

Kory Clarke brings home Soul

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

Kory Clarke and his band may be part of a homecoming, but don't expect a parade.

The 1980 graduate of Livonia Bentley High School brings his group Warrior Soul into The Palace of Auburn Hills Friday, Oct. 25, opening for Queensrÿche.

A classic tale of the local rebel returned in the triumph of a conquering rock'n'roll god?

Not yet, but Clarke is getting there.

"I think I would feel some vindication if I could get some airplay on an FM, AOR (album-oriented rock) radio station or get a write-up in one of the big papers," said Clarke, 29, sounding a bit disgusted in a phone interview. "I feel some vindication in proving my critics and those who pushed me around in high school wrong."

Clarke is bitter, kind of like sucking a lemon after a shot of castor oil.

His experiences in 1980's trail-blazing outfits such as L-7 and Trial were fruitless, running around in an area he believes is indifferent to its musicians and artists. He also sums the Detroit area in general terms of being racist, conservative and "grumpy."

At this point, asking Clarke to pull out his high school yearbook seems as inappropriate as checking an Islamic cleric for his copy of "The Satanic Verses."

CLARKE's accomplishments are in the present. His band, Warrior Soul, has its second album out on David Geffen Records, "God, Drugs and the New Republic," a sonic blast of social commentary wrought through suburban petting.

In this visceral collage, Clarke burns down the facades surrounding drugs, religion, poverty and whatever else is on the evening news.

If Clarke comes across a tad antagonistic, one only needs to look at his past to know why.

Trained as a drummer, Clarke played in a cover band while in school. Then rebellion set in. He formed an anarchy outfit, The Attitudes, and began showing up at Bentley High School with purple and pink stripes in his hair.

Punk had arrived and Clarke was its self-appointed ambassador.

"Everybody was against me," Clarke said. "It's been stated so many times. I was a punk, man. Back then there were no punks."

Those who know him believe



Kory Clarke (second from left) and his band. McClanahan will fill The Palace of Auburn Hills mates — Mark Evans, John Ricco and Pete with the sound of Warrior Soul Friday, Oct. 25.

Clarke was ahead of his time. Dave Feeny also went to Bentley and was a "rookie" for The Attitudes. Feeny was one of a group of 10 students, spurred by Clarke, who began to adhere to the punk fashion of straight-legged jeans and short hair.

"HE WAS A freak," Feeny said with a laugh. "High school, he was the king of punk."

Musically, Clarke was also charting a new course. In addition to being an excellent drummer, Feeny recalls a show with Trial at The Freestyle in the early '80s.

Halfway through one song, Clarke told people in the audience to quit dancing and the band finished with a loud, distorted guitar feedback-induced frenzy. Few people appreciated the message.

Feed up, Clarke sought creative refuge, leaving for New York in 1985. After working as a bicycle messenger and as a weaver, he hooked up with Pete McClanahan and guitarist John Ricco and started Warrior Soul.

"I couldn't go any farther in Detroit," Clarke said. "I was in some bands that were well-run and I had

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— Kory Clarke

done that. There's was nothing going on.

"I don't know what Detroit cares about really... it doesn't care about the arts, at least not musicians."

Clarke eventually gave up drums to concentrate on his vocals and songwriting. Remarkably, Warrior Soul was signed by David Geffen Company after five gigs.

AFTER THEIR debut release, "Last Decade Dead Century," Warrior Soul toured Europe with Metallica and garnered favorable reviews in music publications Sound and Kerrang.

The group's music has been described as something as metal for the mind. But simply placing Warrior Soul in the spandex-and-teased-hair crowd won't suffice.

"You can't really categorize us," Clarke said. "It's the outlook and

the attitude..."

High school alienation only serves as part of Clarke's discontent. He was also influenced by the prescribed musical rebellion of MC 5 and, to a lesser degree, Ted Nugent. Later, he became immersed in the post-punk fury of Joy Division and Public Image Ltd.

Things such as heroin wars and the park movement in the late '70s and even the riots in 1967 before then had an impact on his world view, Clarke said.

All of which makes the indifference by the media in this area to Warrior Soul's music more impat-

able to him.

"One of these days I'm going to sock somebody," he said.

Warrior Soul opens for Queensrÿche 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 25, at The Palace of Auburn Hills. Tickets are \$20. For information, call 377-0100.

IN CONCERT

Y.M.I.

Monday, Oct. 21 — Y.M.I. will perform at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

PARADISE VALLEY JAZZ JAM

Monday, Oct. 21 — Paradise Valley Jazz Jam Session will perform at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 832-2355.

FATIMA MANSIONS

Tuesday, Oct. 22 — Fatima Mansions will perform at the Shelter, under St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.

CHISEL BROTHERS

Tuesday, Oct. 22 — Chisel Brothers will perform at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 832-2355.

VUDU HIPPIES

Wednesday, Oct. 23 — Vudu Hippies will perform at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

JIM GUSTAFSON JUMP CITY REVUE

Wednesday, Oct. 23 — Jim Gustafson Jump City Revue will perform at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 832-2355.

JONATHAN RICHMAN

Wednesday, Oct. 23 — Jonathan Richman will perform two shows, 7:30 and 9:30 p.m., at The Ark, 437 S. Main, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$11.50 in advance. For information, call 99-MUSIC.

THE ATTIC

Wednesday, Oct. 23 — The Attic will perform at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

GWEN AND CHARLES SCALES

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Gwen and Charles Scales will perform at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$11.50 in advance. For information, call 996-2747.

VIOLENT FEMMES

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Violent Femmes will perform with guests, Goobar and the Peas, at the Michigan Theatre, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Reserved tickets are \$18.50. For information, call 99-MUSIC.

BPOC EXPRESS BAND

Thursday, Oct. 24 — BPOC Express Band will perform at The Stonehouse Blues Cafe, 19803 Halston, between Seven Mile and Eight Mile roads, Detroit. For information, call 993-3255.

TRINIDAD TRIPOLI STEEL BAND

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band will perform at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

FLOWER

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Flower will perform at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 832-2355.

JIMMY LEY AND THE PUNK PUMPER

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Jimmy Ley and the Punk Pumpers will perform at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, between Ford Road and Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For information, call 846-1920.

CROSSED WIRE

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Crossed Wire will perform at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

VIOLENT FEMMES

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Violent Femmes will perform at the Michigan Theatre, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Reserved seats are \$18.50. For information, call 99-MUSIC.

THE TOLL

Friday, Oct. 25 — The Toll will perform with guests, Born Naked, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

GRANFALLOON

Friday, Oct. 25 — Granfalloon will perform with guests, Vudu Hippies, at Lili's, 2129 Jacob, Hamtramck. For information, call 875-6555.

DETROIT ENERGY ASYLUM

Friday, Oct. 25 — Detroit Energy Asylum will perform at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 832-2355.

TRUST FUND

Friday, Oct. 25 — Trust Fund will perform with guests, Pop Star Siddle, at Finney's Pub, 3645 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 831-8070.

PIT VIPERS

Friday, Oct. 25, and Saturday, Oct. 26 — Pit Vipers will perform Friday at The Attic Bar, 11667 Jos. Campau, Hamtramck. For information, call 365-4194. The band also performs Saturday at Teo's Pub, 35 S. Main, Clawson. For information, call 425-4755.

JUDY MOWATT

Saturday, Oct. 26 — Judy Mowatt will perform with Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare at The Majestic Theatre, 4140 Woodward, Detroit. Doors open at 9 p.m. Tickets are \$10. For information, call 831-9700.

THE HANNIBALS

Friday, Oct. 25 — The Hannibals will perform at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

GRANFALLOON

Friday, Oct. 25 — Granfalloon will perform at Lili's, 2129 Jacob, off Jos. Campau, Hamtramck. For information, call 875-6555.

JOHNNY WINTER

Friday, Oct. 25 — Johnny Winter will perform at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets are \$14.50 in advance. For information, call 961-MELT.

Coughlan finds niche with Fatima Mansions

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

Sure Cathal Coughlan could find more fulfilling ways to vent his wrath, but they don't pack punching bags with dynamite.

To say the Fatima Mansions' lead singer has a somewhat jaundiced outlook at life is to dismiss the water near the Exxon Valdez oil spill as a bit murky.

Coughlan's angry, he's screeching and, best of all, more cynical than a bagful of tortois at a labor rally.

This translates into some seriously skewed, gushingly fragmented and vertigo induced pieces of pop and rock on Fatima Mansions' "Viva Dead Ponies" (Radioactive/MCA). Bouncy bits of dance synthesizers belie the darkness that beeps inside of Coughlan's mind.

"A necklace of rubber, burning bright/a burning rubber necklace for my angel's delight," begins Coughlan in the most benevolent, sugary tone on the opening cut. Unexpectedly, he goes into a caterwaul discourse on the various possibilities of civil obedience with all the virulence of Mount St. Helens.

The former member of Microdisney dismisses "Angel's Delight" as something of "a little piece of light entertainment." In response to Britain's poll tax and ensuing police crackdown when people demonstrated.

"I figured that's one thing I could do they couldn't touch me for," said Coughlan, transplanted to London from Cork, Ireland. "I could make a record..." In a comic book sort of way.

LIKE A MADMAN perched above in a confined viewing box, Coughlan seemingly thumbs his nose at society below through his music. But with the insanity of poverty and despair in everyday life, maybe he's not so daft after all.

He equates Western leaders such as former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher with dead dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in the fuzzy discord of "Blues for Ceausescu." He mocks deity, casting Jesus among other things as a London shopkeeper in the title-track "Viva Dead Ponies."

These are things Microdisney didn't allow for with its mainstream musings. Coughlan formed Fatima Mansions — named after a run-down housing project in north Dublin in 1988, joining with Hugh Bunker, Nick Bagnall, Nick Allum and Alindras O'Guama.

In a short while, the band has gained instant notoriety, releasing "Against Nature" in 1988 in the UK. Irish music magazine *Hot Press* named Fatima Mansions "Band of the Year" and *Mortuary* picked the band's LP as one of his favorite albums in a New Musical Express poll.

Kudos aside, Coughlan has found his niche.

"There were a lot of things going on in music in the late '80s I was interested in that weren't coming out at all with what I was doing," Coughlan said. "I came to realize I was making records I wouldn't really want to listen to myself and were completely unrelated to what I was listening to at home."

OBVIOUSLY, Coughlan sought a harder edge to his music. "Viva Dead Ponies" delivers, featuring a renege mix of spewing punk guitar and sensuous techno melodies. His hardness at life goes deeper.



Cathal Coughlan, lead singer of Fatima Mansions, has been described as angry, screeching and cynical which translates into some seriously skewed pop and rock on the band's "Viva Dead Ponies" (Radioactive/MCA) album.

Coughlan grew up in Cork, Ireland, and banged around as a musician. Disenchanted with the clichéd Dublin music scene, he left for London in 1983.

Ireland, not exactly known for its abundance of glowing optimists, only gets part of the credit for turning Coughlan into a sardonic songwriter.

"I think it has more to do with my relocation in Britain, really," said Coughlan, who once studied medicine in college. "I found it difficult the way things were running in Ireland I just had to get the hell out of there."

"Since I've got to Britain, I've watched the place deteriorate into a world of bankruptcy and superstition in much the same way Ireland did in the early '80s."

"Angel's Delight" is only one acid-induction induced number concerning this subject. The opening reference to rubber necklaces might lead one to believe it's a song decriing the situation in South Africa.

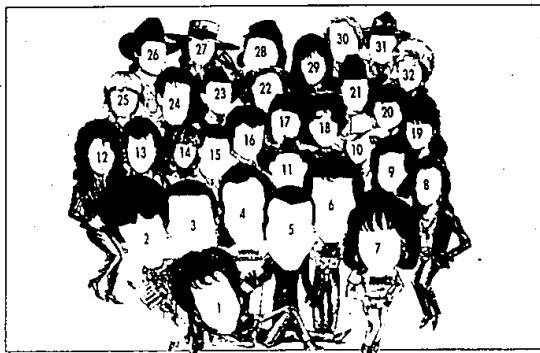
"IN A WAY, it's taking advantage of the marginal position of somebody in this country that says, 'OK, you're nobody.' OK, I'm nobody. I'm going to make seductive music. What you going to do about it? Nothing, because nobody's going to hear it because you've taken me off the radio."

All this gloom and doom can get a guy down at times. Coughlan agrees, but even a cynic's cynic can find a daisy in a compost pile once in awhile.

"Sometimes it's hard to get motivated to walk when things have been rough for awhile," he said. "But people are buying the record and we're going to America."

Fatima Mansions perform Tuesday, Oct. 22, at The Shelter, under St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?



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