

# Baroque Folker

Proctor at Paradiso; punk at WOW Hall.

**B**race for a night of punk rock Thursday, April 3rd, when **F-Minus**, **Blasphemous Abnormality** and **Before Braille** blast into WOW Hall. Before Braille doesn't quite mesh musically with the other two hardcore and thrash acts on the bill, but that's just fine with the band. Though their music has been dubbed "emo-core," the musicians say they "bristle" at being stereotyped and categorized. They are unapologetically DIY (do it yourself — a philosophy of being an independent act and not relying on artificial major label exposure and support) and just want their music to speak for itself.

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Spawned in Mesa, Ariz., the same ground that produced the popular group Jimmy Eat World, Before Braille started with four high school friends who joined forces about three years ago. Lead vocalist/guitarist David Jensen and guitarist Hans Ringger teamed up to write songs. Bassist Brandon Smith and drummer Kelly Reed joined in the efforts. Guitarist Rajiv "Reggie" Patel came on board and Before Braille was born.

The name, according to Jensen, relates to using guidelines to realize goals: "Everybody battles rules, but there are some that help you achieve. Braille is an example...with universal guidelines, a whole new world opened up."

Proudly citing Fugazi as a marked influence, Braille debuted with *The Rumor*, released in Sept. 2002 on Aezra Records. Braille's musical style is difficult to convey through words, which accounts for some of the attempts by music critics to pigeonhole the reluctant stars. The 15 songs on *The Rumor* ably slither from chunky power pop to guitar-led intricacies to quiet, passionate musings on life's vagaries. The lyrics and music are honest and from the heart, whether it be surreal and dream-like or visceral and raw.

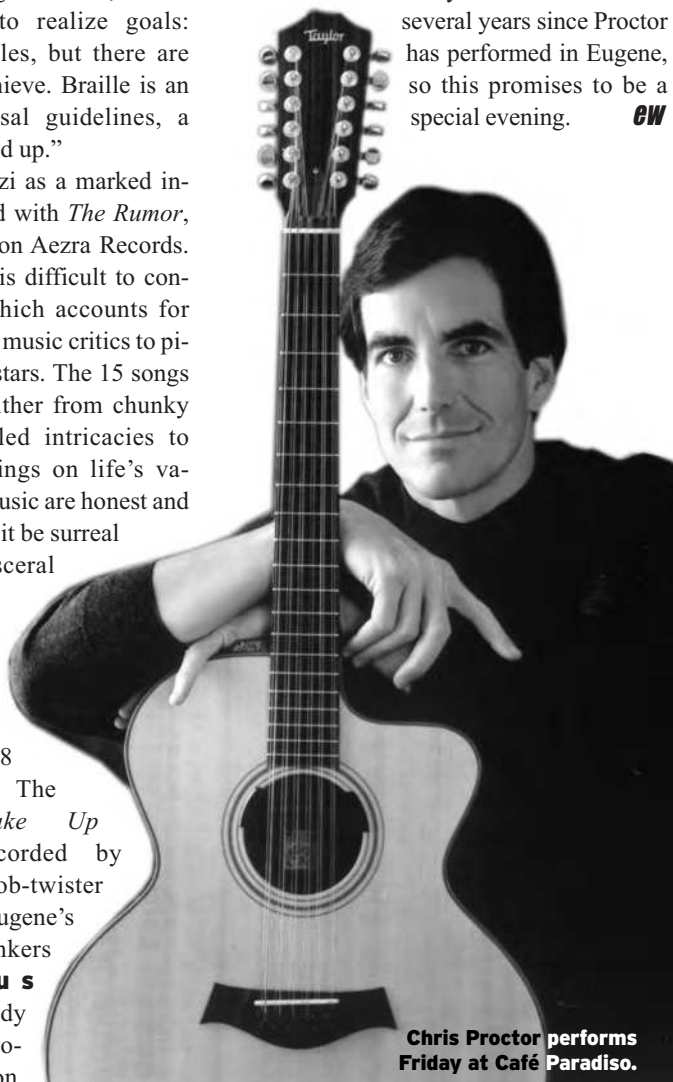
**F-Minus**, a hardcore band from Huntington Beach, Cal., debuted on Hellcat Records in 1998 with *Failed Society*. The band's latest, *Wake Up Screaming*, was recorded by the master knob-twister Steve Albini. Finally, Eugene's three-piece thrash-punkers **Blasphemous Abnormality** are Andy Larson on guitar and vocals, Denver Hamlin on

bass and vocals and drummer Ken Roberts. The group's been together two years, and won the WOW Hall's 2002 contest for Best Band Name.

Switching genres, on Friday, April 4th, Cafe Paradiso will host fingerstyle guitarist **Chris Proctor**. Proctor is touring in support of his newest release, *Influence*. Proctor has released nine recordings in all, and *Influence* is his seventh solo recording. Proctor's virtuosity has often been compared to Leo Kottke and Michael Hedges and he is sometimes billed as "baroque folk." Since winning the National Fingerstyle Guitar competition in 1982, Proctor has toured constantly. He records both his own compositions and his own arrangements of others' songs.

Nationally recognized as a master of fingerstyle guitar and as a steel-string guitar promoter, Proctor has also published several books and videos instructing others in his style of playing. His recent pursuits include the release of his fifth book of guitar transcriptions for Mel Bay Publications. As an endorser and clinician for Taylor Guitars since 1984, that company recently honored him with the new "Chris Proctor Signature Model" guitar. Proctor also has a track on an upcoming Windham Hill recording highlighting instrumental guitar called "Wood and Steel 3."

Proctor is also known for his groundbreaking uses of the electronic bow. As a performer, Proctor lets the guitar become the prime instrument of expression, releasing all of its components — rhythmic, melodic and harmonic, and allowing them to fully flourish. It's been several years since Proctor has performed in Eugene, so this promises to be a special evening. **EW**



Chris Proctor performs Friday at Café Paradiso.

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