, giving weight to the humor and pathos in lines like "This house looks like a bankrupt museum / But I'm not like you, I don't want to go Zen / And you can't see that I won't be / That way for you again," from the thunderous title track. Other standouts include "Reconstruction," a martial, snare-laden puzzle of a song; the surreal and disturbing "Gasoline"; and the trippy, droning monster rocker "Carne Levare." The overall sound is monumental and thoroughly seductive, and best of all, it doesn't sound like rehashed grunge, warmed-over metal—or anything else, really. Like Bedhead before, the New Year has created a style which, if this were the best of all possible worlds, could make them stars.—*LD Beghtol*

**The New Year plays the Knitting Factory Fri 6.**

## TIME OUT NEW YORK

### New Miserable Experience

On April 6, the New Year kicked off their Knitting Factory show with a cozy and appropriately brotherly looking four-man huddle. (Siblings Matt and Bubba Kadane, formerly of Bedhead, front the band.) This formation kept reinventing itself: Drifting into close proximity on the small stage, the guitarists and bassist appeared to be in a latter-day western—think of a gaggle of men riding through the desert on horses with solemn companionability.

The mood was set by a new, as-yet-unnamed number that described being "18 and on the outside," and each song intelligently articulated this kind of low-grade melancholy. The midtempo "Half a Day" (which opens their record, *Newness Ends*) closed with the line "When I see you I won't believe you ever again." In the same vein, the standout "Simple Life," sung by Bubba, commenced on a languid, dazedly romantic note and slowly built momentum—driven by crushworthy Chris Brokaw's subtly ferocious drumming—to the proclamation "I never thought I would think what I'm thinking now." Songs most often predictably climbed in intensity toward the end, layering sound and increasing the pacing, but the New Year's unfaltering precision, in terms of both technique and transmission of emotion, added intrigue to their set. Entirely unflappable throughout, the group panted only as they exited the stage after two encores, as the head-wagging crowd waited for more. —**Hillary Chute**

## VILLAGE VOICE

## THE NEW YEAR

Newness Ends Touch And Go

Matt and Bubba Kadane, sibling leaders of the pioneering Texas slow-core outfit Bedhead, have found the energy to reunite as the New Year. In the two years since the band's collapse they've also found a new sense of urgency and drive that inspires frenzied bursts of outright rocking. So songs like the irrepressibly catchy "Gasoline" churn into a frenzy of guitars and propulsive snare drum (provided by Come and Pullman guitarist Chris Brokaw, here returning to drums, which he played years ago with Codeine) at their peaks. The bad news is that

Bedhead enthusiasts may miss the sense of sleepy melancholy conjured by that band's depressive pacing. The good news is that fans of the Kadanes' songwriting and vocals who had trouble getting over Bedhead's somnambulant pace won't need caffeine to get through these songs. Although "The Block That Doesn't Exist" and "Came Laverne" bash merrily along, the spirit of what the Kadanes do is essentially unchanged. Numbers like "Simple Life" and "Newness Ends"—really, the whole disc—sound introspective as hell, with lyrics that run from contemplative to vaguely self-loathing, deliberate melodies, and careful placement of each note. The band (which also includes Saturnine bassist Mike Donofrio) swells with the tides of emotion, completing the sense that *Newness Ends* is a soundtrack for the examined life. >>>TED DROZDOWSKI



Out

February 20

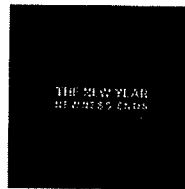
File Under

Slowcore wake-up call

R.I.Y.L.

Bedhead, Galaxie 500,

Codeine



New Year  
Newness Ends  
[Touch and Go]  
Rating: 7.9

The Kadane brothers used to be in a band called Bedhead, who a lot of people liked because they sounded not unlike the Velvet Underground and wrote sad, lovely songs about being sad and lovely and having fairly

ambitious beards. Further, one of the band's auteurs was named Bubba Kadane, which certainly set them apart from many of their peers and made their aficionados like them more. (If it's any measure of fan loyalty, the profusion of websites and mailing lists available online shocked even this longtime fan.) But then Bedhead broke up, which was sad and not very lovely. Now *les freres* Kadane have started a new band called the New Year, whose first LP is called *Newness Ends*, which isn't particularly sad. Thankfully, it's still pretty damned lovely.

Everything surrounding the New Year's debut screams "break with the past." Seeing as the guys elect to use the word "new" in both album title and band name, someone might get the idea that these guys have something to prove. After all, Bedhead's sinuous, country-inflected sorrow and chimy guitar lines could be argued as one of the Ground Zeroes for the current slow-core renaissance, making theirs one of '90s-vintage indie rock's most distinctive, influential sounds. The obvious question for the band that now contains the braintrust of such a blockbuster act is whether to follow down the same path of their previous triumphs or to light out for new territory.

*Newness Ends* cannily splits the difference between innovation and nostalgia. The New Year features Chris Brokaw on drums, where he follows roughly the same steps he did behind the kit for Codeine, another seminal drowsy-rock combo. His tempos here are a little juicier than they were in his Codeine days, as if his other occasional work as axeman for vicious avant-bluesers Come has led him to understand the virtues of amping up a bit.

Not uncoincidentally, the New Year seem more willing to rock than their immediate antecedents ever were. "Reconstruction" builds from a quiet, circular guitar figure into a roiling jam, signaling the band's development from a frail, occasionally silent rock band into an edgier, more rock-and-roll outfit. Similarly, "Gasoline" hurtles forward, propelled by skittery drumming and endlessly inventive soloing. Though no one's going to mistake the New Year for the Donnas, someone involved here has connected with their inner Angus Young.

Or, at any rate, their inner Albini. Mr. Shellac committed this LP to tape, and though it's hardly the grot-rock he's become known for, his less-is-more approach certainly aids *Newness Ends*. Now that the boys in the band are playing harder, with more propulsive riffs and structures, the bare-bones effects of the recording make them sound even leaner and, god forbid, meaner. Where music of this variety can often disappear into its own navel without warning, the New Year sound hale, healthy and ready to rock.

Bear in mind, though, that on their swansong collaboration with compatriots Macha, Matt and Bubba Kadane managed to make Cher's "Believe" into a somber dirge, and their sedated side doesn't go neglected here, either. "One Plus One Minus One Equals One" is the sort of mumbled hymn that marmoset-looking character from Bright Eyes would give important teeth for: Nashville-esque lead guitar co-exists peaceably with subtle washes of feedback, and the band's rhythm section patiently anchors the track. "Alter Ego" is endearing, strummy pop that builds to a complex instrumental climax without ever turning into abstraction or sludge.

So much of the Kadanes' new effort indicates a self-consciousness about their place in the cosmos. *Newness Ends*, from its title on down, seems conscious of the ways in which it looks to Bedhead's accomplishments while plotting the future. At the same time, the band's name bespeaks a certain hope for change and possibility. Let's hope both prophecies turn out to be true.

-Sam Eccleston

CMJ

★★★★★

## The New Year

'Newness Ends'

Touch&Go

When Bedhead was put to sleep in 1998, Texas songwriters Matt and Bubba Kadane promised fans they'd continue to make music together.



Now, despite geographical displacement (Bubba's in Dallas, Matt lives in Boston), they're back — one guitar lighter, but still capable of that Velvet Underground-descended drone. Their new rhythm section (Chris Brokaw on drums, Mike Donofrio on

bass) is placed further up in the mix than Bedhead's ever was, and displays a surprising fondness for syncopation. The way they propel "The Block That Doesn't Exist" may finally convince naysayers to put away the "Snorecore" moniker: for good. Matt Kadane's introspective vocals — the other part of that drowsy equation — stretch out some here as well, toying with phrasing on "Gasoline" and straying from near-monotone on songs like "Half a Day." Still, it would be misleading to call it singing, and even when making goofy rhymes like "Now I'm lying in a fetal position/ I knew I never shoulda been a musician," Kadane maintains the somberness that characterized his former band. Wrapped in the Kadanes' usual minimalist packaging, "Newness Ends" is familiar enough to please the brothers' old fans — and memorable enough (catchy, even) to win new ones.

—john defore

PITCHFORK

# The Kadane Brothers Return With 'Newness' On Touch & Go

BY WENDY MITCHELL

NEW YORK—Brothers Matt and Bubba Kadane, now in their early 30s, have been writing and playing music together since they were teenagers.

So it should be no surprise that even though their last band, Bedhead, dissolved in 1998, the brothers never stopped playing together. Even though Bubba lives in Dallas and Matt lives in Boston, they still collaborate in a variety of ways—either working on songs when they see each other or trading tapes through the mail.

"Our process varies, and we think it's nice that

we don't have a set formula," Bubba explains. "We can listen fresh to what each other does and sort of be the audience."

Now they have a new band, the New Year, to showcase their songwriting evolution since Bedhead's breakup. Chicago's Touch & Go will release the act's debut album, "Newness Ends," Feb. 20.

The Kadanes aren't the only indie-rock luminaries involved in the New Year. They are joined by drummer Chris Brokaw (who plays guitar in Come and played drums for Codeine), bassist Mike Donofrio (Saturnine), and third guitarist Peter Schmidt (who used to work with Bedhead).

The Kadanes used a similar musical lineup in Bedhead. "With Bedhead we thought we hit on something when

we hit on that setup of three guitars, bass, and drums with accent instruments," Bubba says. "It felt like something really substantial to us, something more powerful."

Speaking of power, fans of the languid songs from slowcore pioneers Bedhead may be somewhat surprised by the New Year. The music isn't radically different—it's still emotional with intricate instrumentation—but some songs have more gusto. "It's different in its overall feel," Kadane says.

Corey Rusk, president of Touch & Go, was a big Bedhead fan (the band was

actually signed to now-defunct Touch & Go affiliate Trance Syndicate), and he immediately was interested when the Kadanes shared demos of their post-Bedhead material with him. "Matt and Bubba are doing something new and interesting, but without losing sight of their Bedhead roots," he says.

Touch & Go will service college radio and commercial specialty shows with the album, and the label will work with Web sites such as Epitonic to post an MP3 file of the track "Gasoline." That track will also appear on a promotional compilation for the Local Independent Network of CD Stores in California. The New Year will also tour the U.S. in late March and April in support of the project.



THE NEW YEAR

## BILLBOARD

## ALTERNATIVE PRESS

### THE NEW YEAR

Former Bedhead and Come members embark on delicate adventures.



For the Bedhead fans who have groggily soldiered on since the

group dissolved three years ago, an exciting new band may finally rouse them from their sleepwalk. With Codeine drummer/Come guitarist Chris Brokaw on drums, guitarist Peter Schmidt and Saturnine's Mike Donofrio on bass, Bedhead co-founders Matt and Bubba Kadane have reformed under the name the New Year.

"People see [the New Year] as being something that just instantly happened," muses Bubba. "They completely put up a division between the two bands. But there really wasn't such a hard division. It was really an overlapping."

New or not, the quintet characterize their debut, *Newness Ends*, as, for all intents and purposes, the final Bedhead record. "If you don't like this record, you wouldn't have liked the fourth Bedhead record," expounds Bubba. "It is a little bit different."

"[The album] is more concise," details Matt. "I think the goal of a lot of Bedhead songs was to stretch the limits of the song. We'd slow things down, and we'd take chords apart. On this batch of songs, there was a conscious desire to experiment with things like rhythm instead of chord structure." He laughs. "I think this album is much more 'rhythmo-centric.'" —Eric Bensef

**ALBUM > Newness Ends (TOUCH AND GO)**  
**HEADQUARTERS:** Nashville, TN  
**SOUNDS LIKE:** Melodic post-rock under the influence of codeine.  
**HUNDRED SPIRITS:** Slint, Bedhead, Pullman

# Wake-up calls Ushering in the New Year; Kay does Josie

BY MATT ASHARE

The indie band Bedhead got their start out of what the Trouser Press Guide '90s Rock refers to as "the unlikely locale of" Dallas. And until they called it quits in 1998, after three full-length CDs, Bedhead were generally thought of as that poetically quiet three-guitar band with the bearded brothers (guitarists Matt and Bubba Kadane) from Dallas. But for the last couple of years of Bedhead, Matt lived in Boston. And though Bubba's still in Texas, the duo's new outfit, the New Year, finds them teaming up with a familiar face from the Boston music scene — Come guitarist Chris Brokaw. Which means that Boston can certainly make a legitimate claim to calling the latest Kadane incarnation our own.



**THREE GUITARS:** the New Year retain Bedhead's Skynyrd-like front line - and more.

Whatever the genesis, the ensemble that came together as the New Year, and that will perform an early 7 p.m. show this Saturday (April 7) at the Middle East, doesn't look all that different from Bedhead. Some of the names have changed, but the instrument line-up remains the same — three guitarists (Matt, Bubba, and occasional Bedhead fill-in Peter Schmidt), a bassist (Mike Donofrio of the band Saturnine), and a drummer, Brokaw returning to the instrument he played in the slowcore trio Codeine in the early '90s. The Kadane brothers' trademark sound — an unadorned mix of largely undistorted Velvetsy strum-and-drone guitars, sleepy vocals, and often elliptical lyrics — hasn't really changed much either, with the exception of the tempos, which have become more and more varied as the Kadanes have moved on from their slowcore roots. Indeed, the disc's catchiest track, the relatively propulsive rocker "Gasoline," is neither quiet nor slow. But it's a song that was written for and performed with Bedhead.

"A couple of the songs on the New Year album we actually played on the last Bedhead tour," says Kadane. "The majority weren't, but I don't think there's really any question that these would have been the songs on the fourth Bedhead record."

So, why bother changing a name around which the Kadanes had already built a fan base?

"I think we were getting kind of tired of playing the same songs over and over again, so we wanted to make a break," Matt answers. "Of course, just now, on the way over here, I was saying to Chris that we've got to learn some Bedhead songs for the tour."

That shouldn't be a problem what with the New Year retaining Bedhead's three-guitar line-up, a conceit far more common in the raucous realm of Skynyrd-style Southern rock than in the dreamier domain of melancholy indie pop. "Well, Bedhead were a Southern rock band," Kadane quips. "We had three guitars, Bubba and I had beards, and we are from the South. But it kind of came about because we started out playing with a violin player and we really liked the single-note sustain element of that. So we ended up trying to create chords with three different guitars to get the sustain you get with a bowed instrument."

With the addition of Silkworm's Andy Cohn, the touring line-up will actually feature four guitarists. "I think we might be headed towards Molly Hatchet territory," Kadane jokes.

"We're actually brothers too," jokes Brokaw, who plays drums in the New Year and on their debut CD, *Newness Ends* (Touch and Go), when I sit down with him and Matt at the Joshua Tree, in Davis Square. "I met Matt and Bubba when Come were touring the US for the first time and we played with Bedhead in Fort Worth. We were like, 'This is the best local band we've seen in a long time.' So we knew each other through that. And eventually Matt moved to the Boston area to do graduate work, and I started seeing him more often. After Bedhead broke up, I asked Matt what he was going to do, and he said he and Bubba still wanted to do something, so I just sort of said that if they needed any help with it I'd . . ."

"Now we're like an old couple because I don't remember quite like that," Kadane interrupts. "It was true up to that point. But what happened was that Bubba and I were going to do another record. And I was going to play drums on it. But the more we thought about it, the more we realized that if we were going to make a record we might as well play live. And if we play live, we definitely want to get a drummer, unless I wanted to pull a Don Henley. So I called Chris to see if he would want to do it."