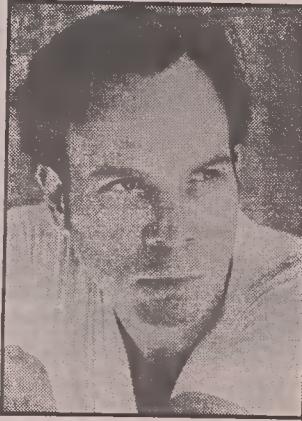


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Q Culture

Cris and Tret to play Carolinas

by Brian D. Holcomb
Q-Notes Staff

Cris Williamson and Tret Fure make a return to Charlotte on May 17, appearing at Tremont Music Hall. Called the "Fave Rave" tour, they will be performing old favorites as well as tracks from their latest album *Between the Covers*. Other Carolinas appearances include Be Here Now in Asheville on May 20, the Handlebar in Greenville, SC, on May 21 and Camp Pleiades in Bakersville, NC on May 23.

Cris and Tret have taken their act to the Internet and this tour's set lists have been developed based upon input from their fans via their web page (www.cris-tret.com). *Between the Covers* has gotten rave reviews from publications across the country as well as from other recording artists. Several cuts have received substantial radio airplay. The second collaboration between Williamson and Fure, *Between the Covers* has more of a true "folksy" feel than *Postcards from Paradise*. To those lesbians who grew up memorizing Cris Williamson's songs (*The Changer and The Changed* was the seminal les-

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bian album of the 1970s), it will be a welcome return.

There are a few surprises along the way, of course. "Please Say," for example, is an interesting, and not unpleasant, venture into a reggae sound. Reflections of the last two decades of women's music can be heard throughout the disc: Judy Collins, Joni Mitchell and Melissa Etheridge can all be heard hiding within the tracks. The difference between this recording and others, however, is that it is just as likely that Cris Williamson developed the sound first and the other artists followed her lead.

Williamson's biography reads like that of the women's music movement itself. *The Changer and the Changed* was released in 1975 and remains one of the best selling independent releases of all time. She co-founded Olivia Records when independent labels were rare and a women's label was unheard of. The label issued her next 14 titles and was a driving force in the establishment of women's music as a genre.

In the years since, Williamson has received praise both as a songwriter and as a vocalist. She has collaborated with legends of the music industry and has forged a sound that is entirely her own. For the past 15 years, Tret Fure has been her musical and personal partner, with *Postcards from Paradise* their first full-length collaboration. Their latest album also marks the debut of Wolf Moon Records, founded jointly by Williamson and Fure. ▼

Lifetime television scores again

by Brian D. Holcomb
Q-Notes Staff

Fresh on the heels of winning a GLAAD Award for Outstanding Television Movie for *Any Mother's Son*, Lifetime rolls out yet another movie sure to entice gay viewers. One begins to wonder whether Lifetime's motto "Television for Women...Or Those Who Occasionally Feel Like Them." In any case, *Labor of Love*, which premieres Monday, May 4, manages to explore parenting, sexuality and friendship in a provocative yet non-threatening way. The two-hour film is both entertaining and interesting and worth a look for the story alone, but even more for the cast.

Marcia Gay Harden stars as Annie Pines, a 36-year-old woman who has had plenty of relationships, but little commitment. All of her friends are having children and she feels that she needs to get started if she is to have one before it is too late. Her best friend Mickey, played by David Marshall Grant, has been staying with her since he was dumped by a long-term lover. He, an elementary school art teacher, also loves children, so the two commit to living together and having a child...even though Mickey is gay.

Naturally, there are all sorts of mishaps and misunderstandings that could happen and many of them do, but the film definitely takes off in some unexpected ways. Perhaps the funniest, and oddest, moment of the film is the

first time that the couple attempts to procreate. Annie is ready with her turkey baster, but Mickey feels that is too impersonal a way to create a child. He prefers "organic farming" (his term, not mine). The ensuing scene is comical, to be sure, but also quite touching and not something that you will have seen before.

Marcia Gay Harden and David Marshall Grant have played a couple before: they played Joe and Harper Pitt, the dysfunctional couple at the center of Tony Kushner's Pulitzer and Tony Award-winning *Angels in America*. In that play, Joe struggled with his sexuality and Harper struggled with reality. Their characters in *Labor of Love* are all set in those areas. Perhaps too much so. Harden has also appeared in numerous films, including *Miller's Crossing*, *The Spitfire Grill* and *The First Wives Club*, as well as portraying Ava Gardner in CBS' *Sinatra*. Grant is probably best known to audiences as Melissa's gay friend in *thirtysomething*. He also appeared in HBO's *And The Band Played On* and on Broadway in *Bent*.

After its debut May 4, *Labor of Love* will enter Lifetime's seemingly endless rotation of films, so you will have plenty of opportunities to tune in. And you should...this is perhaps not the finest drama in the world, but it is a very tender look at friendship and family. Its approach to certain issues is unique, as is the way they are resolved. Lifetime is certainly filling a niche, although not one necessarily anticipated on a major cable network. Good work, guys! ▼

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Lilith Fair announces '98 schedule

by Brian D. Holcomb
Q-Notes Staff

The early '90s were all about Lollapalooza. It appears that the late '90s will be all about the Lilith Fair, which debuted in 1997, heedless of naysayers who claimed that an all-female roster could not sell large venues. Organizer Sarah McLachlan, fortunately, did not listen to the music industry experts and assembled what was to become the top-grossing festival tour of 1997, according to *Pollstar*. Lilith Fair also won the trade magazine's award for "Tour of the Year." In one brief year, Lilith has moved from phenomenon to standard, expanding the list of venues and performers and with sell-outs predicted across the country.

McLachlan is the only artist who is confirmed for the entire tour schedule, from June 19 to August 31. Natalie Merchant will play almost the entire tour, with a brief break in August. The Charlotte date is set for July 23, almost exactly a year after Lilith Fair '97 became the most exciting show of the summer.

Other artists currently scheduled to play in Charlotte are: Meredith Brooks, Holly Cole, Queen Latifah, Holly McNarland, Trish Murphy, Rebekah and Bonnie Raitt. Over 40

artists are currently signed to play at least a portion of the tour; most will play for two weeks or less, depending upon their own schedules and how recently they have appeared in the area. Additional artists may be added to the lineup as Lilith Fair gets underway.

The 1998 tour features 57 performances across the United States and Canada. As in the '97 tour, there will be a Main Stage, as well as Second and Village stages. There is a greater effort this year to include emerging artists at all levels, even including an opportunity for local talent to join the tour for a day.

Lilith Fair '97 contributed over \$700,000 of profits to charitable organizations and plans for this tour are to expand giving. Each company that chooses to sponsor the tour must commit to a major tie-in with at least one national non-profit organization. (Currently these include The Breast Cancer Fund; the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network; LIFEbeat, a national HIV/AIDS resource and awareness organization; and Planned Parenthood). In addition, \$1 from each ticket sold will be donated to a local charity, usually a domestic violence center. For more information, visit the Lilith Fair website at www.lilithfair.com. ▼