

Fruit for Friends

The popular Australian act appears for KRVM.

I've told you about Fruit before, and this time the popular and entertaining Australian band is returning to Café Paradiso Sunday, July 18 as **Fruit...The Trio**, sans drummer Yanya Boston and bassist Brian Ruiz.

The performance is a benefit for Friends of KRVM, all the more reason to reserve your spot at the show. The trio consists of the three main women of the band, Susie Keynes and Sam Lohs on electric and acoustic guitars and Mel Watson showing off her talents on various horns. Each of those women write songs and sing, their vocals harmonizing effortlessly into a sisterly groove, combining to form funk, blues, ballads and rock with anthemic appeal.

Fruit formed in 1995 in the Southern Australian town of Adelaide. The initial formation had the fingerprint of fate, as each of the three women discovered they had all been booked to perform a show at the same venue on the same night. The threesome took the stage and realized they had a unique connection. Surprisingly, the idea of forming a band with three lead singers felt comfortable. According to Watson, "It started off as a project and it ended up being a lifestyle."

The group has performed and recorded as a trio before. The most recent recording, *The Trio Album: Live at the Church*, features the three women performing at the Church of the Trinity in Adelaide. The group has played thousands of shows since its inception and has performed at folk festivals and fairs all over the world. Audiences seem especially receptive here in the Northwest, where Fruit has performed several times.

New Orleans-based jam band **Saaraba** has done all it can in New Orleans; recording a debut studio album, headlining Tipitina's, and performing at Mardi Gras. Now, the band is ready to break out of the South and performs July 21 at Luckey's. The five-piece band performs reggae to

New Orleans-style funk and everything in between.

Saaraba formed two years ago, when guitarist/vocalist Danny Marks and drummer Boyanna Trayanova moved into an apartment above an abandoned convenience store in New Orleans. Recognizing an opportunity, the pair began hosting monthly open jam keg parties.

That's how saxophonist Joshua Scalf and trombonist Luke Hudleston became involved. Bassist Josh Riley hooked up with the four and Saaraba was born, and the New Orleans club circuit greeted them with open arms. In less than a year, the group recorded their self-titled debut CD to strong reviews by the city's daily newspaper and the premier musical publication, *Offbeat Magazine*.

The debut shows a strong sense of music rooted in reggae, with touches of ska and rock steady along with the island beats. There's a little Latin thrown in, some brass and funk winds blowing and a good sense of having fun. If you feel like dancing, check 'em out.

On Thursday, July 15, Sam Bond's Garage will host singer-songwriter **Joanne Rand** and her band, which was voted Sonoma County's Best Acoustic Band. Rand and band will be joined by a cappella vocal trio **Copper Wimmin**, who also hail from Sonoma County, where they have been singing together for more than a decade.

Copper Wimmin have been said to have the harmonic beauty of Sweet Honey in the Rock and the multicultural appeal of Zap Mama. The trio of women

share their ideals of a healing creative force and seek to enrapture audiences into "a complete awareness of our world and a desire to heal it."

Rand, once a pigtailed kid in Georgia, has released seven albums over a 20-year career. She became enchanted with the Pacific Northwest after traveling as a teen and lived in this area for six years. Her recent CD, January 2003's self-produced *Into the River*, is dedicated to a certain wild river she fell in love with while traveling through the area. She says, "Dive in! The river is yours, the river is now, river of life." Over the years she has emerged into a strong voice for preservation of wild places, "songs of transformation and grass-roots power."

When *Into the River* was released, Rand moved back to the Siskiyou Mountains and the river that nurtured her own spiritual growth and transformation. Her creativity was aroused once again and a batch of songs written in 2003 are destined for the upcoming release, *A Year in Orleans*. She also has a new band: The Rhythm of the Open Hearts.

Meanwhile, over at The Downtown Lounge, a brand new 1,000 sq. ft. dance floor is giving an opportunity for evening dance programming and lessons. Noted dance instructor Denise Steele, owner of The Joint is Jumping Dance Studio, will host Blue Mondays with '50s rock, East Coast swing and Lindy hop at 6 pm, followed by swing blues at 7 pm.

Steele has worked closely with Frankie Manning, Lindy hop innovator and choreographer and travels annually to Europe to dance and teach. On Tuesdays you can meet up with members of Eugene Swing Team at 7 pm for lessons until 8 pm and dancing until 10 pm. Wildcard Wednesdays offers instruction in either swing, Cajun/Zydeco or waltz from 7 until 10 pm.

Schedules alternate, so check with Downtown Lounge, or better yet, just plan on going down there every Wednesday! Thursday is Latin night, with amateur ballroom dancers teaching samba, cha cha, rumba, bolero and jive. Lessons start at 7 pm with dancing until 10 pm. With all these choices, you'll have happy feet! **EW**



Fruit...The Trio performs Sunday at Café Paradiso.

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