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arts

Roots Music For A New Century

BY EUAN BEAR

Peg Eves is a woman on a mission to showcase new women's music while honoring its roots. And at the same time, she's running a Brattleboro-area arts organization. Her year-long concert series, Women for a New Century, is a happy confluence of effort that accomplishes both tasks. She's an experienced concert producer, having produced concerts for Holly Near, Theresa Trull, Kate Clinton, and Laura Niro in venues in Randolph, Barre, Montpelier, and Burlington in years past.

West Street Arts is the beneficiary, a nonprofit project located in the former West Dummerston Grange Hall on the West River by a covered bridge. It features after-school programs for kids and an art camp, along with a "Kindermusic" program for infants to age 7, and adult dance classes ranging from square and contra to belly and Latin.

Eves is bringing Tret Fure, Cris Williamson, and Ferron, among others, to West Street Arts. "These women are the matriarchs of women's music, though I don't want to use the term," Eves explains. "I really want to engage the younger generation, and I'm onto a couple of artists who will do that." She mentions a duo from Canada with whom she's negotiating. "I don't know whether they're lesbians or not. They do some spoken word, some politics, some jazz, rock, hip-hop. They'll be fun."

She says she's looking to find out who's out there. "I'm looking for the new wave of feminists — that's why I called the series 'Women for a New Century.' But at the same time, our matriarchs are more prolific and powerful than ever."

Tret Fure has been one

Tret Fure

West Street Arts,
West Dummerston, VT
Friday, Sept 17th, 8 pm
\$20 in advance at Retro Music
in Keene, NH and Collected
Works Bookstore in Brattleboro,
VT or call 802-365-9780.

Cris Williamson

West Street Arts
Saturday October 23th, 8 pm
\$20 in advance

the 1970s, when she was among the first women music engineers. She worked with rock bands Poco, Yes, and J Geils Band. She wrote songs other more famous people sang, and some of them — Bonnie Raitt, Van Dyke Park, and members of Little Feat — played and sang on her own first album in 1973. She turned out three more solo albums from 1984 to 1990 with Second Wave Records.

Somewhere in there came Cris Williamson, first with a job engineering a kids' album, then engineering five of Cris's records aimed at women who love women, followed by three more albums featuring the two of them in musical duet. The two were together musically and personally for 20 years. It is not a deliberately ironic scheduling choice that has Cris Williamson on the West Street Arts stage in October as the second concert in the series, but a coincidence, since she's performing in Burlington at the Unitarian Universalist Church the night before.

Fure has now moved on, pursuing her solo career. Her previous album, *Back Home*, got a second-place nod from *OutVoice*.

If you're a Tret or Cris groupie, you might want to reserve a seat by phone and make a \$55 donation to West Street Arts, which gets you a front row seat and a signed copy of the artist's latest CD, plus a photo.

So satisfy your curiosity, remember our roots, and keep an eye out for how this series will branch out and blossom with the women musicians and stand-up comics who follow these first two. It's worth a trip to the southeast corner of Vermont. ▼

Euan Bear learned of Women's Music in 1974, when the matriarchs and their listeners were fresh young dykes out to have a good time and make a safe space for us all to live.

busy, guitar-pickin', award-winnin', festival-plannin', song-singin' lesbian this summer. Between appearances at the National Women's Music Festival, Milwaukee's Pride Festival, San Francisco's Pride, and the Michigan Women's Music Festival, not to mention her own "Tomboy Girl Festival," in Madison, Wisconsin, it's been a busy summer. The award was presented at the NWMF for Fure's 30 years of contributions to Women's music. Fure's partner Jane Weldon also received an award for convincing all of the NWMF performers to donate their appearance fees back to the festival so it could continue for another year.

Fure's latest CD is *My Shoes*, released two years ago to warm reviews. Sample cuts available on her website pour forth a voice as smooth as honey mixed with a little whiskey fire — sweet, deep and hot, rollercoasting from emotional and musical lows to highs. While some reviewers have characterized the title cut as a "plea for understanding her" [ahem] "lifestyle," it comes across to me as a simple, tired-of-other-people's-shit, stand-up statement: if you haven't been where I've been, don't you dare think you can judge me.

Fure's roots in women's music go back to the beginning in

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