

# Corgan Breaks Down Barriers With Solo Set

By JOSH LOVE  
Staff Writer

No matter how close we feel to them through song, we nonetheless always assume that there will be a certain amount of distance, both physical and emotional, between ourselves and our larger-than-life musical heroes.

Videos, radio and arena tours only reinforce this sense that rock stars exist on some other-worldly plane, and the wall between them and us solidifies even more.

**CONCERT REVIEW**

Smashing Pumpkins  
Cat's Cradle



Smashing Pumpkins frontman Billy Corgan completely obliterated that wall Saturday at the Cat's Cradle, and in the hearts and minds of the roughly 700 diehard fans in attendance, such a wall will never exist again.

To promote the upcoming album *Machina/The Machines of God*, the Pumpkins recently embarked upon a mini-tour of small venues, including a last-minute Carrboro appearance.

On Friday, however, rumors began circulating that neither drummer Jimmy Chamberlain nor bassist Melissa Auf der Maur would appear for the performance. Saturday afternoon, the Cradle announced that Corgan would perform a solo acoustic concert that evening.

Sure enough, Corgan alone appeared when the concert began, amid a chorus of screams and adamant professions of

love that would rival any arena-sized assembly of teenyboppers. Eager to dispense the new material, Corgan delivered lovely, stripped-down versions of "I of the Mourning" and "Speed Kills."

But the performance truly coalesced when Corgan delved into the Pumpkins' catalogue of hits for 1995's "Bullet with Butterfly Wings" — albeit a radically altered acoustic rendition — in which he mocked the song's transformation with a whispered "scream" at its climax.

The initial portion of the performance concluded with perhaps the emotional high point of the evening, a three-song medley that spanned a half-dozen years of songwriting genius.

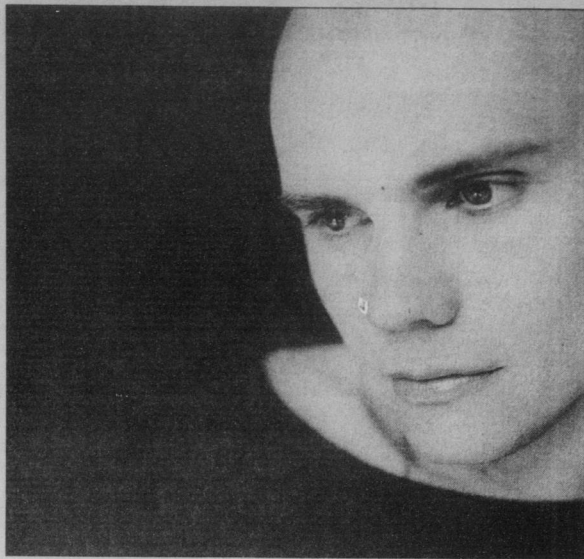
Corgan began with the delicate "To Sheila," from 1998's *Adore*, moved to the haunting "Shame" from the same album and then reached back to the classic *Siamese Dream*-era outtake "Drown."

Following a 20-minute break, Corgan returned and introduced guitarist James Iha to the adoring masses.

The pair then commenced with a spirited mini-set that included a rousing "Cherub Rock" and the instantly memorable "The Glass and Ghost Children." The purportedly tyrannical Corgan even deigned to accompany Iha on "Be Strong Now," from Iha's solo album.

In fact, Corgan exhibited a frankness and humanity throughout the evening that substantially contradicted his perceived persona, even betraying a little sheepishness when he flubbed the occasional lyric or guitar chord.

To culminate his image makeover,



Smashing Pumpkins frontman Billy Corgan performed an acoustic, solo set at the last-minute concert at Cat's Cradle on Saturday night.

Corgan composed and performed a song onstage with the assistance of three audience members, a gimmick that allowed Corgan to joke and converse comfortably with his audience.

Fittingly, Corgan closed the show with "1979," his transcendent anthem of youthful rebellion delivered with his audience-member band in tow. As the

2 1/2-hour performance drew to a close, all those years of worship from afar had been repaid beyond anyone's imagination. "You and I should meet," Corgan implored to the crowd in the last song. That night, we finally did.

The Arts & Entertainment Editor can be reached at [artsdesk@unc.edu](mailto:artsdesk@unc.edu).

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

### MUSIC

Cat's Cradle, 300 E. Main St., Carrboro, 967-9053.  
Go! Rehearsals Room 4, 100 Brewer Lane, Carrboro, 969-1400.  
Local 506, 506 W. Franklin St., Chapel Hill, 942-5506.  
Skylight Exchange, 405 1/2 W. Rosemary St., Chapel Hill, 933-5550.

#### Thursday, Feb. 24

- Lambchop w/North Mississippi All-Stars at Cat's Cradle.
- Outhouse Poets w/Eclectic Bastards at Go! Rehearsals.
- Bottom w/Leadfoot at Local 506.
- Steve Logan at Skylight Exchange.

#### Friday, Feb. 25

- 20 Miles w/Bandway and Bob Log III at Cat's Cradle.
- Lud at Go! Rehearsals.
- Honky-Tonka-Rama featuring The Chicken Wire Gang, the Carabines and Two Dollar Pistols at Local 506.
- Joe Lithgo at Skylight Exchange.

#### Saturday, Feb. 26

- The Connells at Cat's Cradle.
- All Scars at Go! Rehearsals.
- Honky-Tonka-Rama featuring Trailer Bride, Billygoats, Drive-By Truckers and Backsliders at Local 506.
- N.C. Songwriters Co-op Writers Night at Skylight Exchange.

#### Sunday, Feb. 27

- Fear w/The Louts at Cat's Cradle.
- Seely w/Kingsbury Manx at Go! Rehearsals.
- Junk in the Trunk at Local 506.

- N the Red at Skylight Exchange.
- Monday, Feb. 28
- Kenny Wayne Shepherd at Cat's Cradle.
- Open Mic Night at Skylight Exchange.
- Tuesday, Feb. 29
- Jonathan Richman w/Shark Quest at Cat's Cradle.
- Stagger Stagger Crawl w/Clean Air Turbulence 5 at Local 506.
- Open Philosophy Discussion at Skylight Exchange.
- Wednesday, Feb. 30
- Open Mic Night at Skylight Exchange.

### ART

- "From the Molecular to the Galactic: The Art of Max Ernst and Alfonso Ossorio." Through March 26. Ackland Art Museum, UNC campus. 966-5736.
- "Transatlantic Dialogue: Contemporary Art in and Out of Africa." Through March 26. Ackland Art Museum, UNC campus. 966-5736.

### THEATER

- "One Noble Journey." Feb. 24 to Feb. 27. Manbites Dog Theater, Durham. 682-3343
- "The Glass Menagerie." PlayMakers Repertory Company. Through Feb. 27. Paul Greene Theatre, UNC campus. 962-PLAY.
- "Tongue of a Bird." Streetsigns Center for Literature and Performance. Through Feb. 27. Swain Hall Studio 6, UNC campus. 960-4299.

### FILM

- "Sleepless in Seattle." 9 p.m. today. Carolina Union Auditorium.
- "The Mummy." 7:30 p.m. Friday, 10 p.m. Saturday. Carolina Union Auditorium.
- "The Thomas Crown Affair." 10 p.m. Friday, 7:30 p.m. Saturday. Carolina Union Auditorium.

### PLAN AHEAD

- Britney Spears, June 16. Alltel Pavilion, Raleigh. 834-4000. Tickets on sale at 10 a.m. Saturday. 834-4000.

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