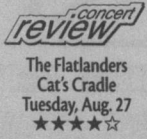


Texans Take Cradle Crowd Into the Flatlands

By EVAN LUCAS
Staff Writer

Years ago, the Flatlanders were young, hip and at the top of their musical game. Tuesday night at Cats Cradle, they proved that they still have what it takes. From the first soulful twang of the acoustic guitar to the last hit on the drums, the band put on a show to remember.



The Flatlanders
Cat's Cradle
Tuesday, Aug. 27
★★★★☆

Frontmen Butch Hancock, Joe Ely and Jimmie Dale Gilmore know how to please a crowd, and they clearly have a lot of fun doing it. Each plays the acoustic guitar, and each takes turns on lead vocals — though occasionally all three sing at once.

Their music is a blend of old-fashioned bluegrass and country rock. Originally from Texas, they call themselves the Flatlanders due to a remark Hancock made in the band's early days.

"(Texas) was so flat there you could see 50 miles in every direction," he said. "If you stood on a tuna can, you could see 100 miles."

Many of the band's songs are relatively simple, though they are always vibrant and heartfelt. They reflect on everything from their childhood to the society they live in.

Hancock started writing songs when he drove a tractor on his father's farm.

"One day I discovered that second gear at two-thirds throttle was the key of G, and I eventually figured out that I could play all the songs I knew," he said.

The band played for a near-sellout crowd and responded by putting on a blistering 15-song set, followed by five songs spread out over two encores.

The audience members didn't just listen to the music. In some ways, they were an extra member of the band, at one point shouting for 30 seconds on command.

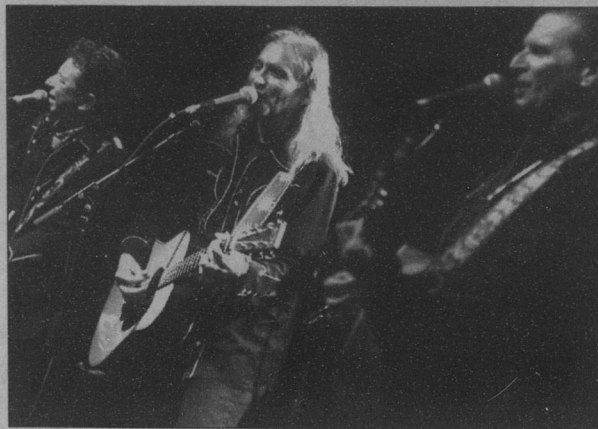
In addition to acoustic guitar, the band also featured an electric guitarist, a drummer, and a bassist. Hancock doubled on harmonica.

It was evident that each member had great respect for the other members of the band. During a pause between songs, Ely told of his respect for Hancock. "I was once destined to be a great songwriter — until I met Butch Hancock."

The chemistry between the band members was one of high energy and perfect fit. After playing for years, each member knows when to sing out and when to sit back to let the spotlight shine elsewhere.

Particularly nice were the electric guitar solos. Few and far between, they were elegant while at the same exciting. The guitarist truly enjoyed being on stage, relishing his space in the spotlight.

After the initial set, the audience members did not just ask for more, they demanded it. They went further than clapping enthusiastically — they



Joe Ely, Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Butch Hancock frontline the bluegrass band the Flatlanders. They performed Tuesday at the Cat's Cradle.

stomped their feet, the sound reverberating throughout the venue.

Keeping with the traditional bluegrass spirit, some of the band's songs were humorous anecdotes.

In one song, the band sang about a boy getting caught by his father while drinking beer. The father responded: "You got nothing to fear/For drinking the beer/If you share it with the son of God"

They introduced one of their songs, titled "Right Where We Belong" by telling the audience that they really were

right where they belong.

And it seems that the Cat's Cradle really was right where they belonged — at least for one night. After walking into the Cat's Cradle, everyone was transported into a different world. For the two hours that the band played, the soul of Texas was in Carboro. And although the performance may be over, for those at the show, that soul will remain for some time to come.

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

Local Band Roars Off Into Sunset With Go! Farewell

By MICHELLE JARBOE
Staff Writer

Chapel Hill band Milo bid farewell to the live music scene Aug. 23. As band members prepare to leave for other states and occupations, they took time to give their fans a preview of their upcoming and last LP at Go! Room 4.



Milo
Go! Studios
Friday, Aug. 23
★★★★☆

With openers Spiraling and Pilot Round the Sun, Milo played a lengthy and intense show to an audience that increased in size and energy throughout the evening.

Anticipation built as a small crowd filtered through the door and Pilot Round the Sun took the stage. All the way from Westchester, Penn., the band's bass, two guitars and drums melded into a bluesy punk funk.

Throughout Pilot Round the Sun's show, the crowd packed the room and cigarette smoke clouds took to the ceiling. By the time equipment had been moved about and Milo's five members manned their instruments, Go! was packed and fans were ready to say an evening-long goodbye.

But the show's tone was anything but mournful. Playing much of its new work, including songs like "The Ship Has Sunk" from its upcoming LP, Milo

threw the crowd a punch of alternative rock. Ranging from mellow to frenzied, the tunes displayed a more mature Milo, far evolved from their early Loaded Gun demo.

Evoking Pearl Jam with lyrically driven rock stylings, Milo skipped over much of its early work, preferring to play from its early 2002 EP *Even If You Knew the Language* and its new body of work — yet to be released.

Vocalist and guitarist Russ Baggett said the band is not playing its old material anymore. "If we played some of those songs, they'd sound worse than they could ever possibly sound."

Milo put on a hard-hitting show for old fans, even with new songs that some audience members hadn't yet heard. Showcasing its well-aged ability and connection to the audience, Milo seemed in its element at Go!, where the band played late into the night.

"We started playing here when this place opened up," said bassist Jeremy Buenviaje. "We kind of like to say this is our home. We always come back here."

And it's here, in the Chapel Hill area, that Milo finished what it started four years ago. But with the frenzy of well-wrought sound, intelligent vocals and a loyal crowd, the band's final show felt more like a hello than a goodbye.

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

'Tadpole' Makes Mediocre Attempt at Age-Old Story

By ALLISON ROST
Staff Writer

A story about a 40-year-old woman sleeping with her best friend's teenage stepson seems perfect for a cheesy Lifetime movie-of-the-week.

But when such a story is written and acted as well as "Tadpole," it's difficult to even consider them in the same league.



"Tadpole"
★★★★☆

Turned on more by educated women

with knowledge of Voltaire than by girls his own age, Oscar pines for his stepmother, Eve (Sigourney Weaver), who is completely clueless about his affection.

But then he drunkenly sleeps with Diane (Bebe Neuwirth), Eve's closest friend, and finds himself stuck in a web of middle-aged admirers while still lacking the one woman he truly loves. To make matters worse, the woman he has slept with is threatening to spill the beans.

"Tadpole" is a triumph of independent filmmaking. The jerky visuals — shot on video — give away the film's low-budget roots, but the intelligent script, written by Niels Mueller and Heather McGowan, is a gem. The writing is alternately hilarious and poignant, and Oscar's infatuation is completely believable.

Stanford's performance certainly is the reason Oscar seems so real. With only a few TV guest shots under his belt, he gives the meaty role all he has and creates a wonderfully complex character that goes well beyond his lines in the script.

Newirth also impresses with her ruthless characterization of Diane, a single middle-aged chiropractor, and turns her into someone you love to hate without stooping to stereotypes.

Contrasting those great roles, Weaver unfortunately drops the ball with her one-note performance. The viewer is told, rather than shown, that Eve feels a void in her life, and her wide-eyed reaction to Oscar and Diane's tryst is more confusing than clarifying.

What is truly refreshing is the short-and-sweet length of the film, at just over 75 minutes. There are no gimmicks and there is no stalling — the story is distilled down to its core.

However, it's still worth noting that the coming-of-age story has been done better before, most notably, in "The Graduate." That film seriously examined the causes and effects of Ben's affair with Mrs. Robinson, while "Tadpole" takes a lighter approach.

"Tadpole" might be a laugh-filled joy of a film that treats its subject matter with a rarely-seen maturity, but it's still a ball of fluff.

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INDUSTRY

From Page 5

"What you will continue to see is that evolution," said Seth Oster, Pressplay's vice president of corporate communications and public affairs. "It will look far different a year from now than it does today."

When it comes to legitimate online music exchanges, Oster sees the top two priorities of consumers as being breadth of service and options for portability.

The most notable online music services have worked to acquire a vital component of any future success — the combined catalogs of all five major record labels. The collective cooperation of BMG, EMI-Capitol, Vivendi Universal, Sony and AOL-Time Warner is needed to snare consumers willing to pay for their

online music. Of course, the recordings of lesser-known labels will be included.

"We're doing both," he said. "We're forming deals with the majors and with the independents at the same time."

With both labels and consumers jumping on the online music bandwagon, listeners may tap into their hard drives as much as their stereos.

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

Writer/Director Andrew Niccol Jumbles Pieces in Potentially Powerful 'Simone'

By BRIAN MILLIKIN
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

All the parts are in place for a good movie — maybe even a great movie. But the pieces never come together; "Simone" just doesn't work.

No matter the outcome, the comedy's intriguing premise can't be blamed. Out of luck, Hollywood director Viktor Taransky (Al Pacino) needs a star for his unfinished picture. When a dying computer wizard gives the director a program to make a perfectly lifelike digital actress, Taransky's back on top.

As the cynical director, Pacino is engaging and humorous in a youthful way we haven't seen since "Looking for Richard." He doesn't just look younger — he feels younger. It seems that if Pacino wanted the kind of box office success in comedies that bosom buddy Robert De Niro has found, he could have it.

Taransky keeps the identity of his star hidden, simply calling her Simone, for fear that he'll be excommunicated for employing a "synthespian." But Simone

becomes the next sensation, and keeping up the charade consumes Taransky.

Pacino plays it straight throughout, and he goes a long way toward making "Simone" passable. The rest of the cast, from Winona Ryder as a self-absorbed starlet to Catherine Keener as Taransky's studio-head ex-wife, are equally free from guilt.

The fault falls squarely on Andrew Niccol, the writer and director. To his credit, he wrote "The Truman Show" and is responsible for the excellent "Gattaca." But while those modern-day metaphors were great films with subtext, "Simone" is great subtext without a decent film to spare.

Niccol's film is not funny enough to be an effective comedy, too benign and declawed to be a sharp or biting satire. It's neither a fairy tale nor a parable for everyday life. It sits on the screen, dull and unexciting. Promise veers in every so often but steers out just as fast.

We frequently find Taransky sitting in front of his gigantic computer screen, schizophrenically speaking to Simone and supplying her responses as well. A film about this split creative personality, working against one another, would have been interesting.

At one point, it seems as though Simone may gain control of herself, or maybe even manifest herself as a real person — both might have made for interesting movies. Instead, we're left struggling with scraps. The brains and the effortless, relentless purpose of "Gattaca" have been deleted from Niccol's program.

In Taransky's Hollywood and in the

real one, you're only as good as your latest work.

Next time around, Niccol ought to digitize himself a good screenplay

before programming an all-star cast.

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4 WE MONEY MARK w/ al. & DJ Simon Booth (\$8)
5 TH X-EUTIONERS** (\$13/\$15) w/ whatzname
6 FR 52 PISTOLS & Lonesome Bob
7 SA Squeeze Toy
11 WE Zoso (Led Zeppelin Tribute)
12 TH CLUB D'ELF, Apple Juice Orchestra (\$8)
13 FR PRETASTERS** (\$10)
14 SA Dinger Four Scores, more (\$8)
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17 TU Boo l. Regatta 69
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27 SU MESH/Megadeth/Catch 22** (\$10)
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