

## STREET SCENE

## Save Ferris' 'Eileen' cover wins support of fans



CHRISTINA FUOCO

The pop/ska/swing band Save Ferris believes in following public demand.

On a whim the band, from Orange County, Calif., band played its rendition of Dexty's Midnight Runners' 1983 hit "Come on Eileen" one night at a show. Its popularity spread like wildfire.

So, while Save Ferris was recording its debut album "It Means Everything" (Epic), its members decided to throw it on.

"It's like one of those things. We never had any intention of doing a cover. We started doing the song live, and the reaction was really good," said Eric Zamora, also sax player.

"A couple of radio stations were asking for a live version of

it, and we got a lot of requests for it. We just went with the demand from the public and it worked out really well."

The first single off the album, "Come on Eileen" has put Save Ferris in the spotlight.

Save Ferris, named after the title character in the John Hughes' movie "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," dabbles in a variety of genres on "It Means Everything" including swing, cool jazz and ska. The seven-member band is led by singer Monique "Mo' Pow" Powell who is formally trained in opera and jazz singing.

Besides paying homage to Dexty's Midnight Runners, Save Ferris gives a nod to an unlikely subject - Spam.

"Spam, it's pink and it's oval," she sings. "Spam, it's made in Chernobyl."

Save Ferris' members, all of whom are in their early 20s, remember the days when they couldn't get into clubs to see

shows and recall it in "Under 21." It describes the misadventures of a music lover who can't get into a free show because she's not old enough.

Zamora said that releasing a cover song as a first single has its good and bad points.

"Some people like the original version better, but a lot of people like this one. It's just something we're using as one of those things to say 'hi.' Now that we've released that song, we can move on to our own."

Save Ferris, Marcy Playground, Fuel and the Eclectics, perform at 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7, at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets are \$5.99 in advance for the all-ages show. For more information, call (313) 961-MELT.

• Ann Arbor-based rock band Getaway Cruiser just wrapped up its debut album for Sony/BMG Music.

Working in Philadelphia with

producers the Butcher Brothers (Urgo Overkill, Cypress Hill), Getaway Cruiser also brought on board Pras from the Fugees and Cool Keith from Ultramagnetic MCs and Dr. Octagon.

"Working with him was amazing," said Getaway Cruiser's Chris Peters, formerly of West Bloomfield. Peters described the album as a "Small Faces, New York Dolls, Rolling Stones meets T-Rex meets all the hip-hop stuff that we love."

The album, he said, should be out in the spring. Meanwhile, Getaway Cruiser is planning on touring most of 1998.

Peters said it's important that listeners know that his band is a rock 'n' roll band.

"We're a rock 'n' roll band that listens to tons and tons of lots of music. We want to make it very clear we're a rock 'n' roll band. It's about being a great live band. The one thing that we bring to the table is a heavy



Playing St. Andrew's: Save Ferris - from left, Marc Harismendy, Eric Zamora, Jose Castellanos, Bill Uechi (seated), Brian Mashburn, T-Bone Willy, and Monique Powell.

R&B influence. The songwriting on this record (reflects what) we've been listening to which is a lot of Faith Evans and Missy Elliott."

If you have a question or comment for Christina Fuoco, you may leave a message for her at

(313) 953-2047, ext. 2130, or by writing to her at The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schuler Road, Livonia, MI 48150, or via e-mail at CFuoco@aol.com. Listen to Christina Fuoco's Friday at 5 p.m. with Millen on WKRR-FM (97.1).

## Students learn about the creative process



ANN DELISI

Over the course of about one and a half seasons of *Backstage Pass*, we have looked at a lot of art - dance, theater, poetry, cinema, the visual arts and music of every kind.

Now, you'd think that this would provide some insights into the creative process. And it has.

Once you observe enough artists, each one becomes like a dot in a painting by Seurat. As you back away for perspective, an image begins to emerge.

The picture that coalesces shows certain constants about those precious people who create the art we all enjoy. Dedication to their form. Focus on their work. An ear for and trust of their creative inner voice. But, ultimately, the creative process remains a mystery. Creating art isn't a cheap mail-order trick, it's perhaps the one true magic we have left.

Even a comparison to magic chaplains art. Could you imagine taking a class in "magic appreciation?" (Chapter One: Which one is Siegfried and which one is Roy?) Yet classes in art appreciation fill up at campuses all over the world. Sure, the more you know about art, the more deeply you can appreciate it. But what

you "like" will always pass through a complex subjective filter of preferences, attitudes, experiences, mood and mystery.

Now, take the leap to the other side of the canvas. How do you teach somebody to be an artist?

Seems impossible, which is probably why so many people say artists are born, not made. But with all the art schools in the world, it must be true that art can not only be taught, it can be learned. The Detroit area is home to some of the best art schools on the planet, and at an upcoming exhibit at Gallerie Blu in Birmingham, you can see the results of not only the artistic process, but the process of teaching the artistic process as well.

The show will feature student work resulting from a class at Detroit's Center for Creative Studies (CCS) called "Art and Artifact." The course is taught by professor Susan Aaron-Taylor explained, "I wanted the students to get inspiration from outside themselves." Before accepting students into her class, Aaron-Taylor interviewed each one to not only make sure their personal artistic direction had been established, but to determine their interest in archeological research and anthropological objects. "I wanted them to see the beauty in the objects which sometimes means experiencing the symbolism within the piece."

So students were given special access to the non-exhibited col-

lections of Cranbrook Institute of Science in Bloomfield Hills. Students donned white gloves and sifted through the science and natural history museum's collection of old post cards, shrunken skulls, Egyptian amulets and all manner of artifacts. They were required to select a prehistoric or historic item, study it and then create an art piece or series of work in any medium inspired by the object.

The exhibition will reflect the diversities of medium, approach and also the array of objects to which individual students were drawn. Donna Maskill, a CCS senior living in Ferndale, was intrigued by bombillas, which are straws used to drink a South American tea, called "mate."

Maskill explained how she found her artifact. "I was instantly attracted to the bombillas. They were exquisite to look at and remarkable to hold. The drinking of mate is a cultural tradition in South America and while the straws were all used for the same thing, each one was a little different. I found connection and separateness in this."

Some quick housekeeping: *Backstage Pass* is off the air this week and next to make way for Detroit Public Television's Winterfest '98 pledge drive. We'll be back for one show on Dec. 18 at 9:30 p.m. on Detroit Public Television, Channel 56, before we're then bumped by the holidays.

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