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Courtesy photos
 Feminist folk singer, Ani DeFranco, (above) will be among many women performing at the Willamette Valley Folk Festival next weekend. Laura Kemp (right) has joined up with three musicians to create a new "folk rock" quartet.



Women will highlight festival music

Acoustic guitar, mandolin, percussion instruments and well-polished harmonies create a mix of musical styles, each very individual, from the women of the Willamette Valley Folk Festival this year.

The festival features many women's bands and soloists May 21-23.

The sounds of Cheralee Dillon, Laura Kemp, Morgan and Phelan, Joanne Rand, Suzi Katz and Ani DiFranco form a range of musical styles from folk, blues, gospel, and rock that combine politics and poetry to bring the audience through a full range of emotions.

Morgan and Phelan start it off for the women's groups at 2 p.m., May 21. These women have been playing together since 1980, performing for thousands of school age children around the country, introducing them to traditional folk music and stories.

"Morgan and Phelan's original songs and selected anthems were gentle, inspiring and totally involving. Their performance skill are as strong as their musical talents and the message they convey." (Joan Franklin, Newton Arts Center, Newton, MA.) Their performances include guitars, mountain dulcimers, mandolin and keyboards for the instrumental influence to their traditionally based original music.

Cheralee Dillon, a blues and gospel influenced folk singer, starts at 1 p.m. Saturday, May 22. She recently released her first full-length cassette album titled, *Old Lady Love Songs*. She presents a viewpoint that could be taken as deeply feminist, although that term does not imply "man-hating."

Some of her terrific lines include: "Maybe she'll get a job selling crystals/ and reading the tarot to her father's mistress/ make a fortune in karma then bolt for the door/ up to the mountain where she's never been before."

Sunday, May 23 at 5 p.m., the Laura Kemp Band plays. Singer/Songwriter Laura Kemp has joined up with three musicians to create an all new "Folk-rock" quartet, home-grown in Oregon's Willamette Valley. Their sounds range from folk to blues grass to country swing.

Kemp has been described as "a musical poet, the words accompanying her music show unique insight and an ability to paint vivid lyrical pictures." Kemp

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— Joan Franklin
 Newton Arts Center spokesman

also has a new album out with ten fine originals with such themes as love, relocating, violence overseas and at home.

Sunday, May 23 at 7 p.m., Joanne Rand starts with her five piece Little Big Band. Her unique, progressive-folk-rock style is a blend of genres from ethnic to classical, from indigenous to avant garde.

Her work goes beyond performance into the realm of "earth-healer," and has taken her to the Amazon Rainforest to record the music of the native people and help spread their message of resistance. "Joanne Rand's singing raises your hair — elegance and fierceness in the same deep breath." (Gary Snyder, Pulitzer Prize winning author).

Powerful feminist performer, Ani DiFranco, will be singing on the EMU main stage at 8 p.m. May 21. Her music is considered by many as alarmingly precise in content and beautifully convincing in sound.

DiFranco was born and raised in Buffalo, New York and has been traveling throughout the nation for three years, spreading her message in music as she goes. She has a soft, friendly nature, but her words often reveal a different attitude with forceful melodies.

At 22 years of age, DiFranco has made it far in her career, with three albums released and a lot of musical talent developed to provoke and encompass audiences, luring them to listen while she performs.

All of these women will create their own unique presence at the festival. Two women, Suzi Katz and Laura Kemp, will also be teaching a workshop on songwriting called "Songwriters in the Round" Saturday at noon. These women along with many other styles and creations of musical talent will perform during the festival to entertain and touch all who attend.

— Teresa Isabelle

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