

Wave of special effects leaves 'Day' mutilated

BY PHILIP MCFEE
EDITOR

Somewhere out there, Ed Begley Jr. is laughing. Thanks to "The Day After Tomorrow," the latest in a long series of Gaia-gets-the-boot films, Americans can learn the egregious error of their over-consuming ways. By means of inexplicable tidal waves, uber-tornadoes, hurricanes, potroast-sized hail and wolves.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the Ice Age is back, and this time it's brought friends. In the film, word gets out — mankind's lifelong love affair with fossil fuels has gone public. Until now, the trusting Earth thought she was the main steady, and now the wronged planet's royally peeved.

So, those cheating humans are getting their just deserts, and global warming-driven climate changes plan to serve man up. Chilled.

This disaster-laced morality tale comes courtesy of director Roland Emmerich, who manages to fling all of his favorite devices into the cataclysmic mix.

The bus-stomping mayhem of "Universal Soldier" meets the New York steamrolling of "Godzilla" and "Independence Day," with a bit of "Patriot"-style flag placement to boot.

It's a tall order, and all the chaos is something only one kind of man can handle: a paleoclimatologist.

And there's one kind of man to play that kind of scientist — Dennis Quaid. Only the star of such pictures as "Frequency" and "Jaws 3-D" can bear the full brunt of the super storm's fury.

It's his job to rescue his son, the doe-eyed Jake Gyllenhaal, from his icy, flooded, wolf-infested hidey hole in the New York public library.

After a breakdown near Philadelphia, it's a scant 78-mile



COURTESY OF TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX
Jake Gyllenhaal knows he's hosed as he wanders through the deluged New York streets — plus he's counting on Dennis Quaid to rescue him.

MOVIEREVIEW "THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW"

★★★
walk through -150 degree deep freezes to the Big Apple.

But if there's one person that can handle it, it's Hurricane Quaid.

All the basic "what-if" schlock pic elements are on display, including:

■ Carefully edited sequences featuring leaps across crevasses;

■ A grizzled old team member with monosyllabic name (better for yelling in despair) cutting own line/stays behind/likewise takes one for the team;

■ Fatalist statements by one of the young leads results in end-of-the-world nookie;

■ Dash Mihok (optional).

The film flopped the first time — when it was called "The Core." And this one swaps homoerotic undertones for a hackneyed eco-

concern. But it's a film about about global issues. Really.

At one point, commenting on a trio of mega-storms, an astronaut says, "The ones over Europe and Russia are even larger." Really.

It'd help to see them. Open-ended international sequences only serve to further insulate the convoluted plot. The other continents are negligible, after all.

The real important things are the effects on U.S. soil — a result of our rapid resource consumption.

And, as subtle as a 200-foot wall of water, the final message crashes in, sweeping away the plotlines in a glossed-over denouement that leaves the audience thusly washed out.

Shoot, nature, you cold as ice.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Agent brings hip-hop home

BY BECCA MOORE
STAFF WRITER

Local rhymespitter Agent Fitz's new LP, *Microphone Damaja*, opens with an intro that chastises anyone who isn't impressed by the lyrical audacity of the emcee.

The album includes a poignant track of homage to his Irish heritage, calls to action in forms of rumpshakin' and fond tributes to Blue Heaven and sweet tea.

After opening with the tongue-in-cheek memo to listeners, *Microphone Damaja* pumps up the jams with "Surprise," a frenzied track laced with bouncing horns and an genuine old-school hip-hop feel.

Fitz's lyrical flow moves seamlessly, spouting verses about traveling the country and the frantic lifestyle of the open road.

"Sexual Influx," an ode to bumping-and-grinding, features the overused snake-charmer musical hook behind the freaky lyrics.

Yes, it's the beat the "ladies wanna shake to," but it's the same groove that's already been shaken to time and time again.

It's time for a new cultural hook.

MUSICREVIEW

AGENT FITZ
MICROPHONE DAMAJA

★★★★

However, any track that lyrically references "Ace Ventura: Pet Detective" receives merit for that alone.

The slow and steady pace of "Average Joe" shifts the focus from the music to the lyrics, where Fitz muses over the definitions of success and self-validation in today's hip-hop world.

"People said, 'here's where you rap about diamonds and big cars' they said, 'wait dude, have a simple hook that all the chicks can relate to.'"

Fitz goes on to expound on the importance of being himself in the overpowering business, all the while shunning the idea of personal trainers and teeth-whitening.

In "Irish Luck Pt. II," Agent Fitz recalls how his grandfather told him to "never snap the limbs off the family tree."

The ode to his heritage features a delicate piano hook that outlines

a mental journey through family memories and importance of loyalty.

"Carolina Flashback" has a retro feel to the Motown beat that cushions the memories of adolescence, citing pretty girls, arcades, Dean Smith and Franklin Street.

It's a rare chance for 4-year tenants of the area, who have a limited history with the town, to hear a more personal perspective on the small slice of heaven so many have come to love.

He also slams on Duke, and such digs never go unappreciated.

Fitz ultimately compares hip-hop to a woman, saying in an interlude that, "You gotta approach her and have the best lines and the best flow. If not, hip-hop, or a woman, is gonna be leaving out the door with the next guy who flows a little bit tighter than you."

With a voice that flows seamlessly and with ease over his often quirky and powerful lyrics, Agent Fitz has the passion to back up the product.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

THE Daily Crossword

By Alan P. Olschwang

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ACROSS

- 1 Vexatious kids
- 6 False god
- 10 Mural site
- 14 Relative of should
- 15 Sea eagle
- 16 Toward shelter
- 17 Start of George Carlin query
- 18 Sicilian mount
- 19 Bread unit
- 20 Fielder's flubs
- 22 Part 2 of query
- 24 Operate a loom
- 26 Undemanding
- 27 Docking place
- 30 False pretenses
- 33 Love in Limousin
- 35 Wake up
- 36 Expressions of satisfaction
- 39 Part 3 of query
- 41 Part 4 of query
- 43 Printer's measures
- 44 Feudal lord
- 46 Type of tire
- 47 Funny business
- 49 Formerly, formerly
- 50 French capital in an old song
- 53 Madagascar primate
- 55 Part 5 of query
- 58 Traps
- 62 Put in a reclining position
- 63 Writer Oz

DOWN

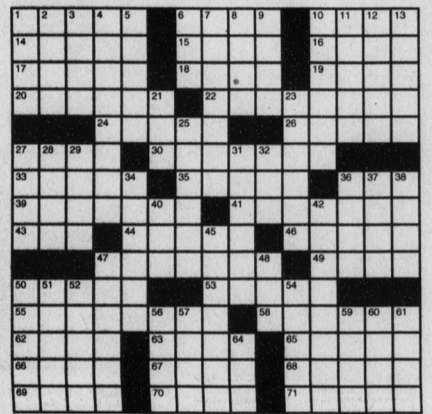
- 1 Boxer Riddick
- 2 German industrial region
- 3 Maturing substance
- 4 Runner
- 5 Cubic meter
- 6 Spelling contest
- 7 Ere's style
- 8 AD part
- 9 Table extension
- 10 Large marine mammal
- 11 Lotion botanicals
- 12 Tether
- 13 Southpaw
- 21 Downcast

ACROSS

- 23 Groups of eight
- 25 Knowledgeable
- 27 Remove rind
- 28 Mosque prayer leader
- 29 Untold centuries
- 31 Oregon city
- 32 Late starter?
- 34 Alleviation
- 36 Culture medium
- 37 That woman's
- 38 Editorial note
- 40 Made free (of)
- 42 Ran
- 45 Sandler movie, "Happy

DOWN

- 47 Economist John Maynard
- 48 MLB bosses
- 50 Loses color
- 51 Sloshing
- 52 Pay hike
- 54 Merge
- 56 Social standing
- 57 Portent
- 59 Chimed
- 60 So what ___ is new?
- 61 Luge
- 64 Pen dame



Advantage one-ups its peers

BY CHRIS COLETTA
SENIOR WRITER

It's been almost 20 years since a pudgy Italian plumber named Mario made his way into the living rooms of America's youth, kick-starting the video game revolution and allowing the Nintendo Entertainment System to become a household name.

In that time, video game music has taken off in a big way. The blips and bleeps of NES games' electronic-based soundscapes have influenced everything from abstract dance music to a breakout single from Lil' Flip, while games themselves become sophisticated enough to have their own soundtracks.

A handful of groups have taken this infatuation and turned it into an obsession, mining the ghosts and goblins of eight-bit soundtracks to create rock songs from the electronic garble.

Of those bands, none does the job better than The Advantage.

On its self-titled LP, the group — named after a long-forgotten, ill-advised NES joystick — whips through 26 songs in 42 minutes with a precision that betrays its members' status as players in Bay Area noise-rock bands.

It's an admirable undertaking, one that would be pleasant enough regardless of the group's skill.

But what truly sets The Advantage apart from its peers is the band's creative reimagining of songs that never were meant to be heard outside their eight-bit homes.

Thanks to the limitations of their medium, the mostly Japanese men and women who composed music for the system's games had to focus on a tune's melody instead of its texture.

But The Advantage isn't trapped



MUSICREVIEW

THE ADVANTAGE
THE ADVANTAGE

★★★★

by those boundaries, and its album responds by imbuing the songs with a vitality that wasn't possible in the original versions.

The blades-of-steel guitar attack in the theme from "Bubble Bobble," for example, is augmented by the work of drummer Spencer Seim, who also smacks the skins for San Francisco group Hella. When the song speeds up into a wily musical workout, it's worthy of the world's geekiest mosh pit.

And the underworld theme from "Super Mario Bros. 2" even brings out a little white-boy funk, thanks to Seim's rendition of the original's kick-snare beat and guitars that one-up the bleeps by giving the track a heavy, cavernous feeling.

Most tracks on *The Advantage* employ a similar formula, and this is both the album's greatest strength and its most obvious weakness.

Though the band finds inventive ways to perform songs from games as diverse as "Castlevania 3" and

"Marble Madness," repeated listens to the album grow a bit tiresome as the novelty and nostalgia wear off.

Still, *The Advantage's* impressive pedigree, creativity and technical wizardry are worth praising.

So thank you, Mario, but the princess is in another castle.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

STARSYSTEM

- ★ POOR
- ★★ FAIR
- ★★★ GOOD
- ★★★★ EXCELLENT
- ★★★★★ CLASSIC

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YOUNG ADAM 9:30, SAT-SUN 4:40

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