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## Scene Report: He's My Brother She's My Sister On Ojai And L.A., CA

Robert, the brother, gives a tour of L.A. while Rachel, the sister, takes us to the hills

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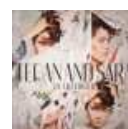
In Scene Report, musicians from all over the globe fill us in on what's going on sonically in their hometowns. This week, *He's My Brother She's My Sister's* Robert Kolar, the brother, gives the scoop on L.A. while Rachel Kolar, the sister, takes us to Ojai, CA. The band's new album, *Nobody Dances In This Town*, is out now on *Park The Van*.

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**Rachel:**

I live in a small town called Ojai, CA. It's a very spiritual community with a real love of nature and cosmology. We have some amazing musicians here who essentially moved away from big city living to reconnect with themselves. When you remove a lot of distractions, you end up reexamining who you really are. This can lead to some amazing creativity but can also lead to self-involvement. It's a wonderful line to dance on as long as you're aware of your trappings.

I don't see too much of a trend in musical genre in Ojai but more of a trend in theme. Spirituality is the dominant theme of most music coming out of Ojai. It's a broad subject and a very interesting one. What I hope to contribute to, in terms of music in Ojai, is the mystery and dark nature of existence, the shadow to the light. I don't see life or music as a duality between good and bad, light and dark—I see and hear it as a multi-sensory experience that should be explored fully, all of it. I think Ojai is embracing that more and more.

**Robert:**

Los Angeles is a vast sprawl of wonder, kitsch, brilliance and tastelessness. So, for this article, I think it's best to focus on my hometown of Echo Park (and adjacent neighborhoods) as it has its own identity and culture unique to most of L.A. There are many trends sprouting and fermenting in the winding streets and sloping hills of Echo Park. But the scene I am most involved in and tied to is the new folk movement, which has been brewing over the last several years in "The East Side."

Centered around events put on by the [New Los Angeles Folk Festival](#), it is made up of folk through a kaleidoscopic lens of innovation and experimentation. It is this world that helped birth He's My Brother She's My Sister. There are many bands and various takes on this new genre,

but the general notion is to take folk and American roots music and give it a modern spin and inventive nature. Odd instrumentation, blends of contrasting genres, unique attire with hints of the circus, surrealism, vaudeville and, oh, maybe an acid trip in the desert.

The movement doesn't necessarily have a moniker, yet. And the lack thereof is part of what makes its identity unique. It's taking those communal and storytelling aspects of traditional folk and amplifying them, electrifying them and painting them with an impressionistic palette. There is no norm. There is no standard. There are no rules. But there is a thread: a raw, fun, earthy quality, which helps crowds let loose and come together while expelling the everyday strains we all experience in life.

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