

# 'Femmes: Timeless, open

Dear Mom,  
You had been gone for a few months when I first heard Violent Femmes in late 1983. From that first odd duckling riff of "Blister in the Sun," I knew they were my band. They seemed to encompass everything good and warmhearted you were. This was a band stripped down to the essentials with a spontaneous nerve exposed.

They started playing on street corners in Milwaukee, Wis., with ever-changing names like the Ruthless Acoustics, but now they're big-time recording artists. They even played Carnegie Hall in New York City three weeks ago. The scene sounds like the Beatles; you thought they were a fad when Dad brought the kids to see "Hard Day's Night" but you finally caught on.

One hundred kids rushed the stage, going berserk and kissed Gordon Gano, the Femmes' singer, Brian Ritchie, the bassist, and Victor De Lorenzo, the drummer. Brian says it was pretty exciting to play a place that had people like

cerns have become more universal and all-age-encompassing since "Add It Up," a song on their first record about teenage lust and frustration.

"It would be kind of ridiculous for a 40-year-old man to be saying 'Why can't I get just one fuck?' I think he should've been fucked by the time he was 40," Brian says.

Gordon's new lyrics recall nothing less than John Lennon's stark first solo record with the Plastic Ono Band, "Faith," a song which could easily be heard at Taylor's, is a direct cop of Lennon's "God." Like Lennon, Gordon details everything he doesn't believe in like General Motors, the president and the League of Women Voters but ends up by saying he believes there's a spirit for everyone. Gordon's spirituality is sometimes seen as being insincere on songs like "Jesus Walking on the Water" but I think he just shows a more free-wheeling open-minded approach to religion.

On "No Killing," Gordon spins out a series



Photo courtesy EMU Cultural Forum

The Violent Femmes play the EMU Dining Room Monday night at 8:30. Advance tickets are \$7 for students, \$8 for the public, and are available at the EMU Main Desk. Prices rise \$1.50 the day of the show.

Tchaikovsky, "a pretty decent guy." I think you would have been impressed.

With their new record "The Blind Leading the Naked," I can see the Violent Femmes lasting another thirty years. They've developed their teenage angst and dance sound into a timeless sound featuring an open format that allows them to include guests on some songs like Jerry Harrison of the Talking Heads on organ, Steve Scales on percussion and Fred Frith on weird instruments.

Brian says his personal goal, whether the Femmes stay together or not, is to remain musically valid until a ripe old age. It's good to see that the good things in life can stick around and not be damaged irreparably. He uses 70-year-old Sun Ra, a Philadelphia jazz musician, as a role model. Brian says the biggest maturing in the Femmes has been in the lyrics; the Femmes' con-

of mantras like "We don't want no killing Lord, I don't want to see my brother die." The cynical might say the message is too basic but it hits an emotional chord, especially if you hear it the same day the Senate votes to fund the Contras.

There's not much time left, Gordon seems to say, so why speak with "poetic" artifice grafted on top of it? Before showing us who the naked are, he gives us a rundown of who the blind leaders are. Mom, "Old Mother Reagan" is a half-minute punkabilly romp that hopes "she go far away."

Violent Femmes should stay awhile. When the second record came out I really thought I had lost something I loved and believed in. With this new record, a friend has reappeared after a long absence.

Story by Paul Sturtz

## Tenth No Nukes Ball slated

One of Eugene's favorite bands, James T. And The Tough, and one of the area's newer musical entities, Liv and Let Live, will provide dance music for the tenth annual No Nukes Ball Saturday night at the WOW Hall.

The two bands will be joined by the a capella women's group Sweetgrass and legendary street-film theater actor Stoney Burke of Berkeley, Calif.

For the past decade, the No Nukes balls have been held to raise money for anti-nuclear concerns, as well as to provide information about ongoing anti-nuclear projects. Past balls celebrated passage of initiatives banning nuclear-plant construction and radioactive-waste storage

in Oregon, and urging a nuclear freeze with the Soviet Union.

Information about drives to designate Lane County and Oregon as nuclear-free zones will be provided at this year's event.

The ball begins at 7:00 with food and free films. Sliding-scale admission based on ability to pay will be from \$3 to \$5. The WOW Hall is wheelchair-accessible, and free child care can be reserved by calling Citizen Action for Lasting Security at 343-8548.

The WOW Hall is located at West Eighth Avenue and Lincoln Street.

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## Case offers recital

University guitar instructor David Case, one of Eugene's premier classical guitar soloists, will perform a free faculty recital Wednesday night at 8:00 in Beall Hall.

Appearing on the program with Case will be harpsichordist John Hamilton and tenor Eric Benedict.

The program will include sonatas by Domenico Scariatti, Spanish pieces by Isaac Albeniz and a guitar-harpsichord arrangement of Boccherini's "Introduction and Fandango" by Julian Bream. The works of English composers John Dowland and Benjamin Britten will be featured as well.

Case is an instructor of Performance Studies, Guitar Ensemble and Guitar Performance. He teaches courses for beginning guitarists through the University's Continuation Center as well. Case is also a co-founder and board member of the Eugene Guitar Association.

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