

Meaningful act pleases crowd Agassi

For a band like the Violent Femmes, performing live presents something of a paradox.

On the one hand, Gordon Gano, Victor DeLorenzo and Brian Ritchie are excellent performers. On the other hand, their music is very introspective and often unhappy. Since rock 'n' roll audiences tend to be composed of young fans out to have a good time, unhappy music can be a problem.

As the audience grows, so does the problem, and the artist finds himself playing to more and more people who don't want to hear any heavy stuff, dude.

When the audience outgrows the band, performers quickly become self-parodies, as R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe clearly proved Saturday night. However, bands that refuse to make any concessions to their audience quickly become unpopular.

So how does a band like the Femmes satisfy its audience without losing its message in the process? At the Thursday night show in Memorial Hall, the answer proved to be a delicate compromise. Lead singer/guitarist Gano teased, cajoled and, when he had to, ignored the audience in the course of 25 songs in two hours.

DeLorenzo and Ritchie provided enthusiastic backup all evening, but Gano was the center of attention. He led the band through spirited versions of "Fat," "Nightmares," "I Hear the Rain," "Promise" and "Mother of a Girl," just for openers. Then the show really started to come into focus with

Ron Crawford Concert

a wire-taut rendition of "Country Death Song," arguably one of the grimmest songs ever recorded.

The crowd happily clapped along with the music.

The Femmes then completely changed the tone of the concert for the first of many times by breaking into the song that got Gano expelled from the National Honor Society, "Gimme the Car."

Then the band, later joined by Horns of Dilemma's Peter Balestrieri and Sigmund Snopek, went on to play a variety of songs from all four of its albums, including "Never Tell," "Kiss Off," "Jesus Walking on the Water" and its only cover of the night, "Santa Catalina."

The Femmes didn't try anything really risky, however, until the encore. They started off with a crowd-pleasing performance of "Add It Up" that got the audience on its feet, dancing and singing.

Then the lights dimmed until a single spotlight focused on Gano. With the crowd still cheering, Gordon strummed his guitar and sang the dirgelike "Nothing Worth Living For."

The crowd shuffled restlessly; here and there an impatient fan yelled something unintelligible.

After two verses, the band quietly segued into "Confessions." The somber tone was momentarily broken when Gano coughed, but the band quickly recovered and finished the song.

At the end, the lights brightened to a hellish orange as Gano sank to his knees, eyes closed, and fingered the same riff over and over. The song collapsed into a cacophony of improvisation that included blasts on a hunting horn and conch shell. And for a full five minutes, Gano knelt in the center of the stage with his eyes closed.

The show should have ended right there with the visual incarnation of all the Femmes' music, but it didn't.

Gano got up, dismissed the band and, as if to say, "It's OK, I'm feeling better," stood in the spotlight and sang the upbeat spiritual "Faith." Gano brought the rest of the band back out — "It wouldn't be right to finish the show without the rest of the guys" — and the Femmes ended with the syrupy "Good Feeling."

The show was an obvious success. The band connected with the audience, and the audience responded eagerly — too eagerly at times. There was also no doubt that the large crowd limited the band's freedom to experiment. But that, as they say, is the price of fame.

At the awards ceremony Agassi looked out at his adoring crowd, saying "Charlotte — what a place to play tennis, huh? I love you guys, and you'll see me here next year." Wild applause and a few sighs of relief followed.

After the ceremony Agassi, sur-

rounded by bodyguards, walked off the court to a gold Mercedes waiting in the parking lot. He did stop once more outside to sign autographs but quickly sped off with his girlfriend already in the back seat.

He may have lost a match he should have won, skipped a press

conference following the finals, and not gone out of his way to indulge his fans with attention, but Andre Agassi can rest assured that on April 29 his family won't be the only people sending him gifts for his 19th birthday. The girls still love him.

Campus Calendar

The DTH Campus Calendar is a daily listing of University-related activities sponsored by academic departments, student services and student organizations officially recognized by the Division of Student Affairs. To appear in Campus Calendar, announcements must be submitted on the Campus Calendar form by NOON one business day before the announcement is to run. Saturday and Sunday events are printed in Friday's calendar and must be submitted on the Wednesday before the announcement is to run. Forms and a drop box are located outside the DTH office, 104 Union. Items of interest: lists ongoing events from the same campus organizations and follows the same deadline schedule as Campus Calendar. Please use the same form.

Monday

2:15 p.m. University Career Planning and Placement Ser-

vices will have a summer job hunting workshop in 108 Hanes.

4 p.m. Math Club will sponsor Professor Ladnor Geissenger, speaking about the new computer software package and dealing with small abstract groups in 332 Phillips.

7 p.m. Human Rights Week '89 will have a committee meeting in the Campus Y Resource Center. Topics will include keynote progress, steering committee, T-shirts and summer strategy. All are welcome. Anorexia Nervosa and Related Dis-

8 p.m. Speech Communications Department will present "Reflections on the Wall: Letters and Poems Left at the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial" in the Union Cabaret. Admission is free. 8:30 p.m. Fellowship of Christian Athletes will have their last meeting of the semester. Everyone is welcome.

Items of Interest

Elections Board has applications available for the 1989-90 school year at the Union Desk or Suite C. They are due May 5; interviews will be conducted early next fall. Call David Smith at 933-4854 or 962-5201 for information.

University Career Planning and Placement Services requests that seniors with definite plans for next year, either job, graduate or professional school, complete a follow-up form for UCPPS in 211 Hanes.

UCPPS is also recruiting six student representatives for a new Advisory Committee. This committee will also include employer and faculty representatives. Rising sophomores, juniors and seniors are invited to apply in 211 Hanes by May 1.

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