

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 Queen'sryche.

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 1980s trail-blazing outfits such as L7 and Trial were fruitless, running amok 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's record "God Damn the New Republic," a sonic blast of social commentary wrought through suburban pettiness and urban decay.

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

If Clarke comes only to look at tangents, one need only 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 a political 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: mates — Mark Evans, John Ricco and Pete

McClanahan will fill The Palace of Auburn Hills with the sound of Warrior Soul Friday, Oct. 25.

Clarke was ahead of his time. Dave Feeny also went to Bentley and was a "readie" 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. "In 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 quiet down and the band finished with a loud, distorted guitar feedback-induced frenzy. Few people appreciated the message.

Clarke sought creative refuge, leaving for New York in 1985. After working as a bicycle messenger and as a veggie, 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

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 musically," he said.

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-leather 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 them 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 implausible to him.

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

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

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 under the Exxon Valdez oil spill as a little water.

Coughlan is angry, he's screaming and, best of all, he's musical though he's hoarse at a labor rally.

This translates into some seriously skewed, gushingly fragmented and worty 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/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 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 Detroit's poll tax and environmental laws, he's where 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 thumps 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" (Radioactive/MCA) album.

In a short while, the band has gained instant notoriety, releasing "Against Nature" in 1988 in the UK. Indie music magazine *Hot Press* named Fatima Mansions' "Band of the Year" and Morrison picked the band's LP as one of his favorite albums. *Newsweek* and *Entertainment Weekly* have found his niche.

"I think I was the last 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 renegeade 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, screaming and cynical which translates into some serious 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 cliché Dublin music scene, he left for London in 1983.

Ireland is not exactly known for its abundance of glowing optimists, only gets part of the credit for turning Coughlan into a screaming, worty hoarse.

"I think I had more to do with my relocation to 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-indigestion induced number concerning this subject. The opening reference to rubber necklaces might lead one to believe it's a song decrying the situation in South Africa.

"IN A WAY, it's taking advantage of the marginal position of somebody who has in this country that says, 'OK, you're nobody.' OR, I'm nobody, I'm going to take sedatives to what you're going to do with it? Nothing, because nobody's going to hear it because you've taken me off the radio."

All this gloom and doom can do is 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, underneath St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.

IN CONCERT

• Y.M.L.

Monday, Oct. 21 — Y.M.L. 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 832-3355.

• 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 932-2355.

• 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 832-3355.

• JONATHAN RICHMAN

Wednesday, Oct. 23 — Jonathan Richman will perform at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. For information, call 919-99-MUSIC.

• THE ATTIC

Wednesday, Oct. 23 — The Attic will perform at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 935-0800.

• GWEN AND CHARLES SCALES

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Gwen and Charles Scales will perform at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. For information, call 864-1200 or 864-1201.

• VIOLENT FEMMES

Thursday, Oct. 24 — Violent Femmes will perform with guests, Goobers and the Peas, at the Michigan Theatre, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Reserved seats are \$18.50. For information, call 993-4194.

• BPOC EXPRESS BAND

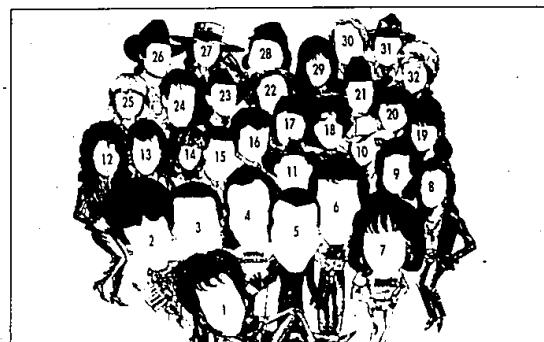
Thursday, Oct. 24 — BPOC Express Band will perform at The Stonehouse Blues Club, 1980 Halston, between Seven Mile and Eight Mile roads, Detroit. For information, call 936-0050.

• ALL OF US

All of which makes the indifference by the media in this area to Warrior Soul's music more implausible to him.

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

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