

# 'Bedroom' emotive, powerful

**Mark Van Hook**  
Columnist

**T**odd Field's "In the Bedroom" is a brilliant exercise in subtlety and restraint, and a riveting film about the power of things left unsaid. There are shocking moments of violence simply used as jumping-off points for deep explorations into the human soul.

The film begins with a summer romance between college boy Frank Fowler (Nick Stahl) and mother of two, Natalie Strout (Marisa Tomei). Frank lives in Maine with his parents, Matt (Tom Wilkinson) and Ruth (Sissy Spacek), a seemingly ideal middle-aged couple. Ruth disapproves of the relationship, but we get the feeling that Matt secretly approves, and in a sense, is living vicariously through his son. Natalie has larger problems, in form of her estranged, abusive husband Richard (William Mapother).

There is an idyllic quality

to these early passages, which makes the moment of tragedy that happens early on all the more shocking. The movie handles the tragedy with deftness and simplicity, allowing the audience to form its own reaction.

After the tragedy, the film shifts its focus to a profoundly honest drama about the grief and sorrow of an older couple. Ruth and Matt eventually grow cold and emotionally distant to-



## THE REEL DEAL

with Mark Van Hook  
e-mail: ash932@aol.com

ward one another. They begin to bottle their feelings, and when they finally lash out, their words are searing and hateful. By the film's end, both characters have gone through the full range of human emotion and may not be better for it.

A film like this relies on the less-is-more philosophy when it comes to performances, and both Spacek and Wilkinson underplay beautifully. Spacek is the embodiment of suppressed rage as

Ruth, and turns in what may be her best performance since "Carrie." Wilkinson, best known for his role in "The Full Monty," reflects a quiet dignity and a simmering anger as Matt. Supporting work from Stahl, Mapother and especially Tomei is equally excellent; all the actors understand their characters down to the core.

But it's the direction by first-time director Field that makes it all work. Field, best known as Tom Cruise's piano-playing friend in "Eyes Wide Shut," has emerged as a director of restraint and complete competence. He has enough confidence in his story and his characters not to rely on cheap melodrama for emotional reaction.

"In the Bedroom" is a color film, but it would have worked just as well in black and white. There are no flashy tricks or camera movements to distract from the emotional core of the story. It knows the hearts and minds of its characters, and has enough faith in its audience to understand that we do, too. This is independent filmmaking at its absolute best.

# ESTV tapes live music show 'Studio E'

**Andi Petrini**  
Reporter

"Studio E" is the latest in student programming to be taped by ESTV. The first show was taped Saturday in the McEwen School of Communications' television studios and featured student band Big Daddy Rex.

"Studio E" is set up as a cross between MTV's "Unplugged" and VHI's "Storytellers," and its producers encourage band members to tell stories about their songs. Students Katrina Taylor and Julie Marateck and adviser J. McMerty developed the idea and set for "Studio E."

"We wanted to get Elon musicians out there," Taylor said. "So many students play in their rooms, they never get heard. We wanted to give them that opportunity."

The show highlights Elon student musicians, as

well as those in the community. "Studio E" will tape two shows in front of a live audience once a month, Taylor said.

The set is decorated like a trendy lounge. Draped fabric and candles set the atmosphere. The live audience has a choice of couches, cush-

of the band is a washboard bearing the band's name. The group's style is a cross between modern rock and country.

The band covered Garth Brooks' "Wrapped Up In You." Duffy introduced the song with a story about his dog, Dixie, that died by accidentally lapping up gasoline.

A song about a Waffle House waitress named Elaine was on the setlist, as was "Spring Morning Fades," which was written by Duffy's friend.

In the future, the producers of the show want to tape Sweet Signatures and Twisted Measure, two Elon a-



Andi Petrini/Photographer

## Who's your daddy?

Will Duffy, Rich Evans and Josh Sullivan of Big Daddy Rex performed on the first taping of "Studio E," the latest show on ESTV.

ioned chairs and stools to sit on in the intimate setting.

Guitarist Will Duffy, vocalist Rich Evans and drummer Josh Sullivan, who comprise Big Daddy Rex, played an hour-long set that included brief stories and chats with the audience.

The signature instrument

capella groups on campus, Taylor said.

Students should contact the ESTV office if they are interested in being featured on "Studio E." Shows will start airing next week, and a schedule will be available on the campus information channel.

## CAMPUS CANDIDS

What is your favorite music magazine?



"Source—They don't censor anything. They say whatever they want to say."

—STEVE HARVIN, FRESHMAN



"Rolling Stone—It has nice pictures and a lot of liberal ideas about music."

—BRIAN CONLEY, SOPHOMORE



"Spin—They have funky artwork and I love reading 'Band of the Month.'"

—NOLYN PASCAL, SENIOR



"Rolling Stone—It's the most informative and has respect for giving up-and-coming bands recognition."

—MEREDITH BIHR, SOPHOMORE

## LINES TO LIVE BY

“ You can write a tune with  
Rhythm and blues as your alibi,  
You can sell your soul and lay the  
Blame on the passers by,  
You shake your body on the TV  
screen,  
Seems to me, you try anything  
twice. ”

—gomez

“rhythm and blues alibi”  
liquid skin

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