

Groovy debut disc fights Kravtiz-clone tendencies

BY AYOFEMI KIRBY
STAFF WRITER

Tie dye, lava lamps, and Dan Dyer. Which of the three doesn't fit?

Ok, so maybe lava lamps weren't that popular until Spencer Gifts came around, but the debut release from soul rocker Dan Dyer will definitely send you time-warping into the early seventies, when peace and sitar were in and war was out.

Dyer's *Of What Lies Beneath* is a satisfying blend of groovy guitar riffs and catchy lyrics that range from love and heartbreak to the search for inner tranquility.

Notably, every track is produced, mixed and accompanied by Lenny Kravitz and — surprise — sounds like songs Kravitz would do.

But Dyer works hard to prevent Kravitz's guitar solos and signature sound from stealing the show. He stands firm, proving that he will confidently walk in the footsteps (or sing in the shadows) of Kravitz to grab listeners' attention and melt them into his psychedelic world.

"Great Ocean," perhaps the strongest song on the album, is evidence that Dyer could be a rock star. He uses his voice well — one moment it's super sexy and raspy

MUSIC REVIEW

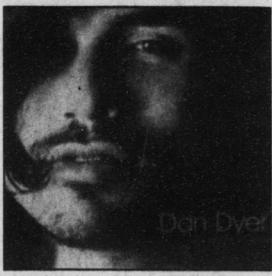
DAN DYER
OF WHAT LIES BENEATH

★★★

like Mick Jagger and the next it's piercing like Steven Tyler's glass-breaking moment in "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing." The song is given a touch of Kravitz flavor during an seductive acoustic solo, adding a sound that makes it shine among the rest.

The title track demonstrates Dyer's writing talent. The chorus asks listeners to consider "Why are we so afraid/To going down in the river/Wash away/Everything/So we can be delivered." The metaphor is cool and his ad-libs are pleasant additions to a well-written, well-sung track.

Skip ahead to "Space Alien" and Dyer hints that it might not be studio magic that makes him sound good. What this ballad-like track lacks in lyrics ("We don't belong/We don't belong/This world's not right/There's something wrong/Please take me home") Dyer makes up for in range. Kravitz complements Dyer with an enchanting guitar solo that makes it stand out as an album highlight.



Of What Lies Beneath is a refreshing release. Though there is nothing truly spectacular about the album, Dyer sings and writes well. It's an upside to an industry slowly redeeming itself from numerous studio-manufactured artists who do neither at all.

But to avoid being labeled a Kravitz creation, Dyer must find his own sound, especially if he wants his own fans.

To put it simply, you'll like the album because it's a decent extension of the soul rocker style, or you'll frown upon Dyer for his mediocre attempt at joining the family tree.

Groovy, man.

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

Talented act outswims peers

BY TANNER SLAYDEN
STAFF WRITER

In the realm of music, there are many fish in the sea — some are less desirable than others.

This fact was illustrated perfectly Friday, when Shark Quest had a CD release party for its latest release, *Gods and Devils*, at Local 506.

The instrumental quintet ended the concert's series of acts with a soothing and transcendent set, but the journey to that point wasn't always above sea level.

Myriad genres showed up at the intimate showcase, but no performer stuck out quite like Billy Sugarfix.

The pseudo-comedian began his performance wearing a tuxedo and green mask with balloons strapped to it. Whether he was trying to be funny is debatable; regardless, he enjoyed his set more than anyone in attendance.

His act included magic flutes, talking dinosaurs and a mask of President Bush.

Honestly, his friends probably told him his show was funny after a long — and I mean long — night of drinking. The performance would have been funny among a small group of friends.

Very, very drunk friends.

The confused audience found salvation from Sugarfix in Des Ark. With catchy guitar riffs reminis-

CONCERT REVIEW

SHARK QUEST
LOCAL 506
FRIDAY, AUG. 3

★★★★

cent of both '70s blues performers and The Mars Volta, this indie rock duo pounded into Local 506 with reverberation and personality.

The act took its show to the crowd — literally — as band members descended from the stage into the audience, moving and gyrating to the music with so much energy they were dripping with sweat.

Des Ark's upbeat and loud sound was completely different from Shark Quest's and would have made an attractive transition into a more mellow set.

But that was interrupted by the return of one incredibly well-dressed man. Billy Sugarfix took the stage once more to play the guitar, drums and harmonica, singing songs that sounded like bad Beatles covers.

The "Jaws" attack song would have been fitting in this situation.

For a supporting act, his total performance time ended up being longer than that of the main event — which was completely sugar free.

When the five members of Shark Quest finally walked on the stage,

the audience knew it was about to look upon humble yet Titan-esque musicians.

Their guitars had strips of duct tape on them, and each member wore a Mona Lisa smile. They were soulfully confident and when the music rang out, the room had an intimate and electrified quality.

Corresponding with its modest appearance, the band's sound wasn't flashy. Each member produced a sound that didn't serve the purpose of highlighting the member but, instead, complemented the group.

The Shark Quest's collective and indistinguishable roles make them the epitome of Gestalt principles.

The band's influences range from bluegrass to jazz to rock to everything else in between. The set featured a mandolin playing over a distorted, electric bass and a slide guitar juxtaposed with a cello.

The group even took stabs at classical guitar stylings on a reverberated electric rig. After hours of musical inconsistencies, the band's idiosyncratic style served as an example of how categorical crossover can be successful.

Boundaries mean little to Shark Quest — for they are the scavengers of musical genres.

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

Hack band surprisingly successful

BY JIM WALSH

ASSISTANT ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Along the craggy shoals of desolate beaches rove the ghosts of U2, The Verve and Our Lady Peace. They are restless.

But fear not. One band has channeled their drowsy aura, rising against would-be champions of innovation, exploration and integrity. That band, dear fans of washed-up fare, is West Coast creation The Shore.

An alternative pop group from Los Angeles, this trio follows in the vein of The Smiths and Pete Dinklage, but seriously lacks in depth.

Casual fans of Coldplay or Radiohead might, upon hearing the band for the first time, be intrigued. However, they would soon discover that the water off of this shore is indeed quite shallow.

Track after track, lead singer Ben Ashley sings overly indulgent tributes to things like love, heartbreak, relationships and the sun. None of it is compelling, none of it provoking.

Lyrics like, "I've been losing these days, can't feel you no more/I've been lost in a haze, got my head on the floor," are blindingly boring. It wouldn't be so bad if the music backing it was worth two cents, but it ain't. At best, the backup instrumentals are noninvasive.

But perhaps noninvasive is good.

Sometimes people just want to pop in an album and play it softly in the background. The Shore is happy to oblige. For an iPod-obsessed society, this album provides the perfect soundtrack for walking to class or doing the laundry.

Take the song "It Ain't Right," for example. Nothing special, this dusty ballad boasts an almost-catchy percussion element that an aloof listener could really get into. It's chirpy. It's glam-y. It's downright digestible. Just don't tell your friends you're listening to something so banal. Rhythmic beats offset overly indulgent vocals, raising the song to a level of tolerability that most others on the album can't match.

Those are relegated to a level of averageness comparable to that of Clear Channel network affiliates. Wait, no — that's too harsh.

Make it a level of averageness comparable to that of a really bad Oasis song.

If anything good can be said about this album, it's that there's nothing really bad about it. It's just typical West Coast prissy whining. The whole album could be used to promote "The O.C." or, for that matter, any other melodramatic, sea-themed program.

Members of The Shore present themselves as the next big thing in alternative rock, yet fail to real-



MUSIC REVIEW

THE SHORE
THE SHORE

★★★

ize one thing: "Alternative rock" is dead. It died a long time ago with the departure of the bands from which The Shore draws its influences. There is nothing next, nothing new and nothing big about this watered-down L.A. trio.

Let sleeping dogs lie, The Shore, and forgotten ghosts wander.

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

THE Daily Crossword

By Alan P. Olschwang

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ACROSS

- 1 Shafts of light
- 5 Hardy cabbage
- 9 Shred
- 14 Thanks ___!
- 15 March middle
- 16 Subterfuges
- 17 Start of Paul Newman quote
- 19 At hand
- 20 Brook fish
- 21 Wholesome
- 23 Having a will
- 26 Gratuitly
- 27 Part 2 of quote
- 33 Ocean extract
- 37 Liveliness
- 38 Travel with difficulty
- 39 Attempts
- 41 Mayday!
- 43 Blockade
- 44 Intermediaries
- 46 Audit pro
- 48 Coarse file
- 49 Part 3 of quote
- 52 Chairman of China
- 53 Ungenerous
- 58 One between 12 and 20
- 63 Sri
- 64 Playful prank
- 65 End of quote
- 68 Hunt illegally
- 69 Dynamic lead-in?
- 70 Huron/Ontario separator

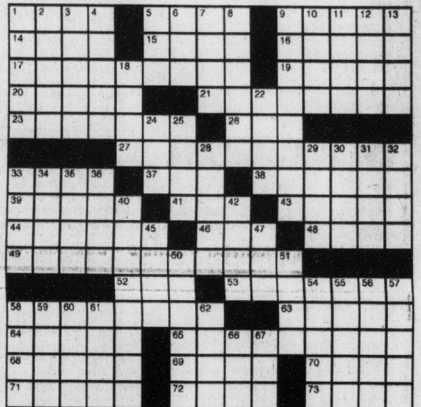
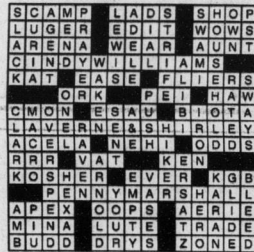
- 71 Bob of the PGA
- 72 Top of the head
- 73 "Sixteen ___"

DOWN

- 1 "Something to Talk About" singer Bonnie
- 2 Actress Woodard
- 3 Walk-the-dog toys
- 4 Nero Wolfe's creator
- 5 "Galahad"
- 6 Bother
- 7 Camera accessory
- 8 Real follower?
- 9 Atlantic food fish
- 10 Littlest of the litter
- 11 '30s movie dog
- 12 Rip
- 13 Catch sight of
- 18 Provo's state
- 22 Bellybutton collection
- 24 Light pat
- 25 Holiday forerunners

- 28 Historical period
- 29 Ecology pioneer
- 30 Conception
- 31 Henhouse product
- 32 Ooze
- 33 Length of a visit
- 34 Jason's ship
- 35 Stead
- 36 Take care of
- 40 Stopovers on the alimentary canal
- 42 Health resorts
- 45 Hosiery mishap
- 47 Latin greeting

- 50 Work-shoe protection
- 51 Ms. Fitzgerald
- 54 Gem surface
- 55 Opening bars
- 56 Flock of geese
- 57 Rabbits' kin
- 58 CD alternative
- 59 Seth's son
- 60 Coup d'__
- 61 Pleasant French city?
- 62 Periman of "Cheers"
- 66 Museum purchase
- 67 Sturgeon delicacy



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