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*Emerald Photo*

## Romantic nihilists hit Eugene

By Cort Fernald  
Of the Emerald

They call the band Romeo Void — not without reason. They are the neo-anti-romantics and they reflect an age in which silicon chips communicate with more exactness than human beings.

"There are no romantic notions here — and there shouldn't be," says Debora Iyall, lead singer with Romeo Void. "We are about reality, not the myths created by other artists."

Tonight, the Cultural Forum brings Romeo Void to the EMU Ballroom for a concert that should shake the sooty bricks of old EMU.

This is the third time the band will play Eugene. They previously played at Grand Illusions and last Halloween at W.O.W. Hall with X as their supporting act.

"That was a great show," says Frank Zincavage, bass guitar player.

Iyall and Zincavage met at the San Francisco Art Institute when Iyall was creating a video soundtrack as a senior thesis.

According to Zincavage, they really had no intention of becoming a band.

They recorded an album, "It's a Condition" for 415 Records, a San Francisco independent label.

The line-up, Iyall, Zincavage, Benjamin Bossi on "Jazz" saxophone, Peter Wood on lead guitar and Larry Carter on drums, solidified on the "It's a Condition" tour.

The release of "Never Say Never" brought Romeo Void the national attention they deserved.

"Never Say Never", produced by Ric Ocasek of the Cars, originally appeared on a 4-track EP — but has since been remixed and is included in Romeo Void's latest album "Benefactor."

"Never Say Never" is indicative of Romeo Void's attitude. They are romantic nihilists. Iyall sings of the wrecked Romeos and jaded Juliets all in faded denim and dreaming of lace. They rock their fantasy Casbah in a passion play seeking fulfillment. Eventually they realize the essential futility of the heart and the enormity of lust. Lust that wears the glare of a calm psychopath.

"I might like you better if we slept together..."

Iyall delivers the lyrics with a distracted emphasis, while Wood's guitar sounds scratchy, a persistent itch to the ear and feet.

But the strength of Romeo Void lies in the integrated sounds of Bossi's saxophone, Carter's drums and Zincavage's relentless bass. It's an urban sound that is more than slightly infectious.

Eugene is an important stop in Romeo Void's tour schedule.

"We did one Northwest run just a couple of weeks ago and now we're running back through some of the colleges," says Zincavage.

Zincavage is not so sure about the response they'll receive in England.

"I'm never sure about the English; they're so splintered and things change from week to week so radically there."

This may be the last time a Eugene audience can see Romeo Void in a ballroom. The venues will no doubt change to larger halls for this band.

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