

Greensboro indie band, The Urban Sophisticates, releases CD

Tim Rink

Reporter

Greensboro-based indie band The Urban Sophisticates are not your typical band. They have the typical parts: drums, guitar, bass. Then there's the trombone, trumpet, R & B singer, and rapper. Their self-titled album is not middle of the road, either.

A wonderful blend of several different instrument styles and excellent song-writing results in a CD that is just fun to listen to. Singer Benton James, who describes himself on the album as "a modern misfit," writes an eclectic mix of songs. Some funny, some serious, some sad, some all three.

The band consists of Ricky Nxumalo on bass, Tim Hooker on guitar, Jeremy Denman on trumpet, Sal Mascali on trombone, Romondo Jessup on drums and Aaron James on vocals.

Probably the best song on the album is "Just Not Urban Enough," a

song lamenting the "unurban"ness that James feels when rejected by ladies. Introduced in concert as a song that addresses a "very serious problem," all cylinders are firing on this song, musically and lyrically.

In "London Trenchcoat," James explains what he would do if he was a gangster. With lines like "I'd pay my taxes, cuz that's how they got Capone/and own a piece of every NFL end zone" and references to the Powerpuff Girls, Gandhi, and GI Joes this song is fun to listen to.

It also contains what seems to be their mission statement, "Here in 2002 (or 4 as they play it now) we rock the boat in thrift store clothes and a London trenchcoat."

"Apartment 3A" takes you inside one of the band's parties at "The hottest spot this side of the Mason-Dixon." James and friends apologize for a tough decision in "The Hardest Thing." In "Philadelphia," James laments being separated from his hometown.

If you want to see the Urban Sophisticates, they play a lot of shows in the area, many at churches and small clubs.

They will be appearing at Brassfield Ham's in Greensboro on Feb. 14 at 10 p.m. and tickets are \$5. On Feb. 21 the band will appear at The Pour House in Raleigh, NC with the Addison Groove Project at 10 p.m. Tickets for that show will be \$7.

Their website, <http://www.-urbansophisticates.com>, has everything you need to know about the band. They have a schedule of upcoming shows, mp3's to download, pictures, and a mailing list so you can stay informed about the band's exploits. The Urban Sophisticates are a band on the rise, catch them while you can.

These "modern misfits" seem to be a good fit for the greater Greensboro area.

Contact Tim Rink at pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247.



Photo courtesy of urbansophisticates.com

CAREER CONNECTION: Your link to the Elon Career Center

Career Corner: Miller Starts Early to Land Great Job!

On May 24, 2003, Erika Miller graduated from Elon with a degree in Business Administration and concentrations in MIS and Finance. At 8:00 a.m. the following morning, she was on a plane to Cleveland to start her new job as a credit manager with Ernst & Young. She also began her first semester of study for a Master's degree in Accountancy at the University of Notre Dame -- a program sponsored by her company.

Her path to success began four years earlier when she selected Elon based on the "right" combination of liberal arts and business requirements. Erika was selected as a Jefferson-Pilot Fellow in the Business School and awarded a Cannon Leadership Fellowship. During her four years at Elon, she was a program director with the Business fraternity, Alpha Kappa Psi, worked in the Leadership Office and served as Senior SGA Senator. She also kept very busy with internships and summer jobs.

At the end of her sophomore year, Erika completed an internship with JP Morgan Chase where she learned about mortgage credit management. In her junior year, she worked in public relations with Mac Cosmetics in London and completed a consulting project for the Cleveland Clinic hospital. The summer before her senior year, she learned about financial services sales through a job with AG Edwards. She also completed another consulting assignment with the Cleveland Clinic, developing a new inventory management system in Microsoft Office.

Erika also began networking with relatives and friends in the Cleveland area to learn about full-time job opportunities. That led to an information interview with a campus recruiter at AG Edwards, and encouraged her to become a member of an area organization formed to connect new graduates with jobs. Her second connection with AG Edwards led to an interview and a job offer that included full funding for her Master's degree.

Erika credits the Elon Career Center with helping her throughout her job search. (Continued next column)

She "got good answers to many questions about job search preparation," and remembers her practice interview as being particularly helpful.

Her advice to current Elon students is very simple and direct. "Start looking early. Don't wait until the last minute."

Upcoming Information Sessions/On-Campus Recruiting Events:

Visit the Career Center website at <http://www.elon.edu/careers/> and select Events under the main header to find out about employers who are coming on campus--such as the IBM Accounting Division and The Fund for Public Interest Research.

Juniors and Seniors -- Sign Up for TransitionTACTICS 2004

Wednesday, May 19 - McKinnon Hall

The deadline to register for this one-day career conference is Friday, February 20. Contact the Career Center for an application form.

Win a Prize by Visiting the Career Center!

Just meet with a counselor in the Career Center or having your resume reviewed by a member of the Resume Rescue Team from Feb. 9 until March 4 and your name will be entered into the weekly raffle for a \$25 gift certificate to the location of your choice. Call the Career Center to set your appointment or come in for the walk-in resume hours listed below.

Spring Graduate School Workshop

Wednesday, February 18, 4 - 5 p.m., Moseley - McKinnon Hall

Career Center Resume Walk-in Hours

Tuesdays: 2 - 4 p.m.; Fridays: 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. First come, first served!

www.elon.edu/careers - 101 Duke - 278-6538

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.