



Mel Gibson leads the South Carolina colonial militia as Benjamin Martin in the new epic "The Patriot," which is set during the Revolutionary War. Twenty-one year-old newcomer Heath Ledger, left, plays his eldest son.

'Patriot' Aims for Epic Status

ARIADNE GUTHRIE Staff Writer

Four years ago, audiences celebrated the Fourth of July holiday with Will Smith and the defeat of belligerent aliens in "Independence Day." This year, the director and producer of "Independence Day" turn the back the clock to the moment of conception: the Revolution.

MOVIE REVIEW "The Patriot"

The year is 1776 and 8 of the 13 original colonies have declared war on England to gain their independence. The war rages on, with the colonists suffering terrible losses in the South, until one man, "The Patriot" leads his militia into victory. "The Patriot" presents the unglamorous side of war: young frightened boys who die for a cause they don't understand, the brutal murder of innocents and families that are torn apart.

"Patriot" is a visual assault. The violent battle scenes are almost on par with the opening sequences of "Saving Private Ryan," with decapitations and maiming taking the foreground in many scenes. With the help of special effects, a cannonball appears to be fired directly into the front rows of the audience, but connects first with the head of an American soldier. While the film is simply too long to maintain the edge-of-seat intensity it begins with, the constant shock of gunshots and cannons is enough to guarantee jittery nerves.

The battles are, however impressive, merely a backdrop for the story of Benjamin Martin, the reluctant leader of the South Carolina colonial militia. Played by Mel Gibson, Martin is a former war hero who wants to remain in peace to raise his motherless child. When the Revolutionary War suddenly springs up in his front yard and claims the life of his son, Martin dusts off his soldier's uniform to save the day. Poor Gibson seems to suffer from

being typecast. As Martin, Gibson could be playing William Wallace of "Braveheart" all over again. Both men have an affection for extracting brutal revenge and a penchant for rallying the troops, on horseback, with a flag and a cry of freedom.

"The Patriot" strives for epic standing but shoots too far. The movie is simply over-the-top in every aspect. The dialogue is too saccharine and melodramatic, the battle scenes too perfectly staged and the characters too one-sided for believability.

The Arts & Entertainment Editor can be reached at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Seabrook Debut Full of Heartache

JUSTIN WINTERS Arts & Entertainment Editor

With his self-titled debut album, Tar Heel alum Wil Seabrook stakes a claim to replace Edwin McCain as the lonely heart singer-songwriter whose music is sure to set females hearts aflutter with his slow songs of heartbreak.

CD REVIEW

Wil Seabrook Wil Seabrook



Now, that's not bad per se, but one listen to Seabrook's first CD and one might either call the guy to cheer him up or recommend a good therapist. The guy sounds like he's been through the relationship wringer a few times.

It's kind of like Seabrook is the male equivalent of a nicer Alanis Morissette in her early hate-filled days, which after translated, means the guy has promise.

With his boyish good looks and unique singing style, Seabrook does set himself apart from other balladeers in the music world who declare they've been wronged by so many gals that they have no hair and a whiny-voiced tone. The best song on the album,

"Bocelli," kick-starts everything with a catchy beat and groove that compares to some of the best songs of local favorite Gran Torino. Seabrook, who wrote a great deal of the lyrics and music on the album, injects the first song with sly references to the pretentious side of fame.

Similarly, songs such as the Beckish "Is a Smile" and soul-filled "Special," with their catchy hooks and samples, make the first half of the album an enjoyable listen. They make you understand why Seabrook has gone Hollywood.

Seabrook's cover of the Motown favorite "My Girl" gets cool points for being different, but the end product just doesn't go well with the rest of the album. Seabrook has the skills to write his own stuff, so he doesn't have to ask Smoky Robinson for permission.

Unfortunately, the remainder of the songs, such as so-so "So Much" and the wordy "Deny," leave the listener wishing for a few more songs which cause you to bounce in your seat a little.

With every song sounding the same, not one sticks out over the second half of the album. By the final song, "Your Life's Not Here," I wasn't there. I had started the album over again to

hear the better first half.

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7 FR INNER CIRCLE Reggae Band
8 SA got' thro' er, Uhra Pente, Songs Of Zarathustra
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12 WE JIMMIE DALE GILMORE w/ John Wesley Harding\*
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