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Appeal of music draws fans, critics

Music — possibly one of mankind's oldest vices — proves infectious and costly

By Ryan Nyburg
Senior Pulse Reporter

Humans have been making music for the entirety of recorded history. The oldest known musical instrument, a flute made of bone, dates back at least 43,000 years. Since then, humans have been compulsively creating and consuming music. According to the Recording Industry Association of America, total compact disc sales in 2002 were more than \$12 billion.

All of this begs the question: Can music be addictive? Local retailers might have the answer.

"I think you can get addicted to anything," Cat's Meow Jazz and Blues owner Jeffrey Ogburn said. "As addictions go, it's not a bad one. I never get tired of it and it

doesn't hurt my liver." Ogburn, whose store is located at 122 East Broadway, is one of many local music retailers who believe in the addictive power of recorded sound.

"It's infectious," said Sarge, manager of Face The Music at 886 East 13th Ave. "There is a song for every moment in the day. I see it as a willful attempt to soundtrack our own lives."

As with other local retailers, Sarge, who prefers to go by one name, considers himself addicted to music.

"Because of the access I have I get really absorbed into every genre," Sarge said.

Other retailers have similar experiences.

"I can get really into a record and just listen to it over

and over for weeks," said Greg Sutherland, a buyer from House of Records, located at 258 East 13th

Turn to **MUSIC**, page 12B



Lauren Wimer Photographer

Face the Music, located on East 13th Avenue, offers a wide range of used and new CDs for music addicts.

VICE BRIEF

Music appreciation can lead to elitism

Musical elitism is a vice beyond rehabilitation for some. Groups of friends usually have at least one person who pushes his or her music like a car salesman, but not all music enthusiasts are as extreme as Jack Black in "High Fidelity."

"I love obsessing over records," Lane Community College student Jazpur Leigh said. "But I think snobbiness is wrong because no one can define quality without injecting their own opinion."

Many of these music fanatics can be found in record stores.

"There are times when I'd absolutely

love to crucify them," House of Records employee Garrett Brown said of music elitists. "But it's just a matter of taste. There's probably a lot of crap I like."

In an era of pop culture, some argue that popular trends sometimes need criticism and that tolerance is an important aspect of music appreciation.

"I'm an elitist, but I'm not a snob," Face the Music employee Meghan Leighton said. "I'm not going to be rude if I think their taste is bad. I'm a person before I'm a music lover."

Some music elitists firmly believe in a musical hierarchy.

"(Elitism) definitely does have its place," Brown said. "Just like bad music has its place."

— Damien Sherwood

University of Oregon

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