

# 'The Brothers Grimm' is no Monty Python tale

by Chrisi Gaskill  
Staff Writer

## The Brothers Grimm

Directed by Terry Gilliam  
(MGM, 2005)

★★★

Terry Gilliam's *The Brothers Grimm* is a bit like an old quilt. It's tattered, torn, and the seams are gaping, but there's magic in it all the same. From a confused background story to an unfinished ending, the movie has style, but lacks a distinct purpose.

The brothers, Wilhelm (Matt Damon) and Jacob Grimm (Heath Ledger), are con artists in French occupied Germany who "save" villages from fake witches and demons of the Grimms' own design. It is not long before Delatombe (Jonathan Pryce) catches them. Instead of executing the brothers, Delatombe sends them, accompanied by his Italian torturer, Cavaldi (Peter Stormare), to the small village of Marbaden where children are disappearing in the woods at an alarming rate.

Angelika (Lena Headey), a local woman who knows the forest's secrets, becomes the brothers' guide. The enchantments of the forest, however, are far too real, and the brothers find themselves hip deep in a veritable collage of fairytales - including a 500-year-old evil queen (Monica Bellucci) locked away in her tower, questing for everlasting beauty.

Unfortunately, the Brothers Grimm can't make up their minds about what kind of people they want to be. The brothers are charlatans, clowns, romantic heroes, and magicians - whatever is convenient for them at that particular moment. I was pleasantly surprised at Ledger's performance of Jacob, the quiet, scholarly little brother. This is a new role for him that he took on splendidly. Peter Stormare is so over the top as a bizarre Italian torturer that there are times when he is utterly incoherent.

Visually, the movie is stunning, but

some of the elements don't quite match up, leaving the viewer slightly bewildered. One minute the forest has an otherworldly glow, and the next it appears to be an ordinary wood. This was due to Gilliam's cinematographer, Nicola Pecorini, being fired halfway through the movie. Yet there is beauty in *The Brothers Grimm*.

There are wonderful allusions to various fairytales. A little girl in a red cape who doesn't come back: "Hans" and "Greta," who leave a trail of bread crumbs; long hair used as rope to climb down from a tower; a gingerbread man who can not be caught; and an evil queen who wishes to be "the fairest of them all" are just a few of the great undertones that can be found in the movie.

Overall, the movie is slightly confusing and choppy. Despite its rough exterior, it has magical elements that take the viewer back to when they first heard the Grimms' fairytales. There is a living feeling to the movie that transports the viewer to a very special place: "once upon a time".



# Asheville-based band headlines Roxaway festival

by Zack Harding  
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It is always such a pleasure to discover a new band that is absolutely flooring. This is definitely the case with the Asheville based band Fifth House, a combination funk/rock/jam outfit.

The band formed in 1999 and stayed together until 2000. It has only been back together again since April of 2005, though not that anyone would ever be able to tell. Influences include Phish, the Grateful Dead, and Stevie Wonder (probably the most evident of the three).

The groove is held together by the funky and solid six-string bass playing of Rob Heyer and the tight drumming of Mike Ashworth. The majority of the lead vocal is shared between guitarist and lead vocalist Corey Bullman and keyboardist Kevin Scala.

An interesting thing about the band is that the focus neither falls on improvisation or songwriting in particular but rather a great marriage thereof. They are the songwriter's jam band, so there is no need

to fear 20 minute freak out sections or cluttered improvisation, they jam with a great sense of musicianship and purpose. Not even the longest of their songs seem contrived; everything is in its right place.

The band recently played at the Roxaway music festival at Lake Toxaway, N.C. Most bands at the festival were quite phenomenal, but none stepped close to the show put on by Fifth House. They possess that unique power of stage presence that usually is only felt with larger well-known acts that have been around for years.

Though adjectives are often overused, two come to mind when trying to describe the danceable sound of their music: fresh and smooth. Every member contributes equally to a beautiful outcome, no one member stands out as the main reference point. There are certain moments in their live show that do highlight a specific band member though, such as the fantastic bass solo by Heyer at the Roxaway festival.

Another interesting thing that sets Fifth House apart from most other jam bands is the rather poetic nature of lyrics

of the bands original songs. In response to poetry in music, Bullman, who writes most of the lyrics, said, "People who write songs are just bad poets."

The band released a demo in their first incarnation around 2000 and an EP of selected live tracks and studio cuts in 2005. There is also a full length LP in the works at the moment, with a likely release in early 2006.

Drummer Ashworth said that one of the most important things for people to understand is the importance of supporting live music. Fifth house is certainly a band whose live music is worth being supported, and since they are coming to Jason's on Main Street on Oct. 1, hopefully many will take this opportunity.