

# Street

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1993

(F-5B) (O)5B

## STREET CRACKS



A woman's comedian: Diane Ford

## Diane Ford: Jokes meant for a woman

BY BON SADLER  
SPECIAL WRITER

Diane Ford does not fit in the mold of the conventional female comic. She is a brash, opinionated, earthy performer who rarely minces — or is at a loss for — words.

"I'm a woman's comedian," Ford said in an interview last week from a hotel room in West Palm Beach, Fla., where she was performing her newest concept, a one-woman show called "Anatomy of a Woman."

"I think I really speak for women," she said. "I don't sugarcoat it; I say what women say when they're alone. A lot of my comedy comes out of the relationships I've had with my closest friends. I've said things in mixed company that women don't like to admit to."

Unfortunately, Detroit audiences will not have the chance to see Ford's "Anatomy of a Woman" when she stops at the Comedy Castle in Royal Oak later this week.

"Anatomy" is a more elaborate stage production than the typical 45-minute club headliner set; it runs around 90 minutes. Ford admits that she's still working out the kinks in the show, having only been performing it for the past month. Eventually, she would like to take her comedic tour de force to New York for an extended run.

"This is the culmination of my 15 years of stand-up," Ford said. "It's got a little more of those poignant theatrical moments, like menopause, how many eggs a woman is born with, and things like that."

Ford's comedy reflects truthfully on the many differences between men and women and how that is played out every day in living Technicolor.

"Men and women think differently. Men go linear, like A to B. Women go from A to P to Q to D to Z and ask if men see the connection. Men say 'No, it looks like an eye chart.'"

When asked if she is to female comedy what Tim Allen is for men, Ford liked the analogy. "I really like Tim. He's a very good friend. I guess I represent the ultimate female perspective. He represents the ultimate male perspective."

Surprisingly, men make up an increasing amount of Ford's audiences and are highly supportive of her.

See COMEDY, 6B

## At The Mike

■ **PRACTICE YOUR "SEINLANGUAGE"**... Hope you have your tickets for Jerry Seinfeld's Turkey Day shows at the Fox Theatre Nov. 25. They've been sold out for months. If not, I'm sure Jerry would love it if you went out and bought his best-selling book, "SeinLanguage."

■ **RUN FOR THE BORDER...** Detroit's most prominent Mexican-American comic is none other than Ruben, Ruben. Catch Ruben Nov. 25 and 26 at Joey's Comedy Club on the lower level of Paisano's Restaurant in Dearborn. Call 584-8885 for reservations.

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Street Scene next week:

- Mark Gallo's interview with Charm Farm and Christina Fuoco's report on a tenuous Thanksgiving.
- John Monaghan's look at the latest in alternative movies.

# 'Everything goes' with Bliss

■ Caelum Bliss began as a side project of members of Noc Barrage, Blue Nation and Surge to Union. Since its inception, however, the band's sound which includes a string section and other non-traditional instruments, has been welcomed into clubs.

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

A cellist and a violinist are the last things you'd expect to see in hazy lounges.

That doesn't faze Caelum Bliss. They weren't afraid to venture out of the cookie-cutter "alternative" music scene. The band uses these non-

## STREET BEATS

traditional instruments along with Melissa Emily's angelic voice to create its eerie gothic sound. The people behind the instruments are equally as intriguing. Caelum Bliss's lineup includes keyboardist/violinist Tony Hamera of the metal/industrial band Noc Barrage; and cellist Michael Madill, guitarist of the industrial band HAL. Emily is a former backup singer for the alternative rock band Blue Nation.

"There were certain things that I couldn't do with Noc Barrage that I would have like to have done," the soft-spoken Hamera said over coffee about his side project. "Like playing with violins and I always wanted to have a female singer. It's a creative outlet."

Madill is aware of the strange looks the band sometimes gets. "You know how it is. They say, 'Wow, man. That's cool.' It's different, I know," Madill said.

Working with both ends of the musical spectrum shows the artists' diversity. "The possibilities for expanding Caelum Bliss's sound are endless," Hamera said.

"I knew it was gonna be no holds barred," Hamera said. "Everything goes. In Noc Barrage, there's really no chance for that. Noc Barrage has a definite sound and direction."

"That is part of what attracted Emily to the group."

"I was really ready for something new. I wanted to be the front person.



Blissful sound: Caelum Bliss includes Dave Johnson (from left), Tony Hamera, Mark Nowakowski, Bill King and singer Melissa Emily (foreground).

I learned a lot (through Blue Nation) like to write melodies around everything," said Emily who speaks in a barely audible whisper.

Recently the band, which cites among its influences Miranda Sex Garden and the Cranes, held a record release party at Industry in Pontiac complete with a string section. At other shows, including one earlier this year at St. Andrew's Hall, the band has used candles and white sheets to create the complimentary moody atmosphere.

Most bands insist that what they're doing is original. But this

time, it applies. "No one is doing anything that we're doing," Hamera said.

The band, which also includes Surge to Union's Dave Johnson on guitar, drummer Bill King and bassist Mark Nowakowski, intends on keeping it that way.

"We're not going to adapt the music to get signed (to a record label). We go with how we feel," she said.

"That counts for the audience as well. "If they don't like us, they can't say we suck as a band. We put a lot into whatever we do," Hamera said.

Caelum Bliss performs with HAL, Batterie Acid, Sweaterfish, Soleil Noir and Smothering Anna on Friday, Nov. 19, at the Majestic Theatre, 4140 Woodward Ave., Detroit. For more information, call 833-5700. Caelum Bliss will also perform with Succatfish Wednesday, Nov. 24, at Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck (874-0909), and Thursday, Dec. 9, at 3-D, 1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak. (589-3344) Their self-titled cassette is available at Record Time in Roseville and other independent record stores.

# MacColl finally gets chance to sing in U.S.

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

Although English singer Kirsty MacColl considers herself "fairly militant" about political causes,



Kirsty MacColl: Performs at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor Nov. 18.

she won't ask her to be involved in any charity records. MacColl is not interested.

"I won't do one of those charity records with loads of celebrities who are singing a really bad song," she said via telephone from New York City.

Aside from that, she's skeptical. "You never really know where the money is going and if it's just to get them (the organizer) on TV to further their career."

She did, however, lend her musical support to the "Red, Hot and Blue" Cole Porter tribute/AIDS benefit project with her two duets with the Pogues.

"That one was good; I got to do a Cole Porter song which offers many possibilities."

MacColl is in the United States for her first tour of the country. She'll play this area on Thursday, Nov. 18, at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor with David Gray. She was scheduled to tour the U.S. in 1991 but her record company (Charisma) blew it out at the last minute. "It was unfortunate because her record, 'Electric Landlady' and the single 'Walking Down Madison' were turning heads."

That was the beginning of the end of her relationship with Charisma Records. The result was MacColl without a record label. She recorded her latest effort, "Titanic Days," before signing to I.R.S. Records in May.

"I had a few (labels interested), but this one was by far the most realistic," she said.

She describes "Titanic Days" as "that dual fear and excitement of a huge tide where everything is

constantly changing." The album is along the same vein of "Electric Landlady" which blends MacColl's wit and sometimes dark lyrics with brilliant melody. The first single "Can't Stop Killing You" finds MacColl collaborating with Johnny Marr of the Smiths, Electronic and The The. In other words, she has also performed with on record or on stage with Talking Heads, Robert Plant and Morrissey. She laughs when the diversity between Plant and Morrissey is noted.

"I'm not doing anymore. I might do something. I really haven't got a lot of time. I'm doing more of my own thing now. When you're on tour, time is precious."

She prefers to spend her time with her children, age 7 and 8, and in her home studio. Back at home, she's also more politically active. She hosted a BBC documentary on water pollution, entitled "Don't Go Near the Water."

MacColl prefers to be recognized for her music rather than for making public statements on particular causes, however.

"For me, it's important that people view me as a songwriter and singer, not as someone standing on the sidewalk telling people what to think."

Kirsty MacColl performs with special guest David Gray at the Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor, on Thursday, Nov. 18. Doors open at 9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7.50 in advance. Must be 19 with ID to enter. For more information, call 996-8555.

**Tuesday, Nov. 16**

**HOT AUTUMN NIGHTS**  
With local chanteuse Wil Downing, keyboardist Jeff Lorber and saxophonist Art Porter at the Royal Oak Music Theatre, Detroit. (jazz/rhythm and blues)  
642-6566

**YO LA TENGO**  
With Tiger Trap at Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. (rock)  
996-8555

**THE VIDEO APPRECIATION NIGHT**  
3-D, 1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak. (alternative rock)  
569-3344

**CHRIS SMITHER**  
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. (rock)  
761-1451

**Wednesday, Nov. 17**  
CHICAGO

### IN CONCERT

Fox Theatre, 2115 Woodward, Detroit. (classic rock/pop)  
642-6567

**DETROIT MUSICIANS ALLIANCE**  
Birthday party at UR's 21, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck.  
872-6259

**SUGAR MOUNT**  
With Dread Filmstone and Universal Xpression at Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. (rock)  
334-1999

**THE SPACE BROTHERS**  
Able's, 5758 Cass, Detroit. (alternative rock)  
832-2355

**KEROSENE**  
With Stock Market Flowers at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. (alternative rock)  
961-MELT

**RED FOOTED GENIUS**  
Rock's, 511 Church, Ann Arbor. (alternative rock)  
966-2747

**LARRY LARSON**  
Grounds Coffeehouse on University of Detroit Mercy campus, McNichols and Livernotti roads, Detroit. Part of "Hunger Week" activities. (folk)  
993-1000

**Thursday, Nov. 18**

**CONSOLE PAGE**  
With Vince Neil at the Palace of Auburn Hills, I-75 and Lapeer Road, Auburn Hills. (rock) cancelled  
377-0100

**MEATLOAF**  
State Theatre, 2115 Woodward, Detroit. (pop/rock)  
961-5430

**BIZZOCCHI**  
With Dougboys and Fudge at Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. (alternative rock)  
334-1999

**FRANKIE BEVERLY AND MAZE**  
With Toni Braxton at Fox Theatre, Detroit. (rhythm and blues)  
642-6566

**TAD**  
With Therapy? and Barkmarket at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. (alternative rock)  
961-MELT

**FOUR HANDS**  
Shadowbox Caffe, 2917 Trowbridge, Hamtramck. (acoustic rock)  
873-CAFE

See IN CONCERT, 7B