

Fetchin favors the 'thrift-shop' cultural sound

By ALLISON PIKE
Staff Writer

A snowstorm kept Charlotte-based Fetchin Bones away from Cat's Cradle in January, but the band is eager to get back and will stop at the Cradle Friday night.

Fetchin Bones are different from many of the popular Southern rock/pop bands in that they combine punk, country, soul, rock and blues to create a sound some critics call "thrift shop" rock, which may be due in part to lead vocalist Hope Nicholls' favorite pastime: thrift shopping.

In fact, one of the only influences of bands like R.E.M. and Guadalcanal Diary on Fetchin Bones was to show that a band from Fetchin Bones' neck of the woods could play music its own way and be successful at it. The band's philosophy is: "There are no rules, just that you have to like what you're playing and doing."

"People respond to us differently," Nicholls says. "Some will say, 'Are y'all a punk band?' and others tell us that we sound like the Grateful Dead. There was one preppy who came up to us after a show and said, 'I shouldn't like your band, but I think you are great.' Ultimately, though, I really don't care what they think we sound like as long as they enjoy the music."

Fetchin Bones was formed in 1983 by Nicholls and guitarist Aaron Pitkin. They met at a party

and within 10 minutes of conversation the two decided to form a band. They added three other musicians, including bassist Danna Pentec. Having been trained in classical violin, Pentec had little knowledge of pop or rock music when she left a full violin scholarship at UNC in 1985 to join the Bones.

The band recorded a couple of albums (*Bad Pumpkin* and *Cabin Flounder*) and toured across the country for a few years. In 1987, the nucleus of Nicholls, Pitkin and Pentec returned to a Charlotte studio to record their most recent LP, *Galaxy 500*. The trio added guitarist Errol Stewart and drummer Clay Richardson to make the band complete.

Galaxy 500 perfectly exemplifies the band's musical diversity. It contains punk-influenced cuts like "Stray," which received heavy air play on WXYC and WXDU, and "Chicken Truck" — a song about a chicken truck that crashes, allowing all the chickens inside to run away while the driver of the truck walks to a "chicken shack" and eats wings: "Finger lickin' good!" Nicholls screeches. The LP also features ballads — "Exit," "Jesse James" and "Steamwhistle" — as well as the progressive pop and rock songs "Sourpuss" and "You Thirst."

The musical tastes of each band member contribute to the Bones'



Fetchin Bones will perform at Cat's Cradle Friday night

diversity. "Anything that one person hates somebody else loves," Pitkin says. "When we write our songs everybody contributes what they feel and it just comes out that way. I'm a big Bob Dylan fan and everybody in the band likes Led Zeppelin. So when you go from Dylan to Zeppelin, you're bound to end up with something weird."

The diversity and individuality

of the songs was enhanced by producer Don Dixon, who, according to the band members, "can conjure up out of the blue one tiny little thing to do to it, or add to a song to make it a thousand times better." Nicholls' powerful, raspy voice also adds to the band's unique sound. Her voice is unmistakably similar to Patti Smith, and her vocal style has a Robert Plant/Led Zeppelin flair.

Throughout Fetchin Bones' existence, the band has felt content to stay in Charlotte away from the new music scene of the Triangle. "There's nothing to do in Charlotte, but we love it," Nicholls says. "We can keep from being influenced by every band around and we don't have to put up with all that pseudo-cultural junk. We just sit down here and watch the trucks go by."

General College

As Sarah begins to deal with her blindness, Joseph contacts the police department in an effort to determine the true cause of her "accident." Shortly thereafter, he receives an anonymous note saying the danger's not over yet.

Feeling like an outsider in the drug scene, Anne goes to Tessa's

sister Tonya with the problem. Tonya suggests that she is too prissy and tells her she needs a new image. She proceeds to make Anne over into a supreme coke maven.

Jason confronts Courtney with his suspicions of her cocaine habit, and after a good deal of argument, she agrees to stop doing the drug.

As Trisha snidely informs Jack that Billy has quit Lower East

Side, Billy gives Paige the same information. The strong-willed Paige retorts that this could only be good news, and in anger Billy tells her with a laugh to beware of Kirk's violent side.

Acting on Tonya's suggestion, Anne carefully steals her roommate's valuable jewelry.


Walking alone at night in a panic Meg runs into former boyfriend Ken. Just as she is about to reveal the cause of her

hysteria, she remembers the night of the rape and finds she still can't entrust her secret to anyone.

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Update compiled by Jason Lyon an assistant producer at STV.

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