

108

MUSIC AND CULTURE AT WESLEYAN
SPRING 2005, ISSUE 1

Interviews with New Bands:

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SPECIAL BREW
HANSOLO**

THE EBB AND THE FLOW

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AND MORE**



108 Magazine

Managing Editor: Naomi Green

Campus Music Editor: Brian Thorpe

Features Editor: Sam Astor

Copy Editor: Andy Sampson

Art Editor: Lauren Pellegrino

Layout: Kate Brown

Cover photo and polaroids by Erin Wisman
All other art shamelessly Google image-searched

Lost in the Supermarket with The Grocers

by John Earle

Round about the cereal aisle, guitarist Max Horwich got back to business.

"No matter what you do before you are in a band, it's going to affect what you do with that band," he said. "Shortly after birth, I went to work at a grocery store. I've been doing it ever since."

I was following Horwich through Weshop, Wesleyan's own mini-market, hoping to better understand the underpinnings of his new band The Grocers. Formed by Horwich, vocalist Sarah Bellovien-Weiss, guitarist/drummer Albert Hill, and vocalist/keyboard player Cece Seiter, The Grocers are a genre bending concept group centered on the world of the grocery store. The band's entire catalog (currently only one song) lyrically focuses on the shopping, stocking, and rocking bound to happen in any food mart.

"It's smart that they put the Red Bulls there," said Horwich, pointing to a clear refrigerator within plain sight of the check-out counter. "Otherwise, I would just steal them. They know their market."

Having worked for years at Geoff's Groceries, Horwich knew his markets too. However, other members of the new band may be less supermarket-savvy.

"I don't have any particular grocery store experience," said Bellovien-Weiss, "but I know my way around a grocery store. I like riding the shopping carts."

In fact, Horwich is the only

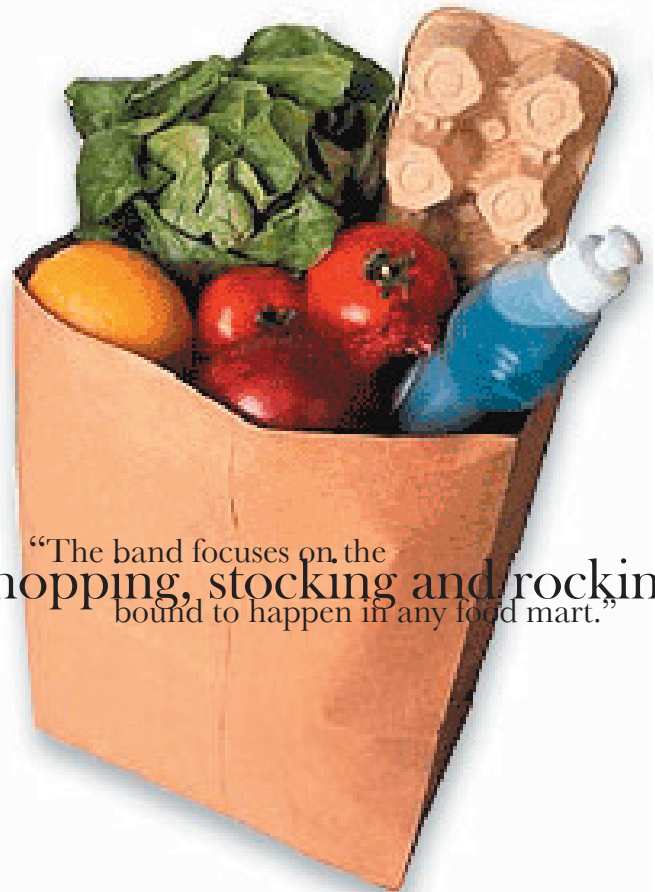
member of The Grocers that has actually worked in a grocery store. For Hill, it was the concept of the grocery store that was appealing. After seeing semi-local, Fibonacci sequence obsessed punk/trip-hop/rap trio The Mathematicians a few months ago, Hill was inspired, and he decided on a new set of band-forming ideals.

"I'm stuck on the idea of concept bands now," Hill said. "[The Grocers] could have been about almost anything else. I happened to think it was funny enough."

"The grocery store provides food, which is a universal human need," said Seiter, who has worked in movie theater next to a grocery store. "When people enter the store, they're bringing the rest of the human condition in with them. There's more than just tonight's dinner in that shopping cart - there's a piece of the American experience."

The Grocers' first single, "Produce Aisle Blues," chronicles the sorrows of lost love and out-of-season fruits. "Cece wrote the song," Horwich told me standing outside of the market, clapping an intimidating energy drink in his impulse-buy hand. "She's in the fruit aisle trying to find the fruit that matches her mood. Of course she's looking for blueberries - they're the only blue food. But at the end of the song, it turns out the store is sold out of blueberries."

"Our band sounds like nothing you've ever heard before, unless you've heard two guys playing guitar and two



"The band focuses on the shopping, stocking and rocking bound to happen in any food mart."

girls singing," said Seiter. "Produce Aisle Blues' is mostly influenced by Charley Patton. We've tried to imitate his enunciation style, but it's really difficult."

Musically, the song remains simple. "We're pretty much pure 12 bar blues," said Bellovien-Weiss. "Traditional."

For a second single, Hill hopes to branch out into other genres, such as metal or hip-hop. "We decided we are not going to constrain ourselves to a single genre," he said.

Horwich had warned me about contradictions between members in separate interviews. Because the quartet had only recently met each other before playing together, the band has had some initial troubles getting on the same musical page. While they were united under the mantle of supermarket enthusiasts, it was unclear how exactly they would go about celebrating the world of the grocery store. "We are a mystery as a band - even to each other," said Horwich. "Especially to each other."

Hill agrees. "We are lacking a central force and motivation," he said.

Back in his room and energy drink free, Horwich hopes that missing central force could be a love of groceries. "We approve of groceries," he said. "We sell them. They are our livelihood. Other than our music, that is. Groceries are our primary livelihood."

WestCo Café:

An Interview with the "Emperor"

by Ben Ansfield



*The Novices play the WestCo Café,
February 2005*

The WestCo Café's versatile role in students' social lives is evident in the variety of events it offers. Some feel its grimy character is perfect for the raucous music it showcases. Others find it more suitable for Improv or Capoeira. No matter what performance students are attending, the WestCo Café offers a fusion of a friendly, intimate venue with a junkie-tinged basement.

As the "Emperor of the Café," Zander Mackie '07 handles much of the Café's booking, sound engineering, and publicity. His general demeanor confirms many students' opinions that the Café is a casual, open space where anything goes.

The Café does not use a formal booking process. Although Zander does book certain bands, he mostly does "schedule jockeying." In fact, the only consideration he makes before approving a band is the Café's availability. In other words, anyone can play. Naturally, most bands are comprised of students or friends of students who contact Zander to set up a show.

Almost every concert at the Café has free admission. This is partially because the Café has no budget to pay the bands for their performances. Once in a while well-known acts or benefit concerts will cost a dollar or two for admission. More often than charging admission, the organizers of the concert will try to raise enough money through

merchandise or donations to pay for the band's traveling expenses.

Sometimes, major acts will perform and request only reimbursement for traveling costs. Such is the case with Joanna Newsom, who will possibly play in the Café or Eclectic House later in the year. This event would probably be sponsored by WESU, which has the connections to bring in most of the popular acts that appear on campus.

Zander is pleased with this year's schedule. Although much of the music featured in the Café is rock, its selection is more eclectic than Eclectic itself. For instance, two radically different shows will often appear on consecutive nights, such as a Hip Hop show preceding the Vagina Monologues. One goal of Zander's has been to book more outside bands, which is evident with the appearance of The USA Is A Monster and two shows by The Mathematicians. Zander named the shows by the Mathematicians as the wildest of the year: "They're freaking awesome... they are Dance/Punk with a robotic Devo quality. They're just sweet dudes who know how to get a crowd going."

Zander does lament the lack of solid freshmen bands formed from the Café's Awesome Fest, held in October. Awesome Fest is an annual show offering

a forum for new bands to introduce themselves. Last year, The Ottoman Empire and Franny, regulars at the Café, were formed from Awesome Fest. This year, only a few freshmen bands have endured since then.

Students can look forward to a few changes in the Café. Zander is contemplating the installation more suitable lighting, couches, and even the return of a fully operating kitchen. Indeed, the WestCo Café once lived up to its name with a staffed kitchen that served food a few days every week.

Zander's experience coordinating the Café exemplifies what it means to be in the music business. When first prompted about the nature of his position, he responded, "sometimes it's just a pain in the ass." Not surprisingly, a lot of bureaucracy is involved. After filling out all the forms, receiving host training, and dealing with ResLife, he must deal with the bands' tendency to switch dates.

Despite these downsides, Zander does enjoy his position. Of course, one perk is getting to know the bands. The experience will also assist him in getting an internship at a record label this summer. More than anything, though, it offers him a chance to "have some control over what is played in WestCo, a place I enjoy living in."

The Ebb and the Flow

**mix jazz, funk
and hip-hop**

by Elana Cook and
Suzanne Tran

The Ebb and the Flow is a fresh, new group on the campus of Wesleyan University. The Ebb and the Flow grew out of the fusion of the Funkyard Group and the Fusion Quartet, with the blend of influences such as String Cheese Incident, The Roots, Nas, Black Thought, Derek Trucks and Cold Duck Complex. Of all the elements of the group, The Ebb and the Flow prides themselves for modeling themselves after The Roots, one of the first real live bands with an MC to receive mainstream recognition.

The Ebb and The Flow is bursting onto the scene without the usual formulaic style. They're paving the way for other bands to come with their self-proclaimed, emerging "Jam Hopica" genre; an eclectic mix of jazz, funk, hip-hop, and the occasional blues elements.

The group is composed of students from throughout the nation. Vocalist Mike Berger is from Philly. Better known to his peers as "Rapper Mike" (MC name, Rapscaillon), Berger is the frontman spittin' his rhymes. He is joined by Micah Dubreuil from Vermont hittin the right keys on the keyboard, Dave Eastman from outside Boston on the guitar, Luke Mecklenburg from Colorado on the base, and Christian Komecki from Connecticut on the drums. Every member is an asset to the group.

All the members of The Ebb and the Flow are early bloomers in the music realm. Komecki played drums since 5th grade because "drums looked shiny

and cool". Eastman rocked out on the guitar ever since he was 12 because "the guitar looks nice on me". Mecklenburg had been playing the base since the beginning of the 8th grade. Dubreuil played classical piano when he was younger, but has become interested in jazz and funk improvisation for the last two years. Most of the band members had their starts in other groups pre-Wesleyan.

Berger was the only mem-

Introducing

by Alice McKenney

The Partridge Family was best known for their bubble-gum-style pop songs.

One of their biggest hits, "I Think I Love You," definitely continued this trend. Never would they have used a distorted guitar solo or rock beats. However, the band Hansolo has done just that with the song.

Made up of singer Andrew Warner, lead guitarist Mike Cho, bassist Hans Hsu, drummer Alaia Zeno, pianist Felix Friedl, and rhythm guitarist Juliet Falchi, Hansolo has taken on this Partridge Family classic, and has made it their own.

Practicing in a corner of the Nicolson lounge with limited equipment, Hansolo has mastered their remake of the song in a short amount of time, and often with borrowed equipment.

There are mixed feelings in the group about the Partridge Family version of the song, which they picked off of Billboard's Top Hits 1970. Falchi feels that "The original song isn't really my taste in music", while Hsu "like[s] the...original song." Their cover has fixed it up into a rock style that all the band members like.

Hansolo



The two largest changes to the remake involve speed (they're taking it faster than the original), and the solo in the middle of the song. Played on keyboard in the original, Cho makes the solo his own, giving it flavor with a distortion pedal.

The members of Hansolo recently came together to Jam. Before joining together to create music, the members worked on solo pieces and were part of other ensembles.

The newly formed group works well together. During rehearsals, this trait is obvious. I could spot Zeno keeping a close eye on Warner in order to keep the beat perfectly in sync with his vocals. Between numbers, each group member gives their input into what they think could be done to make it better, as well as acknowledging those who did well. "Everyone contribute[s] and [takes] charge

of their part," as Hsu explains it, while Cho simply says "It's a team effort." This group mentality is surely one of their best qualities.

Hansolo maintains a level of fun in their rehearsals. This shows in their music. Their enjoyment stretches beyond when they're playing a song, to just fooling around on their instruments before and after practice, with fun little riffs and bits of improv.

Hansolo shows really great potential. Their cover of "I Think I Love You" takes a simplistic song and adds different beats to give it a more updated feel. The band has a great dynamic about them, and the future possibilities are endless. Hsu jokes around when he says that in their future they'll "definitely [do] Star Search... they still have that right?"

ber not to have been part of a band, only having previous experience in rap groups. His interest in rap actually began in the 2nd and 3rd grade when he was strangely attracted to rap music. Though it wasn't until the middle of 10th grade when he would practice rapping (silently) in the mirror, day after day working on his style without actually saying anything, but getting the feel for what he would later do. By 11th grade

Mike finally began writing his rhymes, and spitting his flow.

The Ebb and the Flow are ready to showcase their talent to the world via college campuses, although they're not looking to record professionally. They're doing their own publicity through word of mouth; friends at various schools on the East Coast like Skidmore, Yale, Brown, Bennington and Harvard. Be on the look out for their first demo.

La Spanka:

Thank You, Sir,

May I Have Another?

by Brian Thorpe

Considering the originality of rock trio La Spanka's music, it is surprising to find that the band tends to modestly oversimplify their music.

"I'm sure my ex-boyfriend knows that all the songs are about him," chuckles guitarist and lead vocalist Danielle Lemone '05 when asked about her songwriting inspiration. At best, Lemone's comment is a case of modesty gone wrong. It is no stretch to assert La Spanka is one of the most refreshingly original bands to currently call Wesleyan home.

Rounded out by bassist Nicole Concepción '05 and drummer Victor Vazquez '06, La Spanka play a brand of rock that defies immediate recognition. While the band themselves list various influences, including Björk, Beck, and Smashing Pumpkins, the music that results from the trio's

combined songwriting efforts refuses to overwhelmingly like any particular genre.

"I guess we just play weird rock," states Vazquez, shrugging. Although that label manages to draw a laugh from the rest of the band, it doesn't really do La Spanka's music justice. Touches of Built to Spill's complex, unpredictable guitar melodies and the occasional Radiohead-esque rumination can be heard in Lemone and Concepción's melodic interplay. While not particularly overpowering, Lemone's vocals still manage to draw the listener's attention. Her singing runs the gamut from a reserved, jazz-influenced croon to an emotional pitch reminiscent of Sleater-Kinney's Corin Tucker. The

group works especially well with each other, creating surprising dynamic changes within songs that highlight Vazquez's drumming.

While primarily existing as a live performance band during their time at Wesleyan, all three members express interest in entering the studio and expanding the complexity of their music. Lemone, in particular, is interested in adding new layers to the La Spanka sound, and hopes to work with more than just the three instruments the band uses now.

In the meantime, La Spanka can be found playing shows around campus, and has a track on the recently released Small Antenna compilation CD available at Weshop.

Say What?

compiled by Jenn Heinen

"I tell you, rock 'n' roll can't last." —Jackie Gleason (1956)

"The Beatles are a passing phase. They are the symptoms of the uncertainty of the times. I hope, when they get older, they'll get a haircut." —Billy Graham (1964)

"[Rock 'n' roll] is sung and written, for the most part by cretinous goons; and by means of its almost imbecile reiterations and sly, lewd-in plain fact, dirty-lyrics, it manages to be the martial music of every sideburned delinquent on the face of the earth. This rancid-smelling aphrodisiac I deplore." —Frank Sinatra (1957)

"Of course I've been in bed with several women at once. I'm a rock star after all." —Sting

"I smash guitars because I like them." —Pete Townshend

"Offstage, I'm Ozzie Nelson. I'm gentle. I walk around eating cookies and milk-well, cookies and beer." —Alice Cooper

"If you talk bad about country music, it's like saying bad things about my momma. Them's fightin' words." —Dolly Parton

"I'm not putting Elvis down, but he was a shitass, a yellow belly, and I hated him, the fucker." —Jerry Lee Lewis

"The blues had a baby and they called it rock 'n' roll." —Muddy Waters

"Energy is all you need in rock 'n' roll. Energy and three chords." —Mick Jagger

"I've always said that hard rock...is simply folk music delivered at high velocity. Shot from guns." —David Lee Roth

"Rock won't eliminate your problems, but it will let you sort of dance all over them." —Pete Townshend

Introducing: Jake Aron and Zach Fried two guitarists go electronic

by James Rosenthal

Jake Aron and Zach Fried are two guitarists who were brought together and feed off of the creative placenta that is Wesleyan University. Thriving in Wesleyan's artistic community, Aron and Fried found each other to bring together their musical talents.

Both have similar influences in their guitar playing. They have studied Jazz and both cite Jimi Hendrix as their main influence. Aron said "Hendrix has already done everything guitarists are going to do, including experimenting with sonics." The talent doesn't stop with playing. Aron and Fried have an interest in pursuing producing and working with electronic music. Aron used to work in a recording studio. The class project reflects this new interest.

The duo decided to do an original electronic song as opposed to an organic cover for several reasons. Always putting safety first, Aron said, "we didn't want to rock out too much [in class]; we're not into bursting eardrums or causing spontaneous orgasms." Fried added, "but we totally are." The project that they are currently producing is heavily influenced by Air and has a bass line that really grooves.

As for the future of rock'n'roll, Aron and Fried plan to be a part of it - either producing, recording and touring, or, according to Fried, "Fathering children all across America." Aron added, "So either way we're going to be responsible for the existence hundreds of kids."

The duo believe that in the future, music is going to be a lot more electronic. Fried said, "As long as technology is used creatively it's a good thing. The question is whether computers are removing the element of human creativity or releasing it. Right now, a lot of technology is allowing record companies to push really bad music." One thing is clear, rock will be safe in the hands of these men.

A Special Brew Heats Up

If the name of one of Wesleyan's newest bands reminds you of a brand of coffee, don't be alarmed. Although their first song has yet to be released, the members of Special Brew say that their blend of "folk-style" may be just the type of music that is perfect for Main Street's coffee house, Javapalooza.

The folkie quintet met through mutual friends, and is anchored by keyboardist Tim McGee. As the most musically versed of the group, McGee's past experience includes a classic rock/jam band, Mu, which played a few live gigs. Vocalist Chris Gateman will be playing a dual role as musician but also as organizational leader of the group. On guitars and lead vocals will be Tyler Franklin, whose musical back-

ground is one we can all relate to; "mainly jamming with friends singing covers over a nice Natty Light." Gateman is joined on guitar duties by Greg Polin, who while not part of the History of Rock and R&B class, jumped at the opportunity to join The Brew. Lastly, Jolene "J. Lo" Lozewski rounds out the quintet as keyboardist/guitarist and the sole female member. This will be her first time in a band, but she often can be found around campus "wailing on her car's steering wheel."

Their first project will be an altered cover of Woodie Guthrie's "Talkin' Dust Bowl Blues" or, similarly, Bob Dylan's "Talkin' New York." The political message conveyed by this particular brand of folk music was an immediate draw to

the group, since all members are government majors with the exception of Lozewski. Special Brew's version will be entitled "Talkin' Wesleyan" and will be "poking fun at the craziness that is Wesleyan." McGee will be taking the main writing credits for this project, but the creation of the song will certainly be a collaborative effort. The band's future is unknown as they have only been together for two weeks, but already Gateman is planning a concert at In-Town 13 scheduled tentatively for this spring.

Special Brew will be in the studio recording "Talkin' Wesleyan" on February 25th, and plans for a CD are still in the works. However, the band does have plans for something different musically for the final. Rumor has it that Jolene wanted the group to be reminiscent of glam rock, but the boys rebelled against her. Although Lozewski isn't saying much at this time, she seems to hint that her influence could be felt by the end of semester. In the meantime, we can anticipate Special Brew's first song to be a hilarious commentary of life on campus.



by Josh Tanz

Words Overheard in the Recording Studio with Finger Lee Hopkins and The Connecticut Players

eavesdropping and polaroids by Erin Wisman

"I'm just in it for the babes." – Donielle Lemone



"Finger Lee Hopkins is a visionary." –
Jack "Nipple Martinez" Reilly

"Finger Lee Hopkins screwed me for \$500." –
Rene W. Solomon

"I don't know what the fuck I'm doing." – Rene W. Solomon

"Our drummer isn't a drummer." – Mike Sandler

"I'm drunk." – Rene W. Solomon

"Wait, I wasn't paying attention." – Jack Reilly



Twenty-five years after he composed his most influential piece at his home on High Street,

performs in Zilkha with a distinguished group of Wesleyan graduates

by Shamiso Mtangi

Alvin Lucier

Much of the audience of Alvin Lucier's February 5 performance of "I am sitting in a room" sat on the floor of the Zilkha gallery, with a view of cardboard boxes and other squatting bodies in front of them. Even so, the aural experience made the awkward seating worth it.

Earlier this month, Lucier collaborated with Sol Lewitt to kick off the start of the Center for the Arts Spring events. It was on account of their respective works, "Six Resonant Points Along a Curved Wall" and "Curved Wall," that so many audience members spent the performance in rather unusual seating; Lewitt's twisting wall of cardboard boxes still stands in the Zilkha Gallery.

Preceding Lucier's famous piece were five works by Wesleyan alumni and Australian composer Chris Mann, who also gave the introductory remarks. James Fei (MA'99), Judy Dunaway (MA'00), Nicolas Collins (MA'79), and Ron Kuivila (BA'77) performed individual pieces that prepared the audience for the main feature yet each shined in their own way.

Fei's "The Nerve Meter"

stood out for a lot of listeners who were pleasantly overwhelmed by the sound created by what was described in the program as "the output of the Frequency Shifters." The effect was similar to the sound of the ringing in ears after a loud concert, in an enjoyable way. The thick tones covered all other sounds, such as whispers or footsteps, making the experience entirely auditory and consuming.

Lucier performed his most famous work, which he originally

voice. "I am sitting in a room," he begins, "the same room you are in now."

The presence of the audience members at the performance brings an interactive quality to the piece; the distortion of Lucier's voice depends upon the dimensions of the room and the noises present in it. The text that Lucier reads is recorded as it comes out of the loudspeakers, played again, and then spliced onto the original recording. As this process is re-

The difference between the 1970 version of "I am sitting in a room" and the latest performance points to the growth of technology: Lucier used a computer program in place of a tape recorder.

"For the performance in Zilkha graduate student Jascha Narveson designed a patch in a computer program known as SuperCollider which in real time stored the spoken words, as a tape recorder would," explained Lucier.

Audience members familiar with this particular piece would have noticed it was much shorter than the forty-five minute recording that is available on cd, or, more conveniently for his newest generation of fans, iTunes. Part of the reason Lucier's voice broke down more quickly was on account of the particular architecture of the Zilkha gallery.

Lucier added, "the glass wall in Zilkha had a great influence on the process of transforming my speech into pure resonant sound. The process went faster

than we expected because of this. But the performance was, in its own way, definitive."

**"I AM SITTING IN A ROOM,"
HE BEGINS.
"THE SAME ROOM YOU ARE IN NOW."**



recorded in 1970 in an apartment on 454 High Street. The piece starts off with Lucier slowly stating the process he is about to undertake in a deliberate and slow

peated, the sound of Lucier's voice gradually breaks down; by the end, the resonance of the room wins out over any semblance of human speech.

PLAYLISTISM*

by Erin "you can judge my music library" Wisman

If you haven't heard of Apple's latest music sharing program, iTunes, chances are you've been living under a rock for the past two years, or you're my mother, who, when I asked for an iPod for Christmas responded with "What's an iPod?" Yes, she is a hip, hip lady, but I digress. The following are my personal reviews of few select members of the Wesleyan community whose names happen to show up on my iTunes. I tried to pick people who I don't know, or who I don't know that I know and judged them based on criteria that I believe make up a decent iTunes Music Library.

The criteria include organization of music, honesty in musical taste (no pop music is an automatic deduction of 10 points), eclecticism, devotion to one or a few artists or bands (i.e. do they have The Backstreet Boys' earlier stuff, or just "Millenium" and/or "The Hits: Chapter One"), and last, but certainly not least, taste. (Sorry, but kitsch will only take you so far folks.)

On a separate note, I've included whether or not their Library includes the hit "Toxic" by the sage of our times, Britney Spears. Honestly playlistism is really all about determining likability, and I'm not sure I can genuinely like someone who doesn't appreciate the entertainment value of "Toxic." With that said, let the judgments... er... reviewing begin.

Dubious Enterprises

4194 songs, 10.8 days

#1 most played song: "Kids" by The Management

Organization: A

Honesty: A

Eclecticism: A

Devotion: A

Taste: A

Toxic? ✓

Dubious Enterprises is, perhaps, one of the best music libraries I've encountered in my iTunes adventures.

'Dubious's' "Top 25 Most Played Songs" list is made up almost entirely of hip-hop, a sign that he/she/ze does favor a particular genre. However, the fact that The Management's "Kids" is the number one most played song tells us that Dubious musical taste isn't limited to one style. Browsing through the rest of the library we find that Dubious's tastes range from hip-hop staples like Snoop, Talib Kweli, and Kanye West to 90s rock classics like Bon Jovi, Alice and Chains and Ace of Base. Guilty pleasures like Robbie Williams and Ace of Base rule out musical elitism and Dubious has enough pop (Justin, Christina, Britney) to satisfy my fix. Party in Dubious Enterprises' room?

Final Answer: A+. Well done, indeed.

Betti's Music

1330 Songs, 3.6 Days

#1 most played song: Sugarpie, Honeybunch

Organization: B-

Honesty: A+ ("smart playlists" include a Journey/Matchbox 20 combo)

Eclecticism: B+

Devotion: B-

Taste: C+

Toxic? ✓

All I can say 'Betti,' (if that is your real name), is I've been waiting for a girl like you to come into my life. While

lacking complete collections of any particular artist, Betti does have a nice little collection of Styx, Hall and Oates, Aerosmith and Journey. The fact that Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'" is #5 on her "Top 25 Most Played" playlist and her 'Fun' playlist includes Britney, Foreigner, ABBA, and Wham!, makes Betti my new best friend. She knows what she likes and isn't afraid to shout it out. I can only hope that Betti is online for my next impromptu dance party.

Final Answer: A- for enthusiasm

Fratty's Blues

4745 songs, 14 days

#1 most played song: "Young Pilgrims" by The Shins

Organization: B

Honesty: B-

Eclecticism: B

Devotion: B

Taste: A+

Toxic? X

"Fratty" has one of the most complete collections I've seen. Almost too complete. All the basics are covered from The Cure to the Dixie Chicks, but Fratty, where are the guilty pleasures? Where's "Remix to Ignition"? Sisquó's "The Thong Song"? "Hungry Like the Wolf"??? There have to be some low grade, fad music that gets your party started. To be fair, Fratty does have some Hanson, but "Mmm Bop's" not enough. Despite a lack of guilty pleasures, Fratty's collection of Bob Dylan, complete with "The Basement Tapes" and "The Bootleg Series" is truly noteworthy.

Final Answer: B. More kitsch, less class.



Top 5 Libraries I Wanted to Review But iTunes Wouldn't Let Me Connect

1. Winter of our Discotheque
2. penisand nutsac
3. wanna makeout?
4. girl with Abe Lincoln for a head
5. L Wo's Bumpty Bump

* The word "playlistism" was first published in the Wesleyan Argus in a column by Stephen Aubrey '06. The term was credited to MUSC108's own Kate Brown '06-- numerous publications including "Wired" have since interviewed them about the theory. MTV news once called about an interview, but instead stole the word for the title of a new series on MTV2 in which celebrities judge themselves by their playlists. Lawsuit pending. Not really.

Bob Marley and The Wailers: The Story of Tuff Gong Records

By Jordan Funt

Many musical critics would argue that Bob Marley's music is the most influential reggae music of all time. And why not? Every record Marley and his band, the Wailers, put out made it to the top of the charts. In 1976, Rolling Stone Magazine named Bob and Wailers 'Band of the Year'. And in 1994, Bob was inducted into the Rock'N'Roll Hall of Fame. Inspired by the music of Fats Domino, and Ray Charles, Bob blended his own styles of reggae to form an undivided style to anyone in the music industry. But it was not until 1971 did the Wailers gain a national platform.

In the Beginning

In 1965, Bob Marley and his friends Bunny Wailer and Peter Tosh formed the group 'The Wailers' located in the heart of Jamaica. In 1966, Bob included his wife Rita (Anderson) Marley, Marcia Griffiths and Judy Mowatt, known as the I-Three to band as back up singers along with Aston Barret on bass and his brother Carlton who played drums. The band soon formed the recording/retail company Tuff Gong and was considerably popular in Jamaica. In December 1971, Bob went to Chris Blackwell of Island Records, located in London, and asked if his band could get a record deal. For the first time a reggae band had access to the best recording facilities and was treated in much the same way as say a rock group. Before The Wailers signed to Island Records, Reggae sold only singles and cheap compilation albums. It was in this sense that the Wailers cut their first major record *Catch A Fire*.

Catch A Fire; world-wide release

Released in '73 by Island/Tuff Gong records, the album shows a reggae band in peak performance. In a time

of the human and civil rights movements, the album displays Marley's personal and (primarily) political declarations. With songs like "400 Years", "Slave Driver" and "Concrete Jungle", Marley address the issues of Black liberation and oppression. "Slave Driver" lyrics, which note that "today they say we are free, only to be chained in poverty", were the first of its kind in the musical community. *Catch A Fire*

would later conquer the world.

A Legend Dies

For the next decade, the Wailers would tour the world; going from Paris to Japan and the US. In the time between 1973 and 1980, Island/Tuff Gong records and the Wailers cut seven more albums: *Burnin'* ('73), *Natty Dread* ('74), *Live!* ('75), *Rastaman Vibration* ('76), *Exodus* ('77),

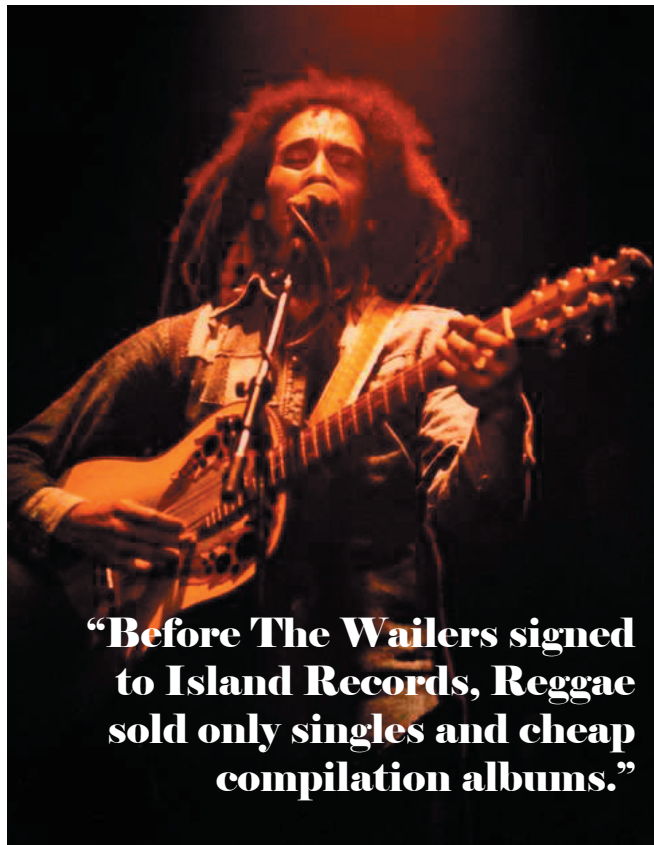
Kaya ('78), and *Uprising* ('80).

In his last album *Uprising*, Marley wrote a song entitled "Redemption Song". This brilliant ballad, featuring Bob alone with his guitar, was arguably his greatest song yet. On May 11, 1981, Bob Marley died of brain cancer at the age of 36. Later that year the government of Jamaica awarded him the Order of Merit and in 1991 proclaimed his birthday be a holiday.

Legend Climbs to #1

Three years after Marley's death, Island/Tuff Gong records released the album *Legend*. The album is a dazzling collection of the most impressive hits by reggae's greatest artist. It is the greatest reggae album of all time and a model "greatest hits" set. Superlatively sequenced, with one song naturally flowing into the next, this is one of the top ten

records of all time. *Legend* sold over ten million copies and has remained on the Billboard Top Pop Catalogue Albums Chart since its release, where it was #1 for 44 consecutive weeks and was the #1 album for 1995. Never were Marley's all-inclusive musical strengths more apparent than on this legendary compilation. It is the kind of desert island disc that will immediately bring a smile to the face and put a bounce in the step of everyone around.



"Before The Wailers signed to Island Records, Reggae sold only singles and cheap compilation albums."

also incorporates loose, lighter numbers concerning primal pleasures like "Baby We've Got A Date" and "Kinky Reggae". The lashing guitar solos and intense rhythms featured with lazy rolling beats, some funky elastic bass and atmospheric keyboards behind Marley's persona give the album a vigorous sound. All in all, *Catch A Fire* was a landmark release that introduced a "new" force into the world of music. It still stands as a strong statement by a great band whose leader

Depictions of Females in Rap Music A Look at Women

Through the Lyrics of Eminem by Vincent Benevento

Rap is a musical genre typically depicting women in a sexist, degrading fashion. Since it emerged as a popularized musical form in the 1980's, rap has offered a realistic look at the urban world through the African American, male perspective. True, women and men of other races were involved in rap music, but it was black men who were both the first to record and achieve substantial success through album sales (Keyes, 256). Thus, because rap music represents the black male tradition, it generates an image of women through that limited perspective (Berry, 185). In the late 1990's, a white rapper from Detroit emerged from the underground circuit to quickly attain a level of rap superstardom. Though his skin tone was atypical of the rap genre, his messages about women, his frequent use of vulgarity, and realistic and direct view of the world struck a chord with listeners, both black and white. According to music scholar Venise T. Berry, three popularized images of women reoccur throughout music, transcending all genres: the saint, the sinner/whore, and the victim. Rapper Eminem portrays women through his highly sexist musical as sinners and whores repeatedly throughout his multi-platinum album "The EMINEM Show," focusing, as is so common in rap music, on the inferior and immoral nature of women.

Because rap is an almost exclusively black institution, it has been, and remains today, difficult for members of other races to cross over successfully into this genre. This is because so much of the music deals with the inner city, impoverished situation of individuals, who happen to be black. As a result, rap has become associated with the ever-continuing black struggle in this country. To accurately represent this struggle through music by an artist of another race is not any easy feat to accomplish, especially when the audience of this music has a fan base that is predominately African American. In the early 1990's, some white rappers, such as Vanilla Ice, achieved immense success with catchy, hit singles. However, these rappers quickly fell out of the limelight, as their music was viewed as highly commercialized and lyrically unsophisticated. Their subject matter was flashy and very uncharacteristic of the raw, realistic genre. Thus, the short-lived success of these "one-hit wonders" increased the gap between black and

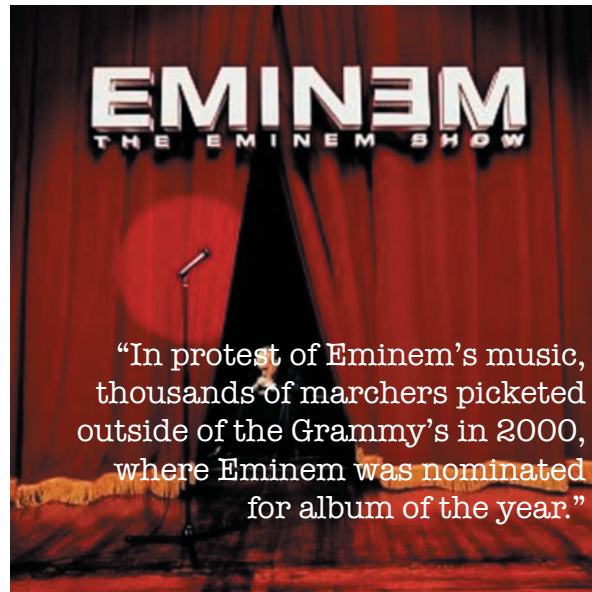
white rappers.

Though he faced initial criticism, style eventually overcame skepticism in the case of Eminem. His talent was recognized by multi-platinum gangster rapper Dr. Dre, who upon hearing him perform immediately signed Eminem to his Aftermath recording label. Eminem's lyrical style was completely fresh, unlike that of any of his white predecessors. He incorporated intellectual commentary, longer lines of rhyme, more explicit imagery, and focused upon subject matter which was previously untouched in rap music. He blatantly attacked homosexuality, talked openly about both rape and murder, and even depicted the murder of his wife at the time, from whom he is now divorced, on his second album. His controversial subject matter sparked a frenzy of negative publicity, but it fueled the sales of his albums. In his song "White America," the rapper comments, "how could predict my words would have an impact like this?" In protest of Eminem's music, thousands of marchers picketed outside of the Grammy's in 2000, where Eminem was nominated for album of the year for "The Marshall Mathers" (his real name) "LP". Even though they strongly disagreed with his message, critics recognized his immense ability to write and perform. As did members of an audience who previously believed that white people couldn't rap.

One of the reasons that Eminem is so popular is that although he was new and different in appearance and style, he maintains a close relationship to the integrity of the genre. Unlike his white predecessors, he keeps his subject matter edgy and realistic and also incorporates popular recurring themes of the genre into his music. One of these popular themes, made so by rap groups like 2 Live Crew, is that single women are promiscuous and submit themselves to male domination. This ideal is part of the whore image as categorized by Venise Berry.

Eminem displays women in the image of the whore in the song "Superman." This song is a discussion of his actions and attitudes towards the women with whom he has intimate encounters. The melody is derivative more of the R and B genre than

that typically found in rap music. It is highly sensual and the song is introduced via a dialogue between the rapper and a mysterious female. The two are obviously going to engage in a recreational sexual encounter. In the last line of this introduction preceding the first verse, the women comments "ooh boy you drive me crazy." The rapper responds, "Bitch you make me hurl!" This statement gives the listener insight regarding the content of the upcoming lyrics.



Once the rapper breaks into the lyrical verse in "Superman," he dedicates his full energy towards attacking the female sex. Eminem's lyrics express a change in his attitude towards women since his divorce from his estranged wife, Kim. Thus, now that he is single and "got not ring on this finger now" he pledges "I'll never let another chick bring me down in a relationship, save it bitch, you make me sick. Superman ain't savin' shit, girl you can jump on Shady's (an alias of Eminem's) d____." This is a clear indicator that Eminem plans not to get involved with a woman on an emotional level again. He goes on to say, in reinforcement of this notion: "don't put out, I'll put you out, won't get out, I'll push you out" and "don't get me wrong, I love these whores, it's no secret, everybody knows. Yeah we fucked, bitch so what, that's about as far as the story goes." The rapper clearly has no respect for women and treats them solely as prostitutes, believing that they have no value aside from their ability to provide him with pleasure through sex. Eminem

illustrates in the chorus of the song the highly promiscuous nature of the lifestyle afforded to a rap superstar. "But, I do know one thing though, bitches they come they go, Saturday through Sunday, Monday through Sunday, yo. Maybe I'll love your one day, maybe we'll someday grow- till' then just sit your drunk ass on that fuckin' runway, ho."

This quotation is loaded with direct negative language. Eminem illustrates here that he sleeps with

numerous women on a consistent basis. He feels that in his individual relationships with each woman, he holds the power to decide just how serious each situation will become. He calls these women "drunks" and "hoes", and his reference to the runway indicates that these women happen to be extremely attractive- women that other men would probably swoon over. By calling himself "Superman" and depicting

these women in an extremely negative fashion, Eminem attempts to create as large an inequity between he and the female sex as possible. He puts himself on a pedestal, high above not only women, but men as well, demeaning beautiful women frequently and efficiently. Eminem's message in this song is clear: the women that he sleeps with are whores; they act in ways indicative of this kind of lifestyle, and should be treated as such. As the rapper says, "but I guess that's what sluts do, how could it ever be just us two, I never loved you enough to trust you, we just met and I just fucked you."

In the remainder of the songs on "Them EMINEM Show" in which the image of women is explored, Eminem cites specific examples from his own life to draw upon. In the song "Cleanin' out my Closet," Eminem lyrically paints an equally negative image of his mother, who according to Berry would serve as representative of the image of woman as a sinner. However, Eminem expresses some degree of remorse regarding

his negative view and subsequent attack on his own mother. Thus, Ms. Mathers' portrayal represents not only the woman as a sinner, but to a lesser degree the woman as a victim. This is different than the image presented in "Superman," wherein the artist offers absolutely no apology for his words.

Stylistically, "Cleanin' out my Closet" is a piece more typical of the rap genre. The sound is dark and slow. The baseline is deep and the instrumentation is simplistic- hi-hat, snare, and base. The obvious focus of the piece is the lyrical content, and it is devoted to portraying Eminem's mother as abusive, hateful, and psychologically imbalanced. In a method similar to that used in "Superman," in which the listener is faced with the main idea of the song prior to the first repetition of the chorus, Eminem concludes the first verse "look at me now, I bet you're probably sick of me now, ain't you Mama, I'm gonna make you look so ridiculous now." From this statement, the listener knows that the artist intends to engage in a lyrical onslaught directed towards his mother. Eminem begins this portrayal of his mother with memories of his childhood. He says, "try to envision witnessing your mama poppin' prescription pills in the kitchen, bitchin that someone's always going through her purse and shit's missin." This is obviously a painful recollection for the rapper, and if this is a true statement, it must have been extremely difficult for him to grow up in an environment with a parent who had a drug problem. Eminem then describes his life in foster housing, which was forced upon him because of unjust actions by his mother. "Goin' through public housing systems, victim of Munchausen Syndrome, my whole life I was made to believe I was sick when I wasn't... now that I blew up it makes you sick to your stomach." Munchausen Syndrome is based on the premise that an individual is ill that the afflicted individuals parents use that illness to gain attention or sympathy. This quote indicates that the rapper's mother has severe mental inequities that not only made her create these false problems in her son's mind but also perpetuated her personal desire for this type of negative attention. The quote also introduces the notion that Eminem's mother is extremely bitter towards his newly acquired success. Because of these factors, Eminem despises the woman who gave birth to him and expresses it lyrically. He goes on to comment "you're getting older now, and it gets cold when you're lonely." He addresses her directly by saying that his daughter

"won't even be at your funeral."

Eminem's greatest statement of anger comes in the last verse "you selfish bitch, I hope you fucking burn in hell for this shit." Clearly the relationship that Eminem has with his mother is not the typical mother/ son bond of mutual affection. It stems from him being mistreated by her as a child, and memories of these interactions bring about highly painful emotions. As the rapper says in the second verse, "you could never justify the way you treated me, Ma."

Despite the fact that Eminem possesses a strong hatred for his mother, he feels guilty about these negative views of this woman. The chorus, which continually repeats throughout the song is: "I'm sorry Mama, I never meant to hurt you, I never meant to make you cry, but tonight I'm cleanin' out my closet." Thus, the goal of the piece is not to degrade his mother, on inflict emotional pain upon her, but rather to comment on the emotional scars of his past. He openly states, "now I would never dis my own mama just to get recognition." Eminem is not trying to gain exposure for his vocal display of disrespect towards his mother, and implies that he disagrees with the concept of a man behaving in this manner. Although she is clearly to blame for the things she did to her son, Eminem is apologetic that the emotional nature of their relationship is adversarial. Nonetheless, his emotions are too strong to ignore in the piece and the overriding message is that he cannot forget to pain he has endured.

The relationship between Eminem and his mother explains much of his animosity towards women. Any other feelings of detest and disrespect stem from the relationship between he and his ex-wife, Kim. In terms of image

according to Berry, Kim represents both the sinner and the whore, and is a combination of the rage that the rapper feels towards his mother and the female population as a whole. His hatred for Kim exceeds that described towards his mother in "Cleanin' out my Closet" and the disrespect that he

feels towards his many sexual partners in "Superman."

Eminem and Kim were married for a number of years before divorcing in 2000. Their relationship was extremely volatile and their breakup was highly publicized. As he says in "Haley's Song," "I got a wife who's determined to make my life living hell." Their marriage came to a conclusion because Eminem caught his wife with another man. This incident is characterized in "Cleanin' out my Closet." The rapper says "the smartest shit I did was take the bullets out of that gun, cause I'd have killed them, I'd of shot Kim and him both." Once again, Eminem displays his pain through this sentiment of potential unbridled violence. He cared for this woman, and the shock of seeing her with another man tore him apart, enough so to contemplate killing both she and the man with whom she was engaged. A skit on the album depicts Eminem and another individual actually planning the murder of Kim and her lover. However, Eminem also delves into just how much he cared for Kim when they were married. In "Haley's Song" he describes in detailed fashion the pain he endured and the sacrifices he made to accommodate their relationship. "The years I've wasted aint nothing to the tears that I've tasted, here's what I'm facing, three felonies, six years of probation. I've been to jail for this woman, gone to bat for this woman, I've take bats to people's backs, bent over backwards for this woman. Man, I should have

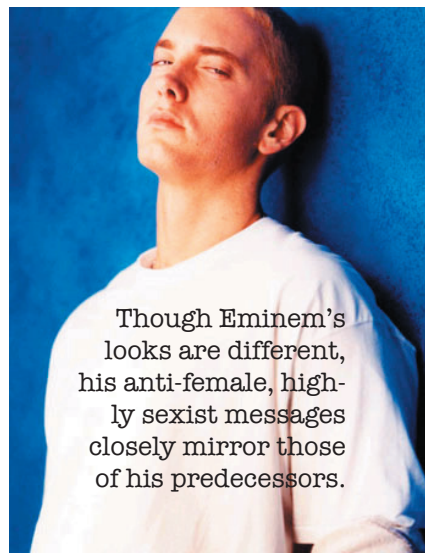
seen it comin..." Eminem wants the listener to know that his ex-wife is a whore whose unfaithful actions merit emotional reaction.

Throughout "The EMINEM Show," hateful and disrespectful references are made to Kim in almost every song, as Eminem

attempts to vent emotional anguish. Eminem accuses Kim of having drug problems of her own. He says in one song "I rap like I'm addicted to smack, like I'm Kim Mathers." This simile compares his quick, ceaseless lyrical style to her chemical obsession with speed. Eminem makes explicit

references to her promiscuous sex life. "Listen to the sound of Kim as she licks on another c___" and "I'd of ripped the pre-nup up if I'd of seen the all the people she was fuckin'" are lyrics that illustrate the idea that Kim has and will continue to be sexually indiscreet. Eminem also repeatedly questions his decision to be involved in a relationship with her at all. He asks rhetorically "why'd I stick my penis up it?" and "why couldn't I have had someone else?" In these questions, Eminem displays a belief that his marriage to Kim was a mistake and that her behaviors were indicative of someone who is socially and emotionally inferior.

The relationship with Kim clearly changes Eminem's attitude and behavior. He feels some sense of closure, despite extreme bitterness towards her. As illustrated in "Superman," he will never again allow himself to be placed in a compromising position, in which a woman can exert power over him. He says "Ever since I broke up with what's her face, I'm a different man." He now feels empowered, confident and stable. His uncontrollable love for Kim brought about violent action that got the rapper into trouble with the law. Without that bittersweet love and the distractions that it caused, Eminem is free to concentrate on his career and his relationship with his daughter. Eminem describes this new found freedom and subsequent happiness and these lines in "Haley's Song:" "but fuck it, its over, there's no reason to cry no more, I got my baby Halie, the only woman that I adore." Eminem recognizes that his relationship with Kim was highly detrimental to his life, and only has negative memories of their time together. Rapper Eminem portrays women in a fashion that is stereotypical of the rap genre in his album "The EMINEM Show." Though his looks are different, his anti-female, highly sexist messages closely mirror those of his predecessors. His life experiences have caused him to be distrustful, bitter, and angry and have stimulated a view of women as lustful, unstable, conniving creatures in his eyes. The fact that the media has heavily scrutinized the derogatory lyrical content of his music has only furthered Eminem's commercial success. By blending a unique lyrical style and the physical aesthetic of White suburban America with the explicit, realistic language characteristic of this predominately urban genre, Eminem has achieved crossover success in rap to a degree that was once thought impossible for a White artist.



Wesleyan University. Janis Joplin and Social Change

By Daniella Johnson

Who ever said Wesleyan was boring? 1968 rocked for our beloved liberal arts institution. The hippie generation was in full affect in Middletown. Women and students of color were recruited as full time students at Wesleyan. Psychedelic rock band, Big Brother and the Holding Company group performed on March 9, 1968 to the Wesleyan audience. Big Brother and the Holding Company was headed by the legendary Janis Joplin, a noted blues and psychedelic rock artist of the 1960s. 1968 rocked!

Janis Lyn Joplin was born January 19, 1943, in Port Arthur, Texas. She was an eccentric child, constantly restless, and gifted with a musical talent. She was influenced by blues artists like Bessie Smith, and imitated their raw, emotional singing styles. Joplin also broke into the industry during times of integration as well as extreme racial tension. Amidst activists and youth seeking social change. After attending college, Joplin headed for San Francisco where she was

asked to join the group Big Brother and the Holding Company. As a lead vocalist, Joplin contributed a unique raw style of blues and psychedelic rock. They slowly gained a youth hippie following and toured for a while before landing a contract with Columbia

{{Why was Janis Joplin's performance at Wesleyan relevant in 1968?}}

Records.

The hippie culture spread across the nation, especially affected college students of the 1960s. Wesleyan University was no exception. The Civil Rights Movement was well underway, as Americans sought equal rights, liberation and integration. In the 1960s, Wesleyan began recruiting students of color onto its campus. In 1968, women were admitted again since 1912, as transfer students, before they officially joined the freshman class in 1969. It is unclear whether women were on campus when Big Brother and the Holding Company performed at Wesleyan, but it is interesting that Janis Joplin,

considered a social activist in her own right performed at an institution where integration was first starting to happen. One particular song in mind is "Women is Losers", which the band may or may not have performed. This song seems to me a sarcastic stab at male dominance. "Women is losers/Now I know you must-a heard it all/I said now men always seem to end up on top anyway." Imagine that song in an audience of all men, or very few women recently admitted as transfer students. Why was Janis Joplin relevant at Wesleyan in 1968? Was it a sign that Wesleyan would develop as a socially and politically active institution? I'd love to believe so.

Big Brother and the Holding Company performance at Wesleyan University was part of an extensive tour around country, in rather small venues. More success under the Columbia label lead to more money, and more access to

drugs and the rock lifestyle. Several months after their performance at Wesleyan, the band broke up due to drug-related conflicts. Yes, Wesleyan University was one of the last venues of the group before they disbanded. Joplin would later achieve success in other bands and fame as a voice for the young and liberated culture, before dying of a heroin overdose in Los Angeles at the age of 27. But at a brief, yet critical moment in time, there was the year 1968, that rocked Wesleyan University.



**in the face of many
new directions
in hip hop music**

can rap bridge the generational gap?

by Sam Astor

As a member of the first generation to witness rap's emergence to the popular culture forefront, I feel a general ambivalence forming as to where rap will head in the future. More conservative voices claim that rap is inappropriate for young children; therefore, parents of these children should refrain from exposing children to lyrics like: "Then fuck your mom hit them skins to amnesia, She don't remember shit just the two hits, Her hittin the floor and me hittin the clit..." (Notorious B.I.G. "Dead Wrong"). However, this is an argument that was established against rock music by conservatives of an earlier generation, and few would argue that rock music has been a detriment to past generations of youth. As such, rap can not be considered harmful as an entity.

My questioning lies in the future of popular rap and how rap's ageing, faithful listeners plan on welcoming new rap styles. As gangster rap continues to pump out hit after hit with explicit content, a rift could easily form between the old guard of rap listeners and rap's new constituency. This gap

can be seen with other forms of music where, for example, an older generation of rockers turned their heads towards a heavier sound of hair bands and heavy metal.

The next graduating classes of Wesleyan will be one of the last that experienced rap emerge in the prime of their adolescence. While this does not ensure any permanent affiliation with rap music, senior Chris Robichaud '03 says, "I started getting into rap for the great beats with smooth rhymes... age will not change a great song, album, or artists' work for me, nor am I ashamed to have rap as part of my life."

While many first-generation rap fans are finishing up their Wesleyan experience as students and still partying with rap music, there are already others on the Wesleyan campus who are involved with the University on a professional level. When asked about

where rap fit into his future, Eric Heng (23), an Area Coordinator for Wesleyan Residential Life, said he noticed that as he's gotten older he's started to pay closer attention to the lyrics and said, "my partner and I both enjoy rap music and will likely continue to listen to rap as we get older. When we have children I think we'll be open the types of music they listen to." This idea of listening to a type of rap targeted at future generations indicates an already developing estrangement between "oldies rap" and "new-age rap."

Newer rap may never be embraced by an MTV generation (one of my least favorite catchphrases) that remembers a different era and style of rap. Nonetheless, there will undoubtedly be a certain level of acceptance and appreciation of the music by older rap fans who understand that sometimes vulgarity and violence is inappropriate, while other times it is crucial to express the raw truth in society.

Review: Twelve-piece Fiebre Brings High-Energy Salsa to Eclectic

by Joseph Feldblum

I went into the Fiebre show on February 19th not knowing what to expect. I have seen a few Wesleyan student bands, and they have displayed a mixed bag of talent. This show, however, blew me away.

Tight orchestration and infectious beats were the theme of the night. At first I tried to stand in the back to watch the band and be objective, but very soon I was swept away on a crazy night of dancing. At one point I looked over and the girl next to me was hitting wooden cogs together along with the beat. There was no need. Fiebre seamlessly executed their blend of Afro-Caribbean rhythms and melodies. My only gripe is that the singing was sometimes drowned out by the instruments. Seeing as they were singing in Spanish, I would not have caught much of it anyway.

The crowd fed off of the incredible energy of the band and danced nonstop. When Fiebre finally paused for a few minutes after playing for an hour, they were swamped with chants of "Otra! Otra!," which they were happy to oblige. They added a hip-hop song towards the end, featuring guest-MC Poet Troubadour, as well as a song with Michelle Rueda. Although I admit that I am no Salsa connoisseur, I do know that this was one of the best live shows I have seen in a while, and one that I would gladly go to again.

Reviews

The Mars Volta: *Francis the Mute* by Joely Pritzker

It is almost impossible to know where to begin with the sophomore release of The Mars Volta, *Francis the Mute*. Trying to even define the genre of music to place The Mars Volta into becomes extremely problematic. But, I suppose the label is far less important than what the band is doing. As band member and producer Omar Rodriguez-Lopez so eloquently explains, “We are really tired of those labels and questions... Concept

album? How can any huge project that takes up most of your life for a year not have a concept? Prog? How can any innovative, forward-thinking art or music not be progressive? It reminds me of when I first heard the label ‘Emo,’ which was the most ridiculous label ever. How can anything you put your heart and soul into not be emotional?” Call them what you will, The Mars Volta is producing some of the most innovative and creative music

out there right now.

In the 75-minute sprawling piece of work, the exceptional musicianship and astonishing vocal capabilities of lead singer Cedric Bixler-Zavala produce an engrossing, mind-bending journey. Transitioning seamlessly between free jazz exploration and hair metal-esque, The Mars Volta demonstrates an amazing breadth of musical influences. The music draws upon the sounds of acts like Pink Floyd, Gun n’ Roses, Miles Davis and yet they in fact sound nothing like any of their influences. The Mars Volta succeeds where many before have failed; they produce a sound undeniably unique, one that simultaneously recognizes the past but still attempts to push music forward in a very real way.

Unlike their first full-length album, *De-Loused in the Comatorium*, which still significantly reflected the presence of the former At The Drive-In members, *Francis the Mute* appeals much more to the psychedelic rock tendencies than to those of indie rock. Listeners hoping for an album more along the lines of tightly crafted songs of At The Drive-In will likely be disappointed. While tinges of indie rock sensibilities are still present, the work as a whole moves more in the direction of an experimental vision. Is *Francis the Mute* meandering? Yes. At times is it overindulgent? Perhaps. But, is it absolutely brilliant? Most definitely.

Lindsay Lohan: *Speak* by Emilia Burditt

One needs to listen no further than the first number on Lindsay Lohan’s *Speak* to hear the extent of what the album has to offer. The song, aptly titled “First”, features a punchy, danceable rock beat under a distorted guitar riff as well as a melodic hook that vanishes from memory before it completely escapes Lohan’s mouth. Like peers such as Ashlee Simpson, Lohan channels Avril Lavigne to create paint-by-numbers teen pop smothered in just enough power chords to make Lohan come across as a rocker, and just enough production sheen to not upset the parents.

The plan seems simple: popular actress makes album, reflects current styles, is projected from car stereos everywhere, and sells millions. It has been road-tested a thousand times, from Annette Funicello to Hilary Duff, and has often been a successful enterprise. After starring in several crowd-pleasing films, including *Freaky Friday* and *Mean Girls*, Lohan has the movie star aspect covered. The problem with her version of the cliché is that her musical debut is a murky mess.

With the exception of a few sprinkles of piano and acoustic guitar (“Symptoms of You”, “Over”), the record features only one texture: a mixture of dance beats and grungy guitars. Rather than using elements from both rock and pop to create its own spunky spin on the trend, the songs seem to indecisively float between the two styles. Tunes like “Anything But Me” plod along inanely despite their club rhythms. The one exception is the final track and first single “Rumors” which uses Britney Spears as a template rather than punk inflected pop. The lack of variation and direction cause the tracks to bleed together until, by the time it is over, record sounds like one giant, bland song. This hampers it from even being a guilty pleasure.

Lyrical, the album successfully caters to its targeted demographic. Lines like “Do you see me?/Do you feel me like I feel you?/Call your number/I cannot get through” will appeal to the 6th grade girl that wrote the same thing in her diary last week. However, the hooks may not be memorable enough to sustain the kind of the radio or MTV presence so key to success with a fickle young audience. In addition, better executed records like Lavigne’s already exist.

Speak is simply a clumsy retread of a genre that needs no help in being watered down. It is dumbfounding that anyone would choose to add this album to their music collection unless they are fans of her work on camera, and even they would probably get more enjoyment out of another screening of *Mean Girls*.



The Futureheads: *The Futureheads* by Eliot Nelson



Pity the modern rocker. No, really.

Pity the Strokes and the Yeah Yeah Yeahs even if sometimes you find yourself wondering if they spend more time working on their songs or scouring SoHo boutiques for \$75 Rolling Stone concert shirts from the 80s. Pity those emo boys like Bright Eyes and Dashboard Confessional (introspective equals sexy... it's the new apathetic). Pity The Stills, Rufus Wainwright, the Arcade Fire, and all the rest—no matter how much they may or may not get on your nerves.

Right now rock is at an impasse. Whereas thirty or forty years ago artists ranging from The Beatles to Neil Young to Randy Newman could incorporate older musical genres into their work without much (if any) critical fanfare or ire, such practices have become considerably more scrutinized as of late. Groups like the aforementioned Strokes are introduced to the public as the Velvet Underground reincarnate, not as a group with a strong command of rhythm guitar and melody. Furthermore, there have been very few additions to the lexicon of rock's subdivisions as of late and most of those allude to earlier musical movements (Noise Rock, Garage Rock Revival, and Post-Punk are just a few that are listed on Rolling Stone's website). Granted anyone could tell you that the Strokes draw heavily from the Velvet Underground, that Damien Rice's music echoes of Van Morrison's early acoustic-centered albums, and so on. Furthermore, many critics are appreciative of today's groups who, in their view, are simply dredging up tried and true formulas. However there is no doubt that it is becoming more difficult

for artists to establish for themselves identities that reach beyond their influences.

Perhaps it is this increasingly academic and referential approach to popular music that explains the crop of artists in recent years who can best be described as Rockers of the Absurd. Groups like the Electric Six and the Darkness have made names for themselves by singing asinine lyrics over catchy, yet not terribly complex instrumentation. You can't blame them: if the thanks you got for producing good music was being reduced to a watered down version of something else, you'd probably go a little crazy and start singing about gay bars and nuclear war too (as the Electric Six did).

And so along come The Futureheads out of northern England with their terrific self-titled debut album. Although they add a decidedly New Wave sound to the musical One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest-ness of the Darkness and Electric Six with songs like "Robot" ("The best thing is our lifespan/ We live nigh on a hundred years") and "Stupid and Shallow" ("You eat shit 'cos you're stupid and shallow") these songs are tempered by more meaningful affairs.

In fact, it is this balance that makes *The Futureheads* so appealing. The album is a rapid fire sequence of catchy two and a half minute guitar-pop numbers

like "A to B" coupled with more melodic songs such as "Le Garage" and the lovely, vocal-heavy "Danger of the Water." Like child commenting on the world around him, the album is a delightful mix of the ridiculous ("Robot") and the painfully truthful (the day in day out monotony of life in "First Day").

If the album does have an Achilles heel, it's that the band sometimes falls too much in love with their own sound. Although the brisk pace of *The Futureheads* is part of its overall charm, a few of the tracks simply aren't unique enough to stand out amongst all the hubbub. One thing that made other one two punch albums so artistically alluring—like Elvis Costello's *Get Happy*, Public Enemy's *It Takes a Nation of Millions...* and The Clash's *London Calling*—was that the artists were able to pack in up to twenty songs yet kept each short and distinct.

Critics may say that all the Futureheads are doing is rehashing Television's CBGB sound with an electronic tinge. Go ahead. If the most unique music today is coming from artists uninterested in actually being unique, I'm glad that the Futureheads are leading the charge.



Ambulance LTD: *Ambulance LTD* by Julia Perciasepe

Led by Marcus Congleton as lead vocalist, guitarist, and songwriter, Ambulance LTD mingles the sounds of almost every era of music. From blues to punk, the New York based band, itself a mixture of interesting characters, delivers an inevitably eminent masterpiece. From songs such as "Anecdote", that has a sweetness to it warranting it a place on a Wes Anderson soundtrack, to "SugarPill", with a more alternative eerie sound, the album takes you on a ride. Whether it takes you someplace psychedelic or to the local bar, the band's heavy use of guitar and drums creates a classic, or what will be classic sound. The group consists of four brown-haired punkers turned hipsters, who produce a foot thumping yet mellow compilation of tracks. Their music is neat yet flexible and cannot be listened to just once. Elements of the Kinks, the Rolling Stones, the Beatles and especially the Velvet Underground can be heard behind the crooning of Congleton and the steady drumming of Darren Beckett. This album lifts the hearts of the listeners and is a must have.

Ted Leo and the Pharmacists: *Shake the Sheets* by Emilia Burditt

On his new album *Shake the Sheets*, Ted Leo rehashes his usual brand of punk tinged indie rock. Those looking for something new from Leo sonically will not be satisfied here, but unwavering energy, politically charged lyrics, and a solid batch of songs make a sound that could sound tired burst with new flavor.

Politically, the album is steadfast without getting too specific. When Leo belts, "It seems a losing fight/Yet, down again, I sit and try to write/An open letter to a president" it is obvious that he is making reference to the current administration, but the concept is vague enough that it will not

make the album appear dated in four years. Leo is content to express his confusion, sadness, and anger about the current "state of the State" ("Criminal Piece") without throwing too many stones. His lyrics are political but dwell on the personal effects of political, making many of his lyrics easy relate to no matter what side of the party line a listener stands on.

Even Leo's more overt statements, such as "So long to you 'Moderates!'" ("Criminal Piece") are fairly easy to swallow, whether the listener is of Leo's political persuasion or not, because the songs they are contained in are so infectious. The three-and-a-half minute slices of punchy rock are so tightly packed with catchy melodies that they would appeal to even the most casual of music fans. Still, the record is edgy enough to satisfy independent rock

purists that constitute some of his fan base. Leo's quirky, earnest vocals over the backbeat-heavy rhythm of "The Angels' Share" would make such disparate influences as the Pixies and Operation Ivy proud.

What makes the whole affair work, though, is truly Leo's energy. The listener gets the sense that he means what he says, and that he is still profoundly excited about music and its possibilities both socially and sonically. In "The One Who Got Us Out", Leo sneers "I'm worried for my tired country" over stop-start power chords that transition into a drum beat fast enough to have been lifted from one of the speedier moments on Bad Religion's debut record. While *Shake the Sheets* is not groundbreaking or revolutionary, it is a solid collection of socially aware tunes that beg for another listen.

George Clinton & Parliament Funkadelic in concert *Toad's Place, New Haven, Connecticut January 20, 2005* by Julia Perciasepe

It isn't every day that you see pre-pubescent hemp wearing boys dance alongside a loyal middle-aged crowd. It was the day of The George Clinton and the P. Funk All-Stars Concert that these two very different sides of the band were separated, the old generation and the new generation. They were separated by a literal barrier of linked metal piping with a muscular bouncer as its watchdog. They both rocked hard, though, for well over three hours to songs such as "Get up for the Down Stroke" and "Flashlight."

The Band at one point became a mass of twelve singers, musicians, a strange stripper like dancer with a velvet jumpsuit and an old man wearing just a diaper who they call "starchild." There was also an extreme swaying head banging violinist, and George himself, modeling his famed colored dreadlocks and sunglasses. They played a medley of songs, sticking to their classics, as well as experimenting with covers. One of the pivotal moments in the show occurred when the band broke into a cover of Little Jon's "Get Low", exciting the hoots and hollers from the younger

audience members and the blank play along head bobs of the old folks.

And then there was the explicit drug use. Half way through one of the bands ear-splitting tangents George Clinton started scanning the crowd and pacing the stage. He made hand gestures drawing his hand to his mouth...He wanted to smoke. And smoke he did, when a girl, on the younger side mind you, handed up her tiny bowl. And magically a blunt appeared and George started to "double fist it"- as the kids call these days- to use both hands. A bowl in one hand, and the blunt in the other.

One can imagine what this did to the music, as the songs became almost unbearably long and loud. The music was still typical and beyond satisfactory, but it lacked the direction of a song not under the influence. It was sometimes like several band members did not know where they were or what they were doing. They knew where their instruments were though, and they played them well.

It is nice to know that some

kids are listening to what their parents listened to and appreciate music other than Lindsay Lohan and Slip Knot. Out of the jumble of older white haired folks and youthful musicians, old rhythms fused with new, feeble and vibrant voices, came a worthy concert. George Clinton and the P. Funk All-Stars did indeed tear the roof off.



My Chemical Romance

by Ashley N. Ruffin

My Chemical Romance is making a name for themselves in the pop-punk world. Recently featured on the 2004 Vans Warped Tour, they're currently headlining the Taste of Chaos tour, which features bands like Killswitch Engage, Senses Fail, Underoath, Opiate For The Masses, and The Used. The band members are Gerard and Mikey Way (vocals and bass, respectively), Ray Toro and Frank Iero on guitars, and Bob Bryar on drums. Their 2002 debut, *I Brought You My Bullets, You Brought Me Your Love*, was an instant hit, attracting listeners with songs like "Vampires Will Never Hurt You" and "Demolition Lovers." This thirteen track album is raw and loud, with lyrics and melodies that attracted everyone from emo kids to metal heads. Constant touring and promotion increased the band's fan base in both Europe and the U.S., until demand for a follow-up album reached its peak. The release of 2004's *Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge* succeeded in pleasing old fans and attracting a score of new followers.

The prevalent themes of *Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge* are death and loss. Lyricist Gerard Way creatively blends his distressed emotions with a surprisingly upbeat sound, while avoiding obnoxious clichés and fatalistic feelings in the vein of "it's the end of the world and we are all going to die." Way's vocals are intense and slightly nasal without being overly annoying. Each song has its own unique, distinct style that makes the album feel like an insane roller coaster ride. From the pleading chorus of the opener, "Helena," the album slides into the up-tempo songs "Give 'em Hell, Kid" and "To The End." Next comes "You Know What They Do To Guys Like Us In Prison," a duet with Bert McCracken of The Used that tells the amusing tale of two fairly unremorseful criminals.

This is followed by the now-overplayed "I'm Not Okay (I Promise)", the song that propelled the quintet to stardom with its teen friendly lyrics MTV-produced music video. One of the best songs on *Three Cheers* is "The Ghost of You," a dreamy ballad that, despite having a different sound than the rest of the album, still manages not to feel out of place. Other songs include the beautifully morbid "This Jetset Life Is Gonna Kill You," humor-filled "It's Not a Fashion Statement, It's a Death Wish," and the power-packed finale "I Never Told You What I Do For a Living."

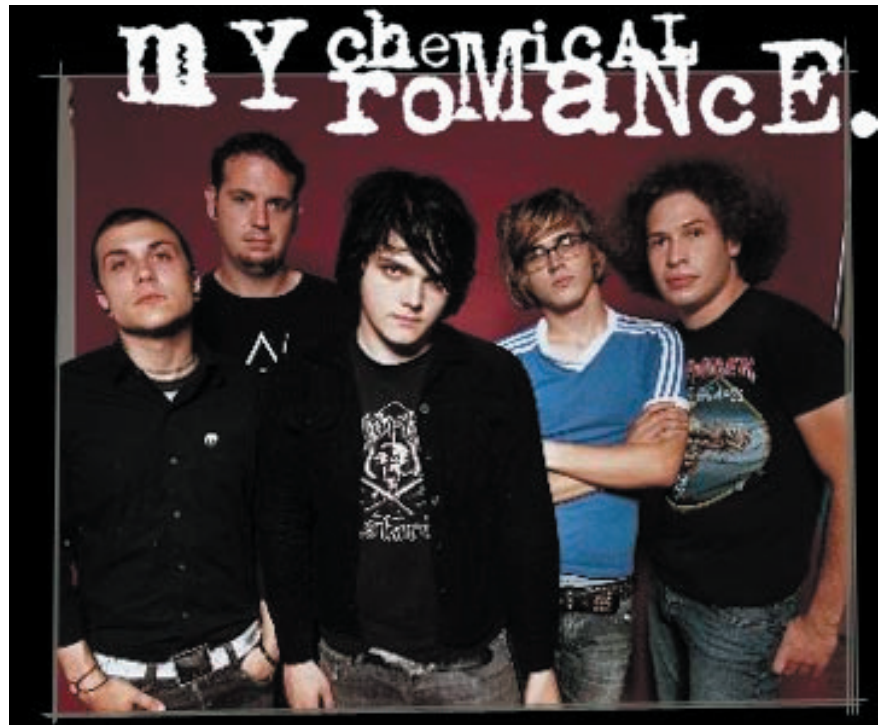
Try as I might, I found it impossible to find any fault with this album. The lyrics are dark without being too cheesy, the vocals are perfectly flawed, and the band plays every song very well. With its eclectic blend of emo, metal, punk and pop, this album is suited for practically anyone. *Three Cheers for My Chemical Romance*, a band destined for future success.

Cold Duck Complex by Joseph Feldblum

Although I had seen them before and this concert was fairly similar to the last, Cold Duck Complex was great. Their January 28th show was put on at the Buttonwood Tree, an intimate joint down on Main Street.

Cold Duck is two bands in one: a rap group called Platypus Complex headed by the emcee, and a jazzy band of music majors from UMass Amherst. They have a very interesting take on music, incorporating clever lyrics (my favorite: "Who's your favorite rapper? I'm tougher than them, tough enough to do the crossword puzzle in pen") with jazz interludes displaying their impressive musical talents. Equal attention is devoted to the jazz and the rapping.

Word spread fast about the performance and the room was packed. Cold Duck managed to keep the crowd on its feet the whole time. With an impressive repertoire of songs and plenty of excitement, Cold Duck Complex were thoroughly satisfying.



Tupac: *All Eyez on Me* by Chris Robichaud

Tupac Shakur's "All Eyez on Me" has sold over 9 million copies to date. The album was nominated for a 3 Grammys in 1997, including Best Album. The album boasts an array of hit singles. Judging by its credentials, you'd think this may be the greatest rap album ever made. Once you listen to it, you realize this definitely is the greatest rap album ever made. "All Eyez on Me" was released in February of 1996 and was Tupac's fourth album, and his first under the Death Row record label which lends Tupac a new, more polished sound. The timing for the release of this album could not have been better for 2pac. "All Eyez on Me" was released at a time when hip-hop was making its way into the mainstream. 2pac and other artists, such as Notorious B.I.G. and Dr. Dre, were starting to gain great amounts of record sales because of the universal appeal of their music. In order to sell such a large amount of records the album must not only have an important message, but also more importantly must be liked by the masses. The producers at Death Row recognized this and produced beats that were accessible to everyone. Producers Johnny J and Dr Dre helped "All Eyez on Me" gain commercial success with hits like "California Love" featuring Dr. Dre, "How Do U Want It" featuring KC and JoJo and "2 of Amerikaz Most Wanted" featuring Snoop Dogg.

Even though all of these radio hits are on first disc, the second is equally good. If released, a number of tracks off the second disk would have been popular hits. "I'd rather be ya N.I.G.G.A.," "Thug Passion," the title track are all wonderfully produced. The title track slows the beat down and lets the listener hear exactly what 2pac has to say. 2pac realizes that now that he's made it, everyone is watching him and wants a piece of his success. Surpris-

ingly, 2pac doesn't appear alone on this track, but is accompanied by Syke, who sings the second verse, showing that someone understands 2pac's situation. Syke's first line "So much trouble in the world, nigga, can't nobody feel your pain," is a line from one of his friends that shows that he realizes how tough his situation is.

The album also features some sampling, which give a clue to 2pac's musical influences. "All About U" samples from the old radio hit "Candy." The second disc features "U Can't C Me," a remix of "Atomic Dog" and even has George Clinton singing the hook on the song. The album boasts several other guest appearances, including Method Man, Redman, and Nate Dogg.

2pac's signing with Death Row records and his release of "All Eyez on Me" shows that 2pac had found a for-

2pac's frustration and fear.

But "All Eyez on Me" shows a completely different 2pac, one that has accepted his lifestyle. The first line of "All Eyez on Me" is "I won't deny it, I'm a f*ckin' ridah, you don't wanna f*ck with me." The album goes on for two entire discs hammering this message home. 2pac sees that all of these actions towards him comes out of envy and says "jealousy is misery, suffering is grief, you cowards better be prepared if you try to f*ck with me." This album doesn't show a scared, confused 2pac, but rather a man that has found himself. The 2pac seen on "All Eyez on Me" is a man who should be remembered. It is on this album that 2pac accepts himself and the lifestyle he has chosen, something many people aren't able to do.

2pac uses his acceptance and realization of his lifestyle as an example for younger listeners. Several songs caution against getting caught up in the lifestyle which he has chosen. "Shorty Wanna be a Thug" discusses a younger kid who always wants to follow around the older boys and do whatever they're doing, even if it is selling drugs. "I Ain't Mad Atcha" presents a similar message to all of his friends which chose the clean life. 2pac says that he is not mad at them for the life they chose and does not consider them a sellout and actually encourages them to go that way. "Wonder Why They Call You Bitch" cautions a younger girl

about promiscuity, saying that she can make it as an independent and does not need to sleep around.

The album also serves as a formula for many artists to follow. The things which 2pac discusses had never been heard before. Many artists now rap about being poor and living this wild lifestyle.

"All Eyez on Me" contains two disks, both packed with tracks that you aren't able to skip. Although some may posit that *Me Against the World* is 2pac's greatest work, I believe it is simply the album that brought his name to the forefront of the rap industry and set him up for the success he received with the release of "All Eyez on Me."



mula for success. The record label gave him access to great producers and featured artists that already had a wide audience. The change in record label also showed a change in 2pac's outlook on life. 2pac's previous album, "Me Against the World," was released on Interscope records one year earlier while he was still incarcerated. When his previous album was released, 2pac had just been shot 5 times, robbed of \$40,000 worth of jewelry, and convicted of sexual assault and sentenced to do time in prison. As a result of this, "Me Against the World" sees a confused 2pac, wondering how he got caught up in the life he was living. Tracks such as "F*ck the World" and "Death Around the Corner" show

Bill Dixon: *The Art of the Solo* by Joely Prtizker

I should preface this review by admitting that my exposure to and knowledge of more avant-garde forms of jazz is quite limited. This did not, however, prevent me from thoroughly enjoying the Bill Dixon and Ran Blake concert at Crowell Concert Hall.

Performing solo trumpet for the first time in 15 years, Bill Dixon's set lasted only a half-hour, yet what he lacked in duration, he made up for in intensity. Dixon used a relatively basic set-up, alternating between two microphones, one with a reverb effect and the other with delay. This configuration, which Dixon has been performing with for decades, allows the trumpeter to push the limits of what his instrument should sound like.

With his transitions between harsh, abrasive noises to clear, beautiful tones, Dixon more than demonstrates the trumpet's versatility as an instrument. The combination of staccato notes echoing back from the reverb and delay and the amazingly quick sequences he creates produces an intensely complex and complete sound. The highly improvisational aspect of his music seems to rely heavily on the technology he employs. By using the reverb and delay, Dixon often appears to be responding to the sound he receives from the effects. This approach to playing helps Dixon achieve what he calls "a multitude of layers that, again, much like something that can be carved, alterations can be made upon."

The most memorable portion of the evening came toward the beginning of his set. Through the manipulation of his breath and the microphones, Dixon was able to create the sounds of a zoo-like environment. Crowell was filled with lions and elephants, all originating from the lone trumpet. For the duration of his performance, Bill Dixon continually left me thinking, "How is he doing that?" In the current music industry climate of homogeny and blandness, it is truly refreshing to hear genuinely innovative music.

Medeski, Martin, and Wood *at Trinity College, February 21st 2005* by Aaron Smith

On February 21, Trinity College's annual "Inside the Music" workshop, held at their Vernon Social Center, featured avant-garde jazz trio and Blue Note recording artists Medeski, Martin, and Wood (MMW). They appeared as part of the "Inside the Music" program, a yearly educational event that highlights the mechanics and philosophy behind improvisational music. MMW not only conducted lengthy lecture and Q&A session early Monday afternoon, but also played a non-stop, two hour long set that evening before a packed Vernon Social Center (at no charge to the fans).

MMW, promoting their latest album "End of the World Party: Just In Case (Dig)," released in September 2004, played a significant amount of their new, more electronic-sounding material on Monday night. Beginning the show with the title track from the new album, MMW, true to their improvisational style, quickly morphed the "End of the World Party" groove into a mixture of unwritten material and jams from previous, more conventional jazz albums (breaking from their constant playing only once).

Their performance perfectly spliced together long, drawn out periods of tripped out, musical chaos with sections of tight melodic grooves that were sure to get heads moving. The chaotic times in which drummer Billy Martin shook sleigh-bells out of control, smacked his drumset in complete disorder, and pounded on cowbells and wooden blocks only made the groovin' points of the show even more funky. The result was a high energy and intimate show that everyone, including the artists, seemed to enjoy.

The Killers: *Hot Fuss* by Ashley N. Ruffin

The Band: This Sin City foursome is comprised of Brandon Flowers (vocals/keyboards), David Keuning (guitar), Mark Stoermer (bass), and Ronnie Vannucci (drums).

The Album: *Hot Fuss*, released June 15, 2004

The Sound: The Killers combine energetic, synth-fueled pop-rock with dark lyrics reflecting their musical influences-- The Smiths, The Cure, and New Order, to name a few.

Overview: *Hot Fuss* marks the Killers' debut on the American music scene, featuring eleven skillfully penned tales of murder, lust, and heartbreak. The band's first single, "Somebody Told Me," is a song with a dance beat catchy enough to appeal to MTV viewers and lyrics that are just dark enough to separate the Killers from their peppy pop peers. The second single, "Mr. Brightside," combines a cheerful pop beat with morose lyrics about a jealous, jaded ex-lover, and stands out as one of the most outstanding tracks on the album.

Other gems include murder mysteries "Jenny Was a Friend of Mine" and "Midnight Show," the theatrical "All These Things That I've Done" (featuring vocals from Sweet Inspirations, a gospel band known for working with stars like Aretha Franklin), and "Andy

You're a Star" (which some say is very similar to Franz Ferdinand's "Michael"). If the album had any flaws, they could be found in the slower songs "Believe Me Natalie" and "Everything Will Be Alright". Although these songs are pleasant enough, they lack some of the enthusiasm that can be found in the rest of the album, and tend to become almost annoyingly repetitive at times.

Overall, The Killers' *Hot Fuss* is a musical gem and a worthwhile purchase for anyone looking for an alternative to today's mainstream music scene.

TOP FIVE MANIA CRAZY GO-NUTS

"Ipod and I"

by Elana Cook

1. Butterfly-Alicia Keys
2. Emotional-Carl Thomas
3. Refuge-John Legend
4. Epiphany-Staind
5. Love Language-Talib Kwali

"An Anomaly"

by Suzanne

1. Kenna
2. Pitbull
3. MosDef
4. John Legend
5. The Temptations

"Top Five Influential Jazz Artists"

by Mike Sandler

1. Louis Armstrong
2. Duke Ellington
3. Charlie Parker
4. Miles Davis
5. Ornette Coleman

"Artists that Give Hope to Awkward White Boys"

by Jesse Young

1. Talking Heads
2. Devo
3. Buddy Holly
4. Weezer
5. Bright Eyes

"Top Five Wesley Willis Hit Singles"

by Janine C.

1. Rock n Roll McDonalds
2. I Whooped Batman's Ass
3. Suck a Cheetah's Dick
4. My Mother Smokes Crack Rocks
5. Cut the Mullet

"Top Five Versions of All Along the Watchtower"

by Pat Wolf

1. Jimi Hendrix
2. Dave Matthews Band
3. Bob Dylan
4. Me in the Butt C bathroom
5. U2

"Top Five Bands Who Deceptively Require a Singular Pronoun"

by Kate Brown

1. Iron & Wine
2. Xiu Xiu
3. Destroyer
4. The Microphones (Mt. Eerie)
5. The Smiths

"Top Five Rock Stars I'd Turn Gay For"

by Josh Ente

1. David Bowie
2. Prince
3. Justin Hawkins
4. Natalie Imbruglia/Des'ree
5. Pat Boone

"Top Five Pop Punk Sell-outs"

by Janine C.

1. Avril Lavinge
2. Sum 41
3. Simple Plan
4. Blink 182
5. Yellow Cord/Sugar Ray (tie)

"Top Five Most Thinly-Veiled References in Song to the Phallus"

by Jesse Young & co.

1. Chck Berry - My Ding-a-Ling
2. Peter Gabriel - Sledgehammer
3. Peter, Paul & Mary - If I Had a Hammer
4. Bruce Springsteen - Ramrod
5. Backstreet Boys - Larger than Life

"Top Five Favorite Video Series Moments"

by James Rosenthal

1. Brian Wilson talking about the Beatles
2. Little Richard on Pat Boone
3. Bob Dylan taking called from radio listeners
4. Otis Redding at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival
5. Jerry Lee Lewis marrying his 13 year old cousin

"Top Five Audience Rules for a Show"

by Jack Reilly

1. Your one goal during the set closer is to get on stage and dance. Especially if Iggy Pop asks you to
2. Don't be a tool, applaud only if you liked the song--heckle if you didn't.
3. Hey "FREEBIRD!" guy--shut up! You're not funny! Go listen to Nickelback or something
4. Stop requesting your favorite song while the band retunes. You aren't impressing anyone by requesting the Japanese import single--the band probably doesn't even know how it goes.
5. Tall dudes: stand in the back. Normal people like to see performances too



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