Roman Gods Live Again


The Fleshtones started in New York 4 or 5 years ago as a classic garage band—a group of friends tracking around on instruments they found in their attic. They're experienced musicians now, but they have kept their garage attitude, and it vanishes them: they're not a revival cover band, but take the attitudes and musical cliches of 60's garage rock a few steps into the future.

The band has pressed a few singles and a 12' LP over the years. In their first LP, they have moved in some new directions. Much of the album is new material. The newer stuff seems slower, smoother, and more akin to music from later in the 60's.

They are masters of the bag of tricks of 60's punk. Fuzz bass, tremolo, and reverberation on a Fender Mustang guitar, harmonica solos, echo and delay on vocals and on anything else that sounds good — all are present in generous quantity.

The biggest surprise on the album is the title track, "Roman Gods." A solid funk bass off from Jim Pakulski is squeezed into a classic blues progression, with instrumentation added by the rest of the band, including sax and horns.

Other tracks that get my toes tapping are "Stop Feeling Around," a fast one that incorporates most of the list of 60's punk trademarks, and "R.L.G.H.F.T.S."—a jumpy song with amusingly superficial lyrics.

Their classic "Shadow Line" gets its own treatment again, and "The Drag," another Fleshtone-oldie, also sounds good here.

The only cover of the album, "Ride Your Pony," is a disappointment to me. It doesn't fit well with the rest of the LP and has nothing unusual to contribute.

The whole album benefits from professional but tongue-in-cheek production, filled with nice touches like hand claps, extra percussion, and backing vocals. The band clearly wanted to make the most of this long-awaited opportunity to make an LP.

Few bands are more fun to see live than the Fleshtones. Last Friday they appeared at Streets and proved once again what a fine dance band they are.

The Fleshtones are very loose on stage, joking and flirting with the audience and each other. When Peter Zaremba's not singing, he grabs a harmonica, or grabs some sticks and drums on a floor tom, or jumps around with the audience. Bless em., they're really just up there to have fun, and that's why I was there too.

John van Zelstewt

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“Two Painters on Paper: Robie Brich and Stephen Meudler,” an exhibition of drawings by the two New York artists will be displayed at the Hayden Corridor Gallery through Sunday, Feb. 7. Admission is free.

The MIT Dramashop’s winter production, Jean Giraudoux’s “The Mad Woman of Chaillot,” will be presented at 8pm in the Kresge Little Theater on February 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, and 13. To is $3.50, $3 with at MIT/Wellesly ID. Call 253-4720 for more info.

Center Screen presents “The Best of New Animation,” the first segment of the 11th Annual Winter Animation Series this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Showings are at Carpenter Center at Harvard University. Call 494-0200 for more details.

Off the Wall Cinema presents the New England premiere of Les Blanks’s “Garlic is as Good as 10 Mothers,” plus the short "Warner Hergoe Eats His Shoe," this Friday. The film will run through February 18, with complete shows daily at 6, 8, 10pm, and Sat. - Sun. at 4pm. For further information, call 547-5255.

This Friday, Feb. 5, Boston's twentieth century music ensemble ALLA III, under the direction of Theodore Antoniou, will present its third concert of the season, the program including the world premiere of Boston composer Robert Scota's "Concerto Grosso." The program will be held at the First and Second Church in Boston. The number is 625-1560.

This weekend's LSC lineup: "Monseur Verdoux," classic film Friday at 7.30 in 26-100.

"Arthur," Friday at 7 and 9.30 in Kresge.


"The Great Escape," Sunday at 8 only in Kresge.

An LSC lecture on Thursday, February 11 will feature Benjamin Hooks, the National Executive Director of the NAACP. The lecture starts at 8pm in 10.250 admission is one dollar, with tickets on sale now.

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