

Frances McKee is first and foremost a rocker. She and Eugene Kelly form the original duo behind Glasgow's cheeky cult band The Vaselines, known for their sexually-charged, playful lyrics. After breaking up in 1990, the group released "Sex with an X" in 2010, followed by this year's "V for Vaselines." In between, McKee took up yoga and she now runs her own Iyengar studio.

When our conversation begins (a conversation that began about a half hour late because she had gone out to dinner and forgotten about the interview ... "I knew there was something I had to do," she tells me, apologetically but laughing), she asks me what the sound of my typewriting is. "Is that a mouse tap-dancing?" she asks. At this point, I know I'll be on my toes. Yoga has given McKee a Zen attitude about life and music, but it hasn't softened her signature sardonic wit.

**When you and Eugene released "Sex with an X," you said it would be a one-off album. Why did you decide to record again?**

I don't know, really. I think it was either record another album or stop; and I don't think either of us was ready to stop completely.

**"Sex with an X" was more mature than older recordings, which I'm sure came with maturing as people and musicians. How is "V for Vaselines" different?**

I'm already interested in the fact that you've said "mature". I think we've matured in every other since but the Vaselines bring out the stunted, stupid jokes. Everything is lowest common denominator. It still comes down to sex. But it only seems more mature. We've made it more subtle.

**I saw your Dallas show in 2010 and you played like you had never taken a break. Was it hard to build chemistry again, or did it come naturally?**

Well, it felt quite natural. I'm getting back at Eugene. I can get on stage and say whatever I want and get paid for it. It's a big plus for feminism. Any woman who wants to get back at her ex should try it.

**ABBA and Fleetwood Mac famously continued recording and touring after relationships. Does having had a relationship with a band member have any advantages when collaborating?**

I've never knowingly listened to Fleetwood Mac. Someone recommended them to me, maybe a therapist after a breakup. But I didn't listen. I can't see any advantages whatsoever. I think that's why we left it for 20 years. The distance helped. We have a set of rules when we're touring. We don't get close to each other. No group hugs. We haven't resorted to separate cars yet.

**Do you approach your solo work much differently from your work with The Vaselines?**

Yeah. I get total control. I can slip in as many minor chords into my work as I possibly can ... It's great to have total control.

**Does that mean you defer to Eugene when it comes to The Vaselines?**

Absolutely. Eugene has this great way of saying, "Right, what do you want to do?" and he'll say, "No." Why did you ask me? It feels stifling. It's like being in a band in a strait jacket. We have a running joke that I'm just the woman in the band. But it really is that way. Tell the fans I'm suffering here for your art.

**[Laughs] I'll be sure to do that. So, music isn't your only career. You also run a yoga studio. What drew you to yoga?**

Actually, I had a sore back, nothing I could pinpoint. It was really quite chronic. Someone suggested yoga would help and it absolutely has and does. Before, I was a schoolteacher and I hated it. When I left teaching, I actually had the time, so I started going to more yoga classes. I really loved it. Sometimes you just find your passion in life. Then I took a training course. I didn't do it to teach cos I'd just been out of teaching but it just happened.

**How do you make time for recording/touring/yoga?**

I think yoga makes you very self-constrained as long as I have time to practice. I always get up earlier and take my yoga mat with me on tour.

**Do you think music and yoga enhance each other?**

Absolutely. I think both of them are very practice driven. So you have to be quite disciplined. On the one hand, they're very different, but because yoga brings a great confidence, you're more aware of posture and self. At least it makes me feel more confident, which helps on stage.

**Glasgow might be best known in the states for twee and other light fare, like Belle and Sebastian, obviously, but you've got an edgy, punk-influenced sound. How would you describe Glasgow music?**

Oh, Belle and Sebastian. Everyone talks about Belle and Sebastian. We taught those guys everything they know. [Laughs] We hate to be described as "twee." We're not twee. Glasgow has a lot of different bands. There's a real diversity. Because of where it is, bands in Glasgow are pretty edgy. It's rubbish as far as what makes money, but the underground in Glasgow is fertile and interesting.

**What are some Glasgow bands you would recommend to people who don't know Glasgow's diversity?**

Scott's (Paterson, McKee's bandmate) Sons and Daughters, they just broke up, but I think they put out four albums; Belle and Sebastian (featuring bandmates Stevie Jackson and Bobby Kildea); The 1990s Michael's (McGaughrin, also of The Vaselines) are underrated and phenomenal; Chemikal Underground (Mogwai, Radar Brothers, Arab Strap, The Delgados) is a great label. I can't think of many off the top of my head.

**You've mentioned feminism, and I wasn't going to bring up Nirvana, because everyone does, but as Frances Bean's namesake, do you consider yourself a role model? Would you even want to? [Nirvana famously covered "Son of a Gun" and "Molly's Lips" on Incesticide and "Jesus Doesn't Want Me for a Sunbeam" on MTV Unplugged and Kurt Cobain called Kelly and McKee his favorite songwriters.]**

That would be pretty cool, wouldn't it? I would really feel for them if they see me as a role model. Don't get me started on feminism, because I don't know what it's done for us as women. In the name of feminism, men have taken more of a backseat. They've sort of said, "Ok, I'll put my feet up," and they're doing even less now.

**Where do The Vaselines, and you, go from here?**

That all really depends on the people who are into in the Vaselines. If nobody buys the record, it's goodbye, Vaselines. We're not U2. We don't have the kingdom of the big bus behind us. If people don't see us on tour or buy our albums, that will be a sign and it's rest in peace, Vaselines. But as long as people buy our albums and come to our shows, we'll keep playing until I kill Eugene.

[I don't agree with McKee as far as Fleetwood Mac and feminism go, but I would definitely like to see The Vaselines stick around for a bit longer, as long as it doesn't lead to murder.]