

Bar 17: No bar none--Acceptable.

by Zack Harding
Arts & Life Editor

Bar 17
Trey Anastasio
Rubber Jungle Records, 2006



I picked up Trey Anastasio's new album *Bar 17*, and after a somewhat mediocre first impression, it keeps getting better with each listen.

Though Anastasio is known for his work in the band Phish, which emphasized lengthy instrumental improvisations, he is capable of writing well-orchestrated studio

material also. *Bar 17* does have a couple of tracks that stretch past the six minute mark into jam band territory, such as the excellent and beautiful title track, but for the most part the album is simply a collection of well written and occasionally experimental songs.

The core of *Bar 17* revolves around lightly played mid tempo jazz-rock pieces with a couple of more rocking tunes. The two rock oriented tracks, "Dragonfly" and "Mud City" sound like they could have come out of the 70's, the latter sounding a bit like an Allman Brothers blues tune.

The other tracks sound pretty similar to Phish's *Farmhouse* disc with Anastasio's high vocals be-

ing sung softly over passive chord progressions. There is a little bit of experimentation vocally, especially on "Shadow," which features layers of different vocals weaving in and out of each other; one female vocal on the track sounds very much like Fiona Apple, though it isn't.

Speaking of guest appearances, *Bar 17* is full of them. There are over forty different musicians who appear on the album, which was recorded and written over a process of several years. The drums, bass and other accompanying instruments have a much different feel on almost every song on the album. Jon Fishman and Mike Gordon from Phish also make an

appearance on the album, no doubt pleasing Phish "phans."

One of the more surprising tracks is the closer, "Cincinnati," which has a lengthy swing style horn, arranged by Anastasio, that works very well into the song.

Some Critics have claimed that *Bar 17* has a lack of cohesion throughout, which pretty much true, but it is still a collection of good songs with a few really great ones. If there is any real problem with the album it is that, for the most part, there is not much new ground made by Anastasio; a lot of it sounds like Phish. But you know that's not such a bad thing. I give *Bar 17* a healthy 4 out of 5 stars.

Porter Center for Performing Arts UPCOMING EVENTS

Christopher Harding, piano & Steven Boe, violin
Sunday, January 28 / 3 p.m. / \$20

A prodigal son returns as Harding, who spent five years on the Brevard College faculty as professor of piano, is joined by violinist Boe for an afternoon of violin sonatas of Brahms. Both players are well-seasoned performers and prizewinners, and both are on faculty at the University

Natalie MacMaster, celtic
Thursday, February 8 / 7:30 p.m. / \$25

Cape-Breton fiddler Natalie MacMaster is the most dynamic performer in Celtic music today (Boston Herald).

The Brevard Philharmonic
Sunday, February 11 / \$15
Vance Reese, organ soloist, and A. Scott Wood, guest conductor, perform Camille Saint-Saens *Symphony No. 3 (Organ Symphony)*.

BC THEATRE: Christopher Durang's *Beyond Therapy*
February 15-17 / 7:30 p.m.
A hilarious comedy about the ups and downs of life.

Peter Schickele / P.D.Q. Bach
Friday, February 23 / 7:30 p.m. / \$40
A co-presentation of Brevard College & The Brevard Music Center

http://www.brevard.edu/portercenter/artist_series.htm

Murray recital excellent start to year

by Megan Murph
Contributor

On Tuesday, January 16, 2007 Dr. Bruce Murray, piano professor of the music department, gave a Faculty Recital at the Porter Center for Performing Arts.

His concert consisted of three large works by Beethoven, Liszt, and Brahms. The program began with Beethoven's famous "Farwell" Sonata in E flat Op. 81a ("Lebewohl"). When this Germanic piece was written, Napoleon Bonaparte led a French attack on Vienna, which forced one of Beethoven's great patrons, Archduke Rudolph to leave the city. This sonata is a reflection of what was going on during that time.

The three movements of the sonata are entitled: (1) "The Farewell", (2) "The Absence", and (3) "The Return". In 1811, an added dedication was read in its first publication: "On the departure of his Imperial Highness, for the Archduke Rudolph in admiration".

Murray showed great control in the phrasing of this solemn sonata.

Next, Murray brought out beautiful melodies in Liszt's Benediction de Die dans la solitude (The Blessing of God in Solitude) from *Harmonies Poétiques at Religieuses* (Poetic and Religious Harmonies). This work, in its entirety, was composed in 1847. Benediction is the third and one of the longest of the 10 movement cycle.

After intermission, the concert ended with young Brahmn's Sonata in F minor, Op. 5. This five movement sonata was composed in 1853. Murray performed this sonata with great technique and enhanced the character of each movement, which was a fine way to conclude the performance.

The recital proved to be an excellent way to start off the new year. The audience seemed to enjoy Murray's recital and supported the BC Music Department's choice of representation.