

Pulse Editor:  
Jacquelyn Lewis  
jacquelynlewis@dailymerald.com

# Pulse *Excite*

Online  
Mason West  
spars with  
Hollywood PR.  
Read the column  
at [www.dailyemerald.com](http://www.dailyemerald.com)



Thursday, March 13, 2003

## Hooking up, hanging out

Some people explore the world of body modification for its performance aspects; others do it for personal relaxation

Jacquelyn Lewis  
Pulse Editor

Around 1 a.m. Wednesday morning, Corvallis resident Teri Orlaske dangled cross-legged from the ceiling of John Henry's at 77 W. Broadway. Her body was suspended above the stage where bands usually perform; large metal hooks jutted into her chest, back and knees. Her eyes glazed over and bright red blood oozed in slow rivulets across tattoos and stretched skin. Two men hung beside her, one from multiple hooks in his back; the other swinging in wide upside-down arcs over a screaming crowd, held only by piercings through his knees.

Tattoos, piercings, music and surprisingly little blood swirled into an intoxicating potion, permeating High Priestess Body Piercing's Second Annual Body Modification Celebration. The atmosphere was an exotic amalgam of adrenaline and

trance-like calm. Some bystanders fainted. Others watched quietly, intently.

The celebration, intended to be simultaneously a party and a learning experience, began at 9 p.m. Tuesday and pulsated into the burgeoning hours of Wednesday morning. Guests paid \$4 to see body modification performances such as multiple piercings, pulls and suspensions, along with music by The Briefs, Capgun Suicide, Whopner County Country Allstars and the Hellenbacks. The beer flowed and the hosts raffled off giveaways from tattooing and piercing shops. Guests curious about body art were invited to approach any of the several High Priestess employees hosting the party.

None of this is new for 30-year-old Orlaske. Not a High Priestess employee, but part of the "family," she has practiced suspensions for nearly five years, performing in public for four of them. She once suspended in front of a crowd of more than 1,000 spectators at Portland's Roseland Theatre. She said that while some participate in body modification for spiritual reasons, her motivation is purely emotional.

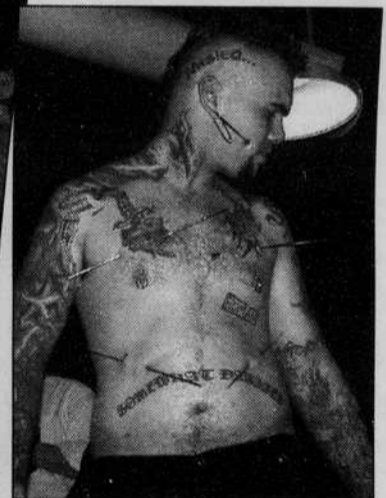
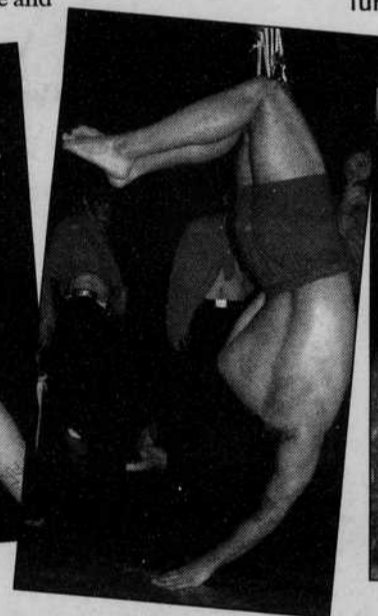
"After I do it, all the bad energy and all the crap is gone," Orlaske said. "I like the release I get. I don't

Turn to **Body**, page 7



Teri Orlaske (above) shows off her back piercings. Members of the High Priestess family gear up for tug-of-war (left center), swing around (center), and suspend themselves from the knees (right center). Supa' (right) flashes the metal artistry that is his flesh.

Photos by Jacquelyn Lewis Emerald



## Thematically diverse 'Evolve' waxes cerebral, sublime

Ani DiFranco's newest album offers a fresh reminder of her impeccable musical craftsmanship

CD review

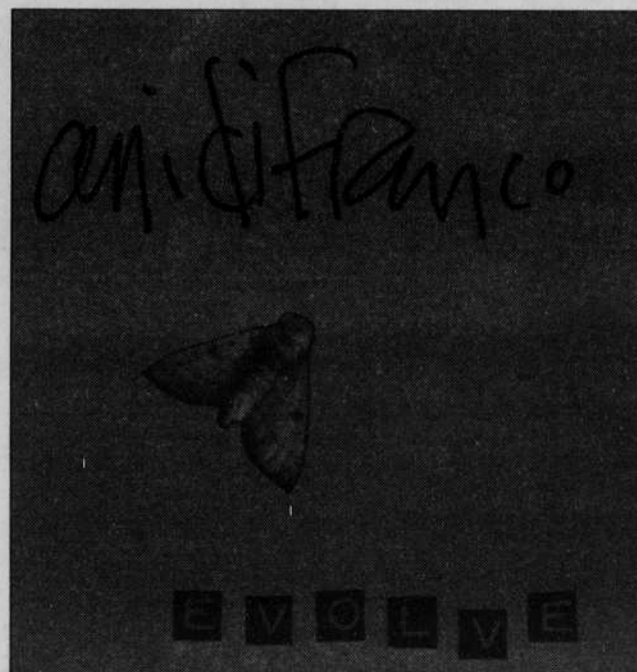
Aaron Shakra  
Pulse Reporter

Ani DiFranco is such a prolific musician that it becomes increasingly difficult to find ways to write about her. Now, each time she casts something out into the world via her Righteous Babe Records, the question that's automatically raised is: What is left for her to say?

Quite a lot, apparently. DiFranco's newest album is "Evolve," her second album in less than a year. While it comes on the heels of "So Much Shouting, So Much Laughter," this is her first release since 2001's "Revelling/Reckoning," containing significant new material.

Still, some of these tunes have been kicking around in DiFranco's repertory for awhile. She played "Icarus" in concert as early as 2001, and many of the songs on "Evolve" appeared at her McDonald Theatre concert in November. But unlike her recent tours, which have been solo, this a band album, featuring the same folks seen on last year's video/concert documentary, "Render."

The 12 tracks on "Evolve" exhibit a continuing movement toward poetic writing for this righteous babe. Fewer songs on the album follow the set standard of verse, followed by chorus, followed by another verse, and are instead driven around ideas. Themes recur, but aren't as overtly political, and are



Courtesy

more cerebral than previous releases.

"Serpentine" is one of the strongest of all the 12 tracks. It's a free-form poem that opens with a lengthy, jazzy guitar

solo. The poetry here is so powerful that the strings of words hit like sharp icicles and elicit a tingling sensation that reverberates through a listener's spine. One fragment: "Hip-hop is tied up in the back room / With a logo stuffed in its mouth / Cuz the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house."

"O My My" is a highlight for DiFranco's vocals, as she sings out the song's title; "Slide" doesn't cease to shock with words like: "And my pussy is a tractor / And this is a tractor pull."

Musically, these songs run the gamut but have a strong influence from jazz and Latin sounds. DiFranco's guitar playing is wonderful, and she even dials it in on piano for "O My My."

Because DiFranco has finally reached such a high level of skill on her instrument of choice, even the simplest of tracks sound delicious. The album's title track, "Evolve," consists of a catchy progression that sounds like it came from her back-pack guitar. She flows out the lyrics: "I walk in stride with people / Much taller than me / And partly it's the boots but / Mostly it's just my chi."

"Evolve" might be loose thematically, but perhaps that, itself, is the theme — looking and striving for where to go next. Oddly, one song that didn't make the cut on this album was "Swim," which I heard performed at Bummer-shoot Festival during the summer in Seattle. I am curious whether DiFranco didn't find the song up to par, or if she is merely saving it for another release. Given the early "Evolve" release this year, it's likely 2003 may bring yet another new DiFranco recording.

Contact the Pulse reporter at [aaronshakra@dailymerald.com](mailto:aaronshakra@dailymerald.com).