



R.A. Breitweiser, III
Early '80s Dance
Tonight, Cat's Cradle

WXYC, UNC's campus radio station, is hosting what will be either its third or fourth annual early '80s dance tonight at the Cat's Cradle.

No one can seem to remember how many there have been. That's understandable, since if one is in his or her twenties or late teens, the experience can easily be confused with childhood memories. Flashbacks to the early days of MTV and the commercial emergence of hip-hop are risks for anyone attending.

Period-specific attire is optional — though it would seem difficult to resist the temptation of donning a pair of 1984 Air Jordans and a Members Only jacket, let alone Duran Duran-style threads — and contests for best costume and trivia knowledge will be held, WXYC station manager Tim Ross said. Prizes will include books, CDs, gift certificates and dinners at local restaurants.

"This should be a ball from a nostalgia perspective," Ross said. He expressed hope that some brave people would enter the break-dancing showdown.

Cat's Cradle owner Frank Heath expressed enthusiasm about the dance as he served beers from behind the club's bar last Saturday. "We're always glad to support WXYC because there's so much there to support," he commented. "They always put on a good dance. And early '80s music is fun for dancing."

The Reagan-era time warp runs from 9 p.m. until 2 a.m. Tickets are \$4.



The Wedding Present.
Pop for all people at Cat's Cradle, Friday.

Aziz Huq
The Wedding Present
Friday, Cat's Cradle

In a world of slackers, drop-outs and losers, The Wedding Present are the trusty proletariat of pop, mining away at their not-particularly unique vein of jangly, spangly pop for all its worth.

You can't really help but be fond of David Gedge and his trusty gnomes. They are so faithful to the pristine ideal of the starchy-eyed chord change, so chaste in their dedication to the perfection of a 3-minute slice of heaven.

You thought they were slightly ridiculous ever since they released one single every month for a year (a process yielding an embarrassingly mixed bag of re-

sults, distributed in the States as *Hit Parade 1 and 2*). And yet, you keep buying their albums!

I want to say that *Saturnalia* is their ninth stateside release, but I'm so wary of having missed something down the line, I won't. *Saturnalia* demonstrates the casual mastery of the throw-away lyric, the instantly catchy snatch of song that epitomizes pop. Songs like "Snake Eyes" and "Jet Girl (acoustic version)" will haunt your every waking moment. If anything, *Saturnalia* plays up the "rockier" aspect, with riffs that could have fallen off *Slanted and Enchanted*.

No surprise, in retrospect, that Gedge & Co. covered a Pavement track in their singles marathon, before even the infamous *Enchanted* had hit the shelves.

Presidents elect for 'Peaches' sequel

At 10 p.m. Nov. 5, everyone was getting bored watching Bill Clinton pummel Dole in the election returns. Meanwhile, the Presidents of the United States of America were waking up a stuffy and pretentious studio audience on an obscure cable channel by cranking their amps to introduce their new single, "Mach 5," a "Peaches"-style minimalist rocker with more hooks than a DTH headline about the UNC chancellor.

MITCH BENNETT

Music Review
The Presidents of the United States of America
//
Columbia Records
A+

The subject of this election day song: a grown man driving a matchbox car. And thus the second full-length PUSA album was introduced to the world. If you've heard "Peaches," the simultaneously annoying and entertaining hit, you won't be too surprised by this one. It sounds like a sequel.

That's because it is one. It's even called *II*. Most of the songs were written at the same time as those on the first album. They involve several recurring themes: a stuffed animal named Chickie, frogs, how the band wants to rock, bugs, the equipment the band uses, words that end in "ie" and things that are little.

But this time we become acquainted with several new themes, including hot lava, Bobby Brady, Darth Vader and voodoo, which fortunately show the Presidents are not about to grow up. We also learn what happens when the band adds keyboards or Morphine bassist Mark Sandman to a song. It sounds like PUSA, only with keyboards or Morphine bassist Mark Sandman.

The album kicks off with "Ladies and Gentlemen Part I," a happy, rocky invitation to listen to the second and third songs on the album. It has all the style and showmanship of the late P.T. Barnum. "Twig" is one of my favorites.

It sounds like a part child and part drug addict attempting stream of consciousness poetry. "I'm shoulder high in crap, and my water wings are flat," sings Chris

Ballew, who is bald and married. He and the band will be taking the holidays off to spend time with their families in Seattle. They will begin touring in January.

The Weekly Barometer

WXYC
89.3fm

WXYC's Top Ten Albums of the Week

- Various Artists** — *Roots of Reggae Volumes I & II* (Rhino). One disc ska, another disc rocksteady, Rhino continues to repackage the history of recorded Western music.
- Various Artists** — *Ethiopian Groove* (Blue Silver). Excellent reissue of '76-'77 afro-pop interpretations of American soul from Ethiopian label Kaifa Records.
- Sun Ra** — *Singles* (Evidence). Double-disc set of 1956-1983 singles from Saturn's major export: keyboard wizard Sun Ra, and his earthbound Arkestras.
- Azalia Snail** — *Deep Motif* (Candy Floss). A swirling marsh of femme-led psyche from NYC's Azalia Snail.
- Yo La Tengo** — *Genius + Love = Yo La Tengo* (Matador). Sure, a two-disc set to highlight a 10-year career seems odd, but the feedback makes you forget that.
- John Barry** — *The EMI Years Volume III* (Scamp). And you thought the James Bond theme was his only claim to fame; the kitsch keeps coming.
- Large Professor** — "Mad Scientist" (Geffen). Producer Extra P tries hand at the mic, one of two singles hailing from forthcoming album.
- Medeski Martin and Wood** — *Slack-man* (Gramavision). Organ-driven jams somewhere between Booker T and the Fat Albert gang's junkyard band.
- Jon Spencer Blues Explosion** — *Now I Got Worry* (Matador/Capitol). 110 percent perspiration from the Elvis of today's generation.
- Various Artists** — *Red Hot & Rio* (Antilles). Trip-hop/space-pop nerds rework '60s bossa nova hits; the latest installment in the AIDS benefit series that can't be killed.

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