

BOOK REVIEW

# Cape Breton tale disturbing, gripping

Fall On Your Knees  
Ann-Marie MacDonald  
Vintage

Ann Marie MacDonald has gone from scriptwriter/actor to renowned novelist, with the most gruesome piece of work I have ever read. Fall on Your Knees is about a Cape Breton family and their legacy of tortured madness.

The book is narrated by a character reminiscing about a dead family. It is at once sad and intriguing. We hear the story of a successful man, James, who has come from a disturbing past. He has risen above his past and is determined to make something of himself.

An immaculately groomed gentleman, James meets a beautiful young girl. He falls in love with her, despite the fact that she is a girl and he is a grown man. They marry and her family is enraged. James resolves to someday show his in-laws that he is much more than they believe him to be. In the meantime, his mother-in-law predicts something horrible in the couple's future.

As the family grows, James finds himself attracted to his daughter.

The history of New Waterford, Cape Breton and all the areas influencing it are intricately woven into the story, fashioning a net of fact and fiction to catch the reader. The reactions of the characters are all too real. They seem like the genuine reactions of the abused and disturbed.

Each few moments of sanity and clarity for the stricken disappears into the fog of the cold Atlantic

Ocean. Sometimes the coast's mist passes through the story, obscuring who is sane and who is not. At the end of the book you finally understand what happened; but I don't think the reader was ever meant to know why it happened. There is so much pain and misery and all of it seems to have happened

for no reason. Never before has a book made me feel so many emotions. I have never felt anxiety at turning the page or sweat trickle down my forehead and my gut wrench as the innocent souls are torn apart by unrelenting vultures. The good are not always as

good as they seem; possibly because the madness never ends. When the weak turn strong they also turn corrupt. The ones that might seem the most evil often turn out to be the most caring characters. What seems to be a positive action

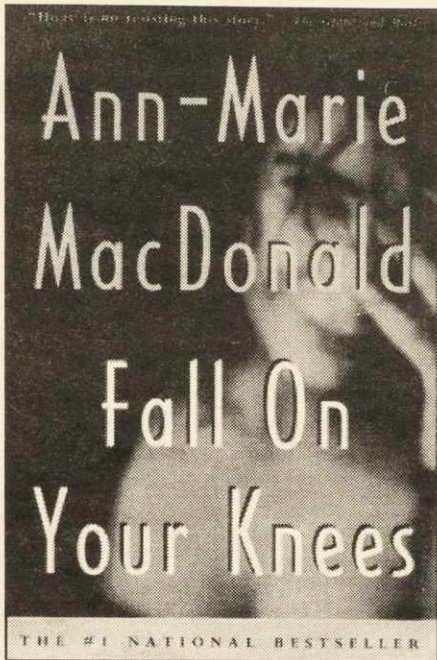
turns into disaster. The characters are so vivid you want to reach out and touch them. They are on their knees begging for your help and there is nothing you can do to release them.

Fall on Your Knees touches on abuse, incest, prejudice, politics and religion. The story is about what happens when all of these things coexist. Every chance for happiness is ruthlessly crushed by the author's cruel constructs.

The book was at no moment uplifting, but at every moment riveting. It places the work of V.C. Andrews and her series which grew from Flowers in the Attic and Colleen McCullough's The Thorn Birds in the category of children's stories. Only descriptions of autopsies have caused my stomach to churn so relentlessly. When I think back to medical procedures I have heard of, they have nothing close to the gruesome air of this novel.

Stunning, shocking and all too real, it is easy to see why this writer has received so much attention. However, this novel being a #1 Bestseller surprises me slightly. This is not a book that you pass to your friend lightly, warn them to take a deep breath before they begin and a long shower to relax when they're done.

TAMARA BOND



continued from page 14...

in Halifax. I guess they were looking for a little bit of that pop magic that seems to be in the water here.

The Gandharvas are from Guelph, Ontario and take their name from the celestial musicians of the Hindu faith. While their past releases dealt with more spiritual concerns and showed off their many musical influences, this album is much more simple and down to earth.

The music is very hook based, and if I was not already familiar with the band, I would have a hard time distinguishing it from the droves of other indie guitar-pop

bands out there. There are some tracks that do stand out, like "Milk Ocean" and "Watching the Girl", but overall it is missing something. There is nothing awful here, but there is nothing outstanding either.

Lyricaly, Paul Jago is still writing clever words to go with the music, but he also seems to be holding something back. The lyrics are more extroverted than his typically introverted fare. With an album titled *Sold for a Smile* and song titles like "Into the Mainstream", one has to wonder at the irony.

This is a mediocre album from a great band.

NEIL FRASER

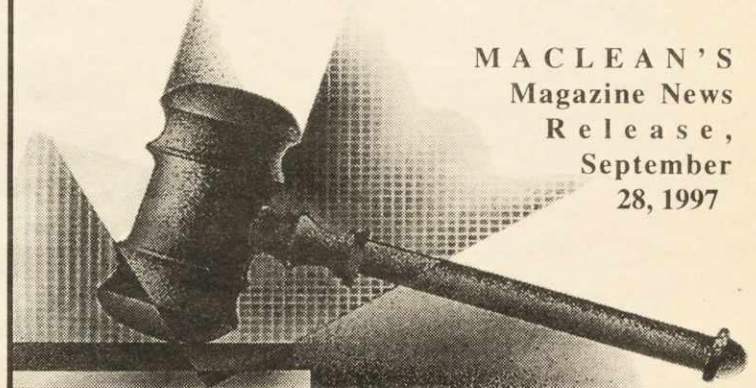
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UNB FACULTY OF LAW is holding an information session on Thursday, October 30, 1997 at 4:00 pm in the Council Chambers Room, Student Union Building

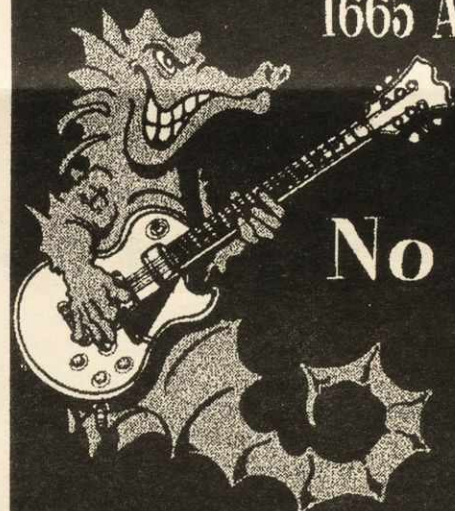
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No Cover

Monday Oct 20<sup>th</sup>

Darren Arsenault

Tuesday Oct 21<sup>st</sup>

Virgo Machine

Monday Oct 27<sup>th</sup>

Stoolfinger

Tuesday Oct 28<sup>th</sup>

Stain

Monday Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>

Gas Free Oxford

Tuesday Nov 4<sup>th</sup>

Soup

All shows start approx 9pm  
Must be 19 years of age or older

For more info bring a CD or  
cass and bio to the bar and  
ask for Dana or Steve

## Graduating?

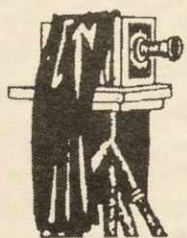
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