Kaplan album lacks maturity, direction

There are those albums, far and few between, which sound so wonderful that we never want them to be over. But, of course, for every album of this type, there must be 20 others that abuse your ears to the point that you think they'll never end. Jonathan Kaplan's album Through the Window is one of the latter

Kaplan's endeavors show a brief glimmer of promise at the outset of the album but met to a level

BROCK PIERCE Jonathan Kaplan Through the Window Jonathan Kaplan

of annoying monotony that seems to make for an eternity of boredom. The first track, "Faith," begins with crashing guitar, pounding drums and seems to suggest a kind of vigor that brings hope for the rest of the album. However, those

At 11 p.m. Saturday, The Pietasters

finally appeared, dressed in suits, on a smoke-filled stage to give a packed Cat's Cradle an hour and 15 minutes of pure ska entertainment (fortunately, the

majority of the smoke came intention-

ally from machines for special effects).

trumpet, sax-

trombone

steadily grow-

ing attraction

to ska music

the

plify

The band's upbeat lyrics, fun vocals,

With music reminiscent of tradition-

al Jamaican-influenced ska with some

added modern punk sounds, the band

CARL JACOBS

Concert Review

The Pietasters Cat's Cradle

hopes are soon shattered by the remainder of the song and CD, for that matter.

The song "8 mm film" mixes a lively

acoustic sound with whining electric guitar licks to salvage a hint of musical decency. However, the most captivating part of the song is not the music but the lyrics which hit close to home for many Chapel Hill residents: "Jan. 26, 1995, Henderson St. Chapel Hill, NC, 1:46 in the afternoon, crazed gunman, an M1 rifle, 45 rounds of ammo, 2 dead, 3 wounded, everyone is asking why? Why did this happen? Why did Wendel

Williamson do what he did?"

The album's motif is all too obvious. Kaplan's lyrics show maturity and depth, but his music remains infantile and falls short of providing structure for his vocal contemplations.

While the song "as for me" represents the best Kaplan has to offer with crisp riffs on the electric guitar, it still lacks distinctive sound and falls into a repetitious rut. And that seems to be one

Pietasters light up stage with energetic ska grooves

notably the ability to grab the attention of fans from varied backgrounds.

once during the entire concert.

Opening the concert with three mel-

low songs (the latter two being love songs), The Pietasters slowly teased the

eager-to-dance audience, and the potential energy of the crowd reached its peak

of the night by the end of the third song.

Jackson took advantage of the situation, asking the audience, "Do you guys like to drink beer?" With the incessant roar

that followed, Jackson dedicated the-fourth song, "Take it Easy," to all the

beer drinkers. The entire audience, beer

At this point, lead singer Stephen

From skater people, to fraternity and sorority people, to punks, to preps and to beer-drinking idiots (this last group drawing its crowd from each of the other categories), the audience lulled not of the album's main downfalls

It's as if each song begs to be taken in particular direction but are all left hanging. The final tune, "rebekah," is the best example of this fault. Presenting a nice lilting touch on the acoustic guitar, Kaplan seems to have crafted an earcatching sound that, if developed, would deliver a song worth listening to. But the song goes nowhere, and the only sentiment that arises is "When will this

The best way to characterize the album as a whole is to look at the effect (or lack thereof) that each song creates for the listener. Listen to a mere 15 seconds of certain catchy songs on the radio, and you'll be whistling their tunes

for an entire day.

Listen to Kaplan's album for an entire day if you wish, but don't expect to be able to hum a single note of a single song. Instead, you might just take the CD title's advice and decide to throw it "through the window."

From this point on, the kinetic energy of the crowd took control. It seemed that everyone who could fit on the

dance floor was hopping around and having a great time dancing to the sound of one of the best horn sections

in ska music today.

Meanwhile, I calmly observed the dancing crowd from my seat in the back

of the Cradle, cursing my need to take

By the seventh song, my desire to dance was too strong and I spent the

remainder of the concert disrespecting my journalistic career on about one

square foot of the dance floor. What can I say? The concert was simply too

good to pass off as a chore. The Pietasters emanate their enthusiasm and

pure understanding of ska music with

every note they play.

My only wish is for their next concert

notes on the concert.

to last a little longer.



The Seymores fail to create a distinctive sound and lose focus with conflicting musical forms. The band, originally formed in Richmond, makes a futile attempt to mix the musical genres of punk and pop.

homeless

(assuming this worse

than a poor man's) Green

Day with worse vocals with

annoying

more

and



MUSIC BRIEFS

The Seymores

Pitch a Tent Records

I could get a group of guys in my residence hall and make a better CD than

Maybe the recording company forgot to listen to the Seymores' demo tape. In any case, it must be an accident that this group ever made an album. The CD sleeve doesn't even give the musicians' names. Hmmm

This group could best be described as

SCOTT RUDICIL **Music Reviews**

Musings of a Creek Dipper

screechy noises from the guitar. And Green Day isn't even that good to begin with

New male groups continue to sound more and more like each other these

days.

The Seymores manage to escape this

The Seymores Manage to escape this trend. They sound worse. It's amazing when groups with less combined musical talent than Rosanne cut a CD. At least she has a Hollywood career to fall back on. And my hall mates and I have

Victoria Williams Musings of a Creek Dipper

Atlantic Records
I get her name confused with Vanessa Williams. I get her looks confused with Alanis Morisette. But it's hard to mistake Victoria Williams' talent.

With singers like Sarah McLachlan, Jewel, Morisette and Fiona Apple lead-ing a new wave of killer female singers (killing all the male competition), Williams may not be far behind with her quirky new album Musings of a

Quirky is the only description that defines everything (her voice, her lyrics, her voice, her instrument choices and her voice) about her.

Distinctive voices have become harder to come by in these modern days of hearing the same song on the radio 50 times in a row, but Williams is a refreshing difference

Whether she lulls the listeners in with whether she this the inserters in what the dreamy sounds of "let it be so" or gets a good laugh from "grandpa in a cornpatch" (laughing yet?), she's got their attention. Even if her voice takes a song or two to get used to, its worth

My first Williams' CD was stolen (she's had a few before this one). I always knew it was gonna be worth something someday.

showed the large audience the true power of horn-driven music — most drinkers and all, went insane. http://www.movieminder.com

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A Sunny Place for Shady People



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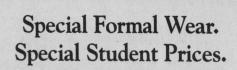
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