

'Ya-Ya' Fun Estrogen Fest

BY KRISTEN WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

To enjoy and appreciate "Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood," a viewer should be Southern, a member of a close group of friends and a woman.

If you adhere to this criteria in any way, then "Ya-Ya" will probably be hilarious and touching, as it is intended to be. If not, then perhaps it's best to see another flick.

The film is an adaptation of the acclaimed novel of the same name by Rebecca Wells. Unlike other movies derived from literature, "Ya-Ya" follows its source closely and doesn't invent any new scenes.

"Ya-Ya" combines three different story lines into one big pot of Louisiana-style gumbo. The modern day sequences jump from a mother Vivi (Ellen Burstyn) to her daughter, Sidda

(Sandra Bullock). They are engaged in an argument so heated that it's up to Vivi's friends, the female sisterhood known as the Ya-Yas, to resolve it.

The Ya-Yas are Vivi's three best friends since childhood who have seen each other through every joy and sorrow. In an effort for Sidda, an unusually cynical Bullock, to understand her mother, the Ya-Yas break open their scrapbook to tell their story and Vivi's through a series of flashbacks.

These blasts to the past are fairly seamless but still can be confusing. The Ya-Yas' names randomly float around until a light bulb moment occurs halfway through the film in which one can finally link the older Ya-Yas to their younger counterparts. Only Vivi's leadership of the Ya-Yas is evident in the transitions.

Drenched in bourbon, cigarettes and fits of both hysteria and humor, Vivi's story carries the majority of the movie. As the dysfunctional yet charming mother, Burstyn bears the weight with ease.

The actress shines as present-day Vivi - she rants like a drama queen about

Sidda as the ice tinkles in her bourbon. Ashley Judd is surprisingly versatile in her role as a younger Vivi, immersing herself in drunken tirades, as well as having light-hearted fun with her young children.

Alcoholic episodes and cigarette smoke-filled escapades are common even with the older Ya-Yas, except for Maggie Smith, who carts an oxygen tank as Ya-Ya Caro. Smith has been criticized for her "Southern" accent, but it sounds like an old quavery-voiced Louisiana woman even when she occasionally slips.

At first sight, the film seems like a teary chick flick, which it is at times. However, it sheds light on the timelessness of women's friendships and the relationship between a mother and her daughter.

These themes may seem tired, but the film throws in something new - a woman's relationship with her mother's friends can also be a very strong bond. The closeness of all the women seems genuine, and any Southern girl can relate.

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



Kudzu

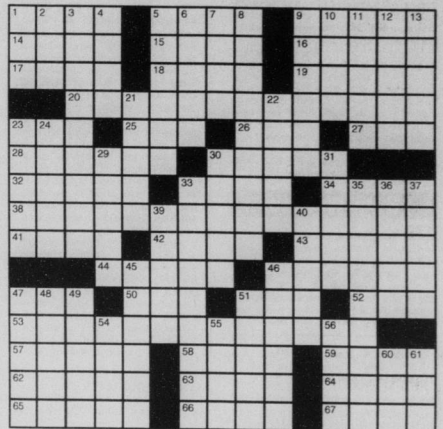
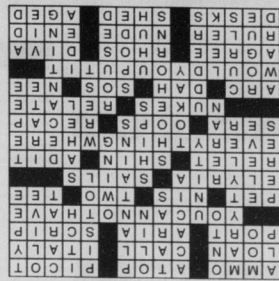


THE Daily Crossword

By Alan P. Olschwang

©2002 Tribune Media Services, Inc. All rights reserved.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Rounds or clips, e.g.
 - 5 Perched on
 - 9 Embroidered loop
 - 14 Type of shark?
 - 15 Summon
 - 16 Leghorn location
 - 17 Nautical left
 - 18 Operatic melody
 - 19 Temporary paper money
 - 20 Beginning of quip
 - 23 Favorite
 - 25 Constantine's birthplace
 - 26 Tango team
 - 27 PGA prop
 - 28 Ohio city near Cleveland
 - 30 Jibs
 - 32 Sublease a flat
 - 33 Front of the calf
 - 34 Mine entrance
 - 38 Part 2 of quip
 - 41 Evening in Milano
 - 42 Sorry 'bout that
 - 43 Story so far
 - 44 Uses a microwave?
 - 46 Impart
 - 47 Circle segment
 - 50 Lah-di-
- DOWN**
- 1 High peak
 - 2 Bovine comment
 - 3 A Moore
 - 4 Not fooled by
 - 5 Gum arabic tree
 - 6 Tony Curtis movie, "Bulba"
 - 7 Lena or Ken
 - 8 Banana cousins
 - 9 Six-shooter
 - 10 Restless craving
 - 11 Jeweler's measure
 - 12 Popeye's sweetheart
 - 13 Herman Melville novel
 - 21 Singleless
 - 22 Payable
 - 23 French fathers



Merritt at Her Best on Stage

BY SARAH KUCHARSKI
Managing Editor

Diamond in the rough Tift Merritt has been polished clean and set in platinum. After a brief stint in the recording studio, the Southern rock artist returned home with a debut album under her belt and a cleaner, more sophisticated sound.

Merritt opened her show with "Virginia No One Can Warn You," the second track from *Bramble Rose*, released June 4. The pint-sized powerhouse seemed refreshed, full of grit and glad to be in front of a familiar audience.

She slowed things down with "Are You Still In Love With Me?," a story-song reminiscent of Willie Nelson's music. The bittersweet, melancholy ballad is perfectly indicative of Merritt's country roots and exemplifies her talent for tugging at the heartstrings rather than just cranking out soon-to-be Southern rock anthems.

In the same vein, Merritt warbled out "Sunday," a midtempo, blues-oriented ballad for sensual, clandestine activities. Backed by newly added saxophone and trumpet, Merritt's band, the Carabines, swelled to match her plaintive, yet powerful vocals.

Her Joplin-meets-Raitt-meets-Cline voice is not Merritt's only asset, however. She jumps freely from acoustic guitar to electric and from harmonica to keyboards. At the Cradle she bounced from instrument to instrument and from song to song, eager to keep the show rolling at a breakneck pace.

As she sat down at the keyboard for the Vietnam War-themed tune "Bird of Freedom," Merritt verbally dismissed the insult of a Canadian critic who recently equated the song with Skynyrd's "Free Bird." As the band members kept time with the soft taps of their cowboy boots, Merritt exhibited equal aptitude on keyboards as she did on guitar for the duration of the hard rock, 1960s-influenced song.

Merritt finished the set by switching back to acoustic guitar and adding a harmonica for "When I Cross Over," also



DTH/JASON ARTHURS

Texas-born Southern rock musician Tift Merritt celebrates the release of her debut album, *Bramble Rose*, at the Cat's Cradle on Friday.

the final track on *Bramble Rose*. The slow fade of the hymn-styled tune brought the concert to a quiet end - at least until the audience erupted into explosive applause, calling Merritt and the Carabines back to the stage for a three-song encore.

And while she covered the entirety of *Bramble Rose* on stage, it must be said that Merritt live is a different creature than Merritt on CD.

Not to mix album reviews with concert reviews, but Merritt in the flesh

bears a certain raw grittiness that a studio recording cannot reproduce. Her energy is contagious, and the complications of budding stardom are made null and void by her musical voracity in front of a crowd.

For now, this trait might be the only thing that will truly pave her way to fame.

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



Tift Merritt
Cat's Cradle
Friday, June 7
★★★★☆

Free Lunch or Dinner
with the purchase of two beverages and one lunch or dinner at the regular price, receive a second lunch or dinner of equal or lesser value **FREE!**
Not valid on fajitas. Up to \$7.95 value. (Not valid on Fridays. Dine-in only. One coupon per table.) Expires 6/27/02.

BANDIDO'S MEXICAN CAFE
159 1/2 E. Franklin St. • Downtown Chapel Hill • 919-967-5048

BRAKES 50% OFF
Pads and Shoes
Coupon Must Be Presented At Time Of Estimate • Expires 8/19/2002
Coupons Not Good On Warranty Work Or Previous Work

PERFORMANCE EXHAUST 10% OFF
Stainless Steel Mufflers, Flow Master Mufflers
Coupon Must Be Presented At Time Of Estimate • Expires 8/19/2002
Coupons Not Good On Warranty Work Or Previous Work

TUNE-UP only \$99
New Spark Plugs, Fuel Injection Service, Oil Change w/ New Filter, Tire Rotation
Some 6 and 8 Cylinders. Most Cars and Light Trucks.
Coupon Must Be Presented At Time Of Estimate • Expires 8/19/2002 • Coupons Not Good On Warranty Work Or Previous Work

Summer Specials

meineke
Discount Mufflers and Brakes
407 E. Main Street • Carrboro
919-933-6888
Ask How To Receive A FREE Meineke® T-Shirt

SHOCKS/STRUTS
Buy 3 Get One Free (right rear)
Coupon Must Be Presented At Time Of Estimate • Expires 8/19/2002
Coupons Not Good On Warranty Work Or Previous Work

OIL CHANGE \$21.95
Oil Change or \$9.95 with any Brake, Shock or Exhaust Service.
Coupon Must Be Presented At Time Of Estimate • Expires 8/19/2002
Coupons Not Good On Warranty Work Or Previous Work

SUMMER SPECIAL
Radiator Power Flush, Transmission Power Flush, Free Tire Rotation, Free Oil Change and Free Brake Inspection for **\$169.95**
Coupon Must Be Presented At Time Of Estimate • Expires 8/19/2002
Coupons Not Good On Warranty Work Or Previous Work

Nathan's **Subs!** **Arthur Treacher's**

subs • burgers • chicken • gyros • salads • hot dogs • steaks • seafood

When Hunger Strikes... Head to the Neon Lights!

Show your student ID and receive 10% off!
combo meals starting at \$2.99

Sunday - Wednesday 10:30 - 2am • Thursday - Saturday 10:30 - 3am
107 E. Franklin St., Chapel Hill • 929-6551

BUB O'MALLEY'S
157 E. ROSEMARY ST. (UPSTAIRS) 942-6903

MONDAY \$1.²⁵ Domestic Longnecks
TUESDAY \$2 Pints, 80's Night - Live DJ
WEDNESDAY \$2.50 Micro & Import Bottles Live Acoustic Music
THURSDAY \$3.²⁵ Pitchers Karaoke Night
FRIDAY \$2.²⁵ 22oz. Bottles
SATURDAY \$2.²⁵ 22oz. Bottles

30 Taps! 100 Different Bottled Beers!
NEVER A COVER AT BUB'S

Join the Cosmic Wave!
eat. big. cheap. late. great.

\$2 Cosmic Cantina FF
ANY ORDER OF \$5 OR MORE
EXPIRES 6/19/02

menu sampling:
various menu items.....\$2
old school veggie burrito.....2
veggie burrito deluxe.....4
chicken burrito.....5
quesadilla.....3
chicken quesadilla.....4

960-3955
open super late night until 4am
always fresh, juicy, big and healthy

...and more plus...
all mexican beers \$2

where are we?
nyc: east village, 3rd ave at 13th near nyu
chapel hill: right across the street from the varsity theatre at 128 franklin street (at the end of the hall).
durham: on 9th street and perry street (across from brueggers). 286-1875.

HEALTHY FOOD
OPEN LATE 'TIL 4AM

HEALTHY LOWFAT LATE NIGHT Cosmic Cantina
(it's what we do best!)