

Bands

Love Tractor gets vocal on its newest release

By ALLISON PIKE
Staff Writer

A quick listen to Love Tractor's latest LP, *This Ain't No Outerspace Ship*, is bound to shock veteran Tractor fans. This predominantly instrumental band has put out an album with tracks — eight of them vocal. If you want to be one of the first to witness Love Tractor's new step toward success, then stop by Cat's Cradle this Saturday night.

Michael Richmond (guitar/lead vocals), Armistead Wellford (bass/vocals), Andrew Carter (drums) and Mark Cline (guitar/vocals) did not set out to be an instrumental band back in 1980. They were just a group of friends in Athens, Ga., who decided to form a band and play at college parties. They had vocals for their songs but couldn't afford a PA system. So Love Tractor evolved into a primarily instrumental band.

Around the same time, there happened to be another Athens band that was also playing at parties around town. And their new wave of guitar-oriented Southern rock allowed R.E.M. to break away from the Athens scene and leave the other bands behind — including Love Tractor. But Love Tractor holds no resentment and doesn't like to be compared to R.E.M.

"We don't really care that we're

from Athens — it's not any big deal to us. We don't try to publicize it at all," Cline said. "Yeah, maybe we've been in R.E.M.'s shadow, but then again they made their career move way before we did, like in 1980, and went on the road, which we didn't until '83. But we don't harbor any resentment for any of the bands (of Athens), because a lot of them have really helped us out."

Cline also stresses that he does not like the fact that many Southern bands call their sound "Flannery O'Connor" rock. "I know you're not going to believe me, but I'm Flannery O'Connor's first cousin," Cline recently admitted to Spin magazine. "We don't consider ourselves part of that Southern guitar revival Americana crap," he says. Cline also offers advice to Northerners who want to come down to the Athens music scene: "Stay where you are. Too many Northerners have wrecked enough of the South. I've lived down here all my life, and listen to my accent. It was ruined by private school nuns from Buffalo!"

Seeing Love Tractor live should prove they aren't your basic Athens rock band. The band loves to play covers of their favorite songs. They're likely to play anything from the Gap Band's "Party Train" and the Trammps' "Disco Inferno" to Iggy



Love Tractor will appear at Cat's Cradle Saturday night

Pop's "Search and Destroy" or Eddy Grant's "Electric Avenue."

"We do songs that we really like and that we can make our own. We're not one of those bands that necessarily have to write all our own material. There can be other songs out there that we really like," Cline said.

Love Tractor says their move toward more vocals was a result of just being a little tired of doing the same thing all the time and wanting something new to work with.

"Some old fans were shocked. They didn't know what was going on with the vocal stuff. But it gives people something to write about, something to wig out about," Cline said.

He admits that the switch to vocals is strategically a good move. "Of course it's more commercial — not intentionally on our part, but it does make us more viable and acceptable. The question is what was our intent by it. We know it would make us more that way, but we intended upon going vocal years ago."

Cline admits that Love Tractor is "taking a big leap" with the new vocalized LP. "Well, we hope people take it the right way," he said. "It's a fun album; it's not like our second record, which is like this real serious weird art record. I think our new album is a lot like our first one, but just with vocals."

Long-time Love Tractor fans shouldn't be discouraged about the change, though. Cline vows: "We'll never stop doing instrumentals!"

GRAFFITI

By CATHY McHUGH
Omnibus Editor

News Flash! Elections are over. And if you were paying any attention at all to the DTH editor candidates' platforms for the past month, then you probably noticed that changing the Omnibus was a high priority. So stay tuned, changes will be forthcoming in the following weeks. But, first, how about a history lesson? Once upon a time (and not too long ago either), believe it or not, there was no weekly Omnibus to brighten up your Thursdays. I know, I know. No Joe Bob. No Week's Fare. And, (horrors) no graffiti. It's a scary thought. But calm down, kick back and read on.

Omnibus. Kind of a strange name, kind of mysterious. But what's in a name? Well, since former 1985-86 DTH editor Jim Zook couldn't be reached for comment on why he chose such a curious name for the magazine, I turned to Webster's New World Dictionary for a clue. I found that Omnibus means: Definition 1 — a bus. Pretty amazing, huh? Definition 2 — a collection in a single, large volume of previously published works as by a single author or in a related theme.

Somehow, I just don't think that's what Zook had in mind. Previously published works? Sounds like a libel suit. Definition 3 — (adjective)

or uses. Careful, kids, I think we're getting close.

The Oxford English Dictionary (you know the one — it's more like an encyclopedia set than just a dictionary) elaborates slightly more on this topic. First of all, *omni* derives its roots from Latin meaning "all," and *omnibus* is a former Latin word meaning "for all." In French, the phrase *voiture omnibus* or *voiture pour tous*

(providing for many things at once; having a variety of purposes meant "vehicle for all." That's specifically vague enough for my purpose. You can think of Omnibus as a vehicle you can all enjoy. Okay, maybe that's pushing it.

But there are other interesting uses of omnibus in history. In 1831, omnibus took on the meaning "all encompassing." John H.

Overton: "His scheme of making the Church a theological omnibus never took any definite shape." In 1875, the Knight Dictionary of Mechanics listed omnibus in reference to glassmaking: a sheet-iron cover for articles in a leer or annealing arch, in order to protect them from drafts of air. See, you learned something, didn't you? It also meant a man or a boy who assists at a restaurant or hotel.

Aug. 5, 1888, "Star" published: "To pay what is known as an 'omnibus,' i.e. a lad who clears the tables." Curiouser and curiouser.

Well, that's enough history. The future is more important anyway. Omnibus will soon be the (all-encompassing) place you can look to for all your weekend plans. Weekends were made for partiers; so, let us entertain you. (You can flip back to Joe Bob now.)



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