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Local band will perform score to vampire classic

Mood Area 52, sporting an eclectic mix of sounds, has composed original music to accompany 'Nosferatu'

By Ryan Nyburg
Senior Pulse Reporter

Local band Mood Area 52 will resurrect a vampire Friday at Tsunami Books. The group, which dubs its style "nuevo tango," will be performing a score it has created for the classic 1922 silent film "Nosferatu."

Mood Area 52 has been together for nearly five years and is comprised of accordionist Michael Roderick, cellist Amy Danziger, bassist Dan Schmid, violinist Anthony Dyer, guitarist Adam Wendt and saxophonist Kee Zublin. The group was recently chosen as the third best band in Eugene by the Eugene Weekly, while Schmid, who is also a member of the Cherry Poppin' Daddies and the Visible Men, was chosen as best male musician. For the Tsunami performance they will be joined by drummer Jim West.

"Nosferatu" was directed by F.W. Murnau and is considered one of the classics of German expressionist style. It was loosely based on the novel "Dracula" by Bram Stoker and was remade in 1979 by Werner Herzog. In 2000 it inspired the film "Shadow of the Vampire," which was a take on the mysteriousness that surrounded the original film's star, Max Schreck. Mood Area 52 has performed the score once before, last April at Sam Bond's Garage. They had previously performed their own score for the 1962 French short film "La Jetée," which was written and directed by Chris Marker. The band has also released a self-titled album of original material.

Roderick, the band's primary composer, said that he chose to score "Nosferatu" because of its graphic beauty and also because it is one of his favorite films. The band resurrected the score for this performance due to its popularity and because it seemed like an appropriate choice this close to Halloween.

"We're thinking of recording the score, but we want to see how it

plays," Roderick said. "The majority of our music is based, at least stylistically, in the tango tradition, which has a lot of tense overtones and can be pretty spooky. For this score we've taken that element and explored the possibilities of exaggerating those qualities."

Roderick said that the score utilizes a degree of jazz improvisational theory as well as fixed themes for each character and certain plot elements.

Other members of the band also think that the film is a good choice for a musical score.

"They broke the mold when they made this one," guitarist Wendt said. "I've never seen anything like it, the way it touches on so many issues, like money, plague, greed. Our music fits because it has a kind of ethereal, cinematic quality, like something out of a spaghetti western."

Tsunami Books is located at 2585 Willamette St. The all-ages performance begins at 8 p.m. and tickets will be \$5 at the door.

Contact the senior Pulse reporter at ryanburg@dailymerald.com.

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POETRY

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The book's design itself comes across as a play for the MTV demographic and is an obvious point of critique. It should come as no surprise that the publisher is MTV Books/Pocket Books. But lest you think Williams is unaware of potential hypocrisy, one section of the poem addresses this critique. In a dialogue between a journalist and a "Maned Character," he seems to be stressing the importance of just having the words get out into the world (and uncensored, at that).

The black and white page reversals also complement the words. One example can be found on pages 106-107, which make dualistic statements on male and female gender. On the left side, a black page with white lettering reads: "God has hair / on her pussy / and waits / burning with desire / for you." The right side of the page is white with black text, and responds: "this is no blasphemy / you have erected / ancient penises / in your capitols / and prayed / in the name / of a father / a male child / and a ghost."

The overall character of the poem is one of intoxication and rapture — with revolution, freedom and new

forms of consciousness. Williams' narrative has this kiss-bearer walking the streets to spread the knowledge that has been imparted to him.

If America needs strong voices of dissent and conscience, Saul Williams is one of the louder speakers these days. It might take academics 20 years to include his poems in their Angliofied canons, but his message is one of immediacy. He is spreading words of change, and revolution, with an awareness that embraces all that civilization has tamed.

Contact the Pulse editor at aaronshakra@dailymerald.com.

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