

Dinner & A Movie

Lisa McChristian
The Pendulum

The Usual Suspects & L.A. Confidential

Yes, you read correctly, this week's movie section is about two movies from more than a year ago. Due to a bite from the flu bug I had time to catch up with some great movies that I managed to miss.

"The Usual Suspects" is an action-adventure movie that I was weary of first but I really had a good time watching. The story focuses on five con-men who are placed in a police line up together through the manipulations of mysterious Keyser Soze. From that moment on the film never stops moving. Just when you think you know who's double crossing who, everything you know turns out to be wrong.

The film stars some of Hollywood's most gifted leading men like Kevin Spacey, Gabriel Byrne, Pete Postlethwaite, Kevin Pollack, Chazz Palminteri, Benicio Del Toro, and Stephen Baldwin.

Spacey won an Academy Award for the seemingly slow-witted Verbal Kint. He is one of the best American actors today.

"L.A. Confidential" is a murder mystery set in the 1950's. It has a little bit of everything from corrupt cops, gang violence, a hooker with a heart of gold, a true romance, and a sleazy tabloid reporter.

I now understand why Kim Basinger won the 1998 Best Supporting Actress Award for her role as Lynn Bracken, a woman who came to Hollywood to become a star and had to settle for being a hooker.

I highly recommend "The Usual Suspects" and "L.A. Confidential." You'll get your money's worth for the rentals.

The Olive Garden

Before the flu struck I had the chance to make my second trip to the Olive Garden with a few friends.

As usual I got a great meal for under \$20. Our meal started out with an endless bowl of house salad and fresh bread sticks that are delicious.

I took a risk and also order a the side dish of stuffed mushrooms filled with a variety of cheeses, marinara sauce, and peppers. The mushrooms were very tangy. They can be very filling so be careful how many you eat before the entree. I highly recommend the ravioli. You are given the option of cheese or beef. I picked the cheese stuffed ravioli and was not disappointed.

A word of warning: Avoid the mushroom alfredo at all costs. I don't want to tarnish a good restaurant but the dish is foul. Stick with the more traditional dishes.

An unusual night with Aerosmith

Tom Mullen
The Pendulum

Great plans seem to always have holes. Things you don't expect and things you never dream of happening. Never in a million years before coming to college did I think I would interview countless bands including Fear Factory, Helmet, Vanilla Ice, Jimmy Eat World, and the Promise Ring. Last Thursday at the Greensboro Coliseum was not one of those nights.

Aerosmith and Columbia Records label-mates The Afghan Whigs rolled into town this part Thursday. Didn't they just come through here? You would think they would have a limit on this? The fans didn't care and neither did I.

The review starts with a startling realization that my friend and I have great tickets and backstage passes courtesy of a close friend who knew the opening band. We proceed to the seat and weave our way around countless women in leather, guys in ratted tour shirts and plenty of booze. The seats were

great but there seemed to be too many people cheering for The Afghan Whigs to start. Clue #1

Then we asked a roadie about the backstage pass. He said someone already came along to get people with those passes. Clue #2.

Then a huge banner of

tour. I guess it's hard to play the same songs every night for 20 years and still try and play them with the same passion. I will admit they pulled out all the hits at the right time and were as tight as any band I have ever seen. "Walk This Way," "Dream On," "Dude Looks Like a Lady" and "Love in an Elevator" (the only reason I watched MTV in middle school) all rocked the house and got the crowd up in arms.

My favorite part of a huge arena show is the end. The band leaves after their "supposed" last song and half of the place clears out. Then when Aerosmith comes back out to do an en-



Aerosmith floated down and the lights became dark. Clue #3.

We missed The Afghan Whigs. That was the only reason we came. Aerosmith was just the icing on the cake. My friend wallowed in his seat as I stood and tried to make the best of the situation.

Aerosmith came as if they had just gotten out of their wheelchairs. Steven Tyler did his best to trick the almost capacity crowd that they still rock. He ran from one side of the stage to the other and only stopped to do sexual type movements against big models of cats and snakes, which made the women in the crowd scream as loud as teenyboppers at an N'Sync show.

Joe Perry was hunched over his guitar the entire show. He tried to play the songs as if it was the first

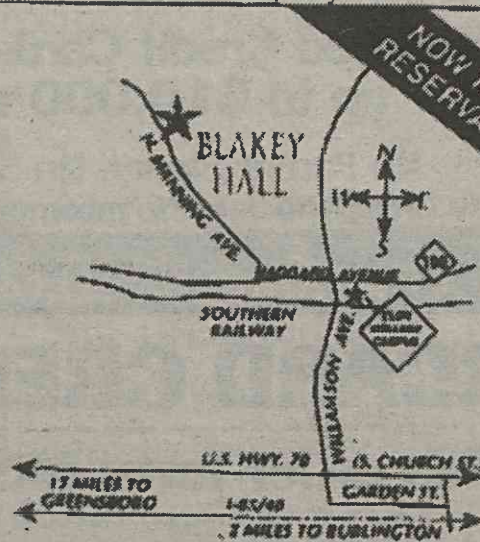
core they all rush back and make excuses why they left to their new friends that they just met at the show. It never gets old for me.

The night wasn't a complete washout. I saw two and half hours of Aerosmith and if that wasn't enough, 94.5 FM was blasting Aerosmith in the parking lot as the crowd left.

My friend and I were disappointed that we never saw The Afghan Whigs, but Aerosmith certainly showed me how they keep their fans and still know how to give the goods after all these years. They also still like to charge \$25 for a T-shirt.

My friend was still upset about missing The Afghan Whigs, but I left the arena saying to myself "There is no show, like a free show."

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