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**Frank Black & The Catholics are slated to play MacEwan Hall April 7  
Off-Broadway goes Black**by **Mike Bell**  
Calgary Sun

ABBA, Queen and ... Frank Black? Yes, believe it or not a New York writer is currently working on a musical centered around the musician and his former band the Pixies.

And how exactly does the elder statesman of alt rock — by elder, I mean almost 38 — feel about being immortalized Off-Broadway?

"Marginally famous, I suppose," he says with a slight laugh. "I like it ... I like the attention. It's more interesting than Spin magazine. I'd rather be associated with Off-Broadway than Spin magazine."

But while flattered, reflecting on his past and the careers he's already had as a solo artist and with the Pixies is something Black says he'll leave to others.

"The only thing I'm interested in is when am I going to do my next record and when's my next gig — that's where I'm at mentally," he says.

"Maybe one day I'll be able to ... rest on my laurels. But I'm still out here. Nothing's changed. I'm out here playing the same clubs that the Pixies played."

Well, that's not exactly true.

Black will pay his first ever visit to Calgary April 7 when he brings his new band The Catholics to MacEwan Hall.

The band is one he's recorded his last five records with, including his most recent ones Black Letter Days and Devil's Workshop, which were released concurrently in August of last year.

And lest fans think those are laurels he's going to rest on, the band just finished putting the finishing touches on a new record — tentatively titled Show



FRANK BLACK



Ottawa Sun  
Toronto Sun  
Winnipeg Sun  
Bowes Publishers

Me Your Tears — which should be released late summer, making it six albums in as many years.

Black says the reason his output has been so great has more to do with the way they're recorded — mostly live to two-track tape — and his current label situation — his albums are released in Canada by East Coast indie label Sonic Unyon — and less to do with the fact that he's become more prolific in recent years.

"I guess I don't consider myself that prolific. Maybe I put out more records than some people, but I don't think it's any big deal.

"I think it's just the nature of the music business."

As to the current state of the biz, artistically speaking, Black says he doesn't spend much time listening to today's musicians — countless of whom owe a debt to Black — choosing instead to take in jazz records he didn't have the patience to fully appreciate in his early years.

"Besides, I'm sure if there's someone really great, if the next Clash comes rolling down the pike I'll probably hear about it and I'll be listening," he says.

"I could be wrong, tell me I'm wrong, but something tells me there's no one out there that is like that."

But that doesn't mean he's entirely oblivious to alt rock today.

"I've heard The White Stripes because I got really drunk at their gig and bought everything at their T-shirts stand in a drunken stupor," he chuckles.

"And I actually thought they were pretty good."

2003-04-02

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