

Clarissa release conveys emotion

By Les Zaczek
Freelance Reporter

Clarissa is a band formed from the ashes of the mostly unknown yet brilliant band Snatches of Pink, who produced the critically acclaimed acoustic album, *Bent with Prey*.

With their new album, *Silver*, Clarissa uses more electric guitars, but the music remains fairly soft and mellow. *Silver* is along the lines of dark, folk-tinged rock with high intensity, somewhere in the soundscape of Mark Lanegan, REM and Cowboy Junkies.

This is definitely music for a rainy Sunday morning; it's full of melancholy, sadness and a general feeling of loss and emptiness.

What is amazing on this album is the amount of emotion and power of the songs carried by the soft voice of the guitarist and singer, Michael Rank. Sometimes Rank just whispers, making him

sound desperate and isolated, just barely reaching out to the listener.

The songs have a crisp feel to them. The combination of the friendly voice, gently strummed guitars, bass and drums sound familiar and pleasant, yet the music is original in its own way. Clarissa doesn't break any new ground in the spectrum of rock music, they just create intense and beautiful songs.

The record starts off with "For You," a catchy ballad that rolls along nicely and sets the mood for the album.

"High Horses" is one of the best tracks on the album, a pretty yet depressing melody accompanied by a violin, which contributes to the emotional content of the sound. In the middle of the song, the music quiets down and Rank is just whispering before a rocking guitar solo comes in.

It's these kinds of interesting changes and emo-



COURTESY PHOTO

Clarissa's latest release, "Silver," includes drastic instrumental and emotional shifts that add variety.

tional swings that make *Silver* so successful.

"Sail Away" is the kind of catchy, folk-tinged rock song that would make Michael Stipe proud. "Charms" recalls the band's more acoustic side, but in spite of the lack of volume and drums, Clarissa pulls off a great tune.

"Bandits" is the most rocking number on the album, and while it's a good song on its own, it seems out of place on this record. But it's a plus that the band isn't afraid to try different sounds and change styles a bit.

The album ends with "Strange Places," a perfect closing track that includes bongo drums and some neat vocal harmonies that makes Clarissa sound a bit like the 90's version of Crosby, Stills and Nash.

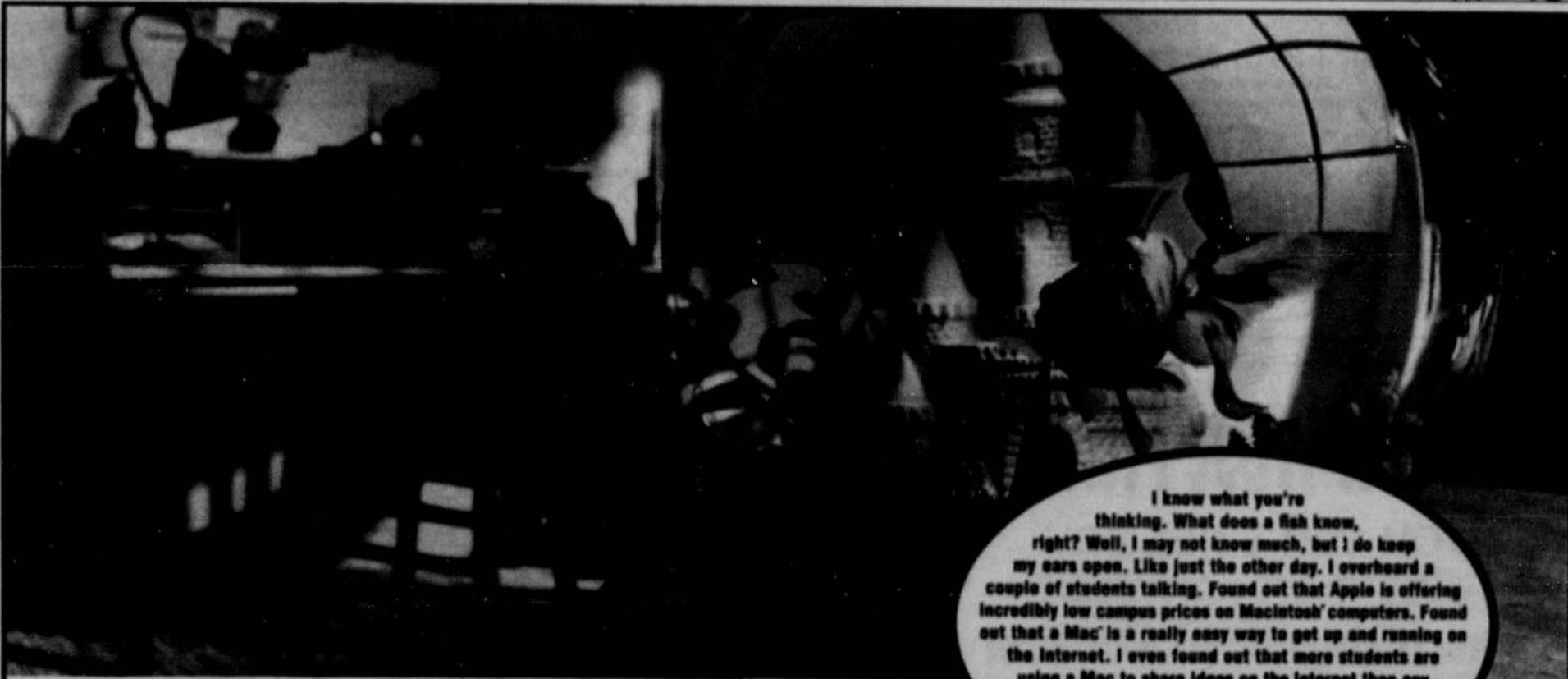
What is impressive on this album is that every

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