

Actors most valuable in stirring pigskin picture

BY AYOFEKI KIRBY
STAFF WRITER

The Permian High Panthers were the crown and glory of the small, impoverished town of Odessa, Texas — a place so quiet that a pin drop could be heard from a mile away.

That is, until Friday nights. A story about a sleepy town and a championship football team, "Friday Night Lights" might seem like just another high school sports movie. But it is definitely a step above the rest.

The film, based on the novel of the same name by H.G. Bissinger, is the true story of the Permian High Panthers' 1988 football team and the adults living vicariously through their children's lives.

Before the game, players are fed for free, businesses close and everyone in town is ready to cheer for their football team — hopeful they will bring home honor and attention to the impoverished, otherwise ignored and overlooked town.

But, quickly, "Friday Night Lights" becomes more than the typical high school football story and develops into an examination of the lives, relationships, hopes and dreams of the people in Odessa, using football to assure them that there is life outside their small town.

MOVIEREVIEW "FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS" ★★★★

Directed by Peter Berg, the film explores issues of alcoholism, child abuse and racism, among other social themes. These, along with the pressures of bringing home a state championship, make for an excellent story line.

The cast of "Friday Night Lights" delivers an outstanding and heart-felt performance, full of compassion and short of the brawn you might expect coming to see a film on football.

Billy Bob Thornton does a superb job playing Coach Gary Gaines, who is trying to find the balance between being a coach, a friend and a father to the players. Lucas Black plays Mike Winchell, a tight-lipped quarterback who doesn't realize that he is the heart of the team. The intensity in his eyes speaks much louder than any word he utters throughout the film.

Country music star Tim McGraw and award-winning actor Derek Luke present the film's most notable performances.

McGraw is convincing as an alcoholic and abusive father, demonstrating that not all musicians crossing over into acting lack sub-

stance.

Derek Luke, who gained critical acclaim for his work in "Antwone Fisher," delivers another profound performance as cocky star running back Boobie Miles.

Luke, who was handicapped by Denzel Washington for his role as Antwone Fisher, follows closely in the footsteps of his mentor and friend.

"Friday Night Lights" is shot in the style of documentaries, with shaky camera work, blurred shots and over-the-shoulder angles. These techniques cause the film to seem more like an ESPN special on the journey of the team than a melodrama.

Though this technique can be bothersome to audiences if used carelessly, Berg uses it to his advantage, providing authenticity to his work.

"Friday Night Lights" is an excellent film, full of emotion, heart and action for drama and sports fans alike.

When the Permian High School football stadium lights came on in Odessa, Texas, in 1988, everyone was there to feel the heat. After seeing "Friday Night Lights," you'll feel it too.

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

Limey crew spin own brand of blitzkrieg bop

BY JACKY BRAMMER
STAFF WRITER

Pop bands are a dime a dozen — especially clichéd British ones that have seen Oasis on MTV Europe too many times and have decided they wanted to get wasted, get laid and cuss on TV a lot.

But accents are cool, and that's all that matters, so it's tolerable.

It's refreshing when an album like the self-titled debut release from the Futureheads comes along. The up-tempo post-punk style of their music is so addictive you go through withdrawal when you turn back to other bands. Lead singer Barry Hyde has an inviting voice that attracts the ear. His vocals are also versatile enough to give the music different facets, as in the a cappella "Danger of the Water."

Overall, there's a certain care-free quality to the energetic North England quartet's manic sound. It does not always make sense, but the listener just goes with it. On the track "A to B," the lyrics are simplistic: "It is a shame/It is a pity/When you can't raise the energy/To get from A to B."

Whether the song is talking about the hassle of going to classes and jobs on a daily basis or the struggles of middle-school geometry students, it's unknown, but it's dang catchy.

As bizarre as the connection is, it is reminiscent of Ol' Dirty Bastard's almost incoherent rantings on

MUSICREVIEW THE FUTUREHEADS THE FUTUREHEADS ★★★★

Return to the 36 Chambers that verge on a type of idiosyncratic genius.

The band's vibe is exceedingly light. Indeed, the band is not trying to say anything epic with its 15 songs spanning 35 minutes.

The LP feels like a downhill roller coaster. After the opening chords of "Le Garage," a title which may or may not be a potshot at the frogs across the Channel, the album is off, and there is no stopping it. It's moving so fast, it's racing to be over.

Every song ends before it wears out its welcome. On the flip side, this can prove a shortcoming, because you don't want the songs to end.

On the track "First Day," one might wonder if the band was aware of what listeners would be thinking:

"And they say faster, faster/It's time to take you to the next stage/But it's only your first day/And you're not ready for the next stage."

Despite the death blows of Monty Python and Mr. Bean on American impressions of the Brits, the Futureheads are a good addition to any fish-and-chips-eating, Franco-bashing afternoon.

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PUNK VOTER

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going be dead in 20 years," he said. "We're all going to be around for a lot longer than that."

Theatic said the efforts of Punk Voter, as well as other organizations such as Rock the Vote, Music for America and Slam Bush, are all valuable touchstones for people to use to educate themselves.

"Punk Voter is a resource for people to get involved, and it's definitely a time in history where people and their votes really matter."

Kaia Wilson of Durham-based punk band The Butchies said Punk Voter is a very effective tool of com-

munication for voters.

"The Internet really makes it easier for people to get motivated and feel like they're a part of something," Wilson said.

Punk Voter organizers hope that feeling lasts longer than the next two weeks. After the election, Jeg said, the group will remain focused on expanding the scope of smaller, grassroots political efforts.

He cited the organization's support of longtime punk musician Jesse Townley, who is running for city council in Berkeley, Calif.

Jeg said Punk Voter is supportive of Townley and his efforts because his dedication to political activism reflects the kind of long-term

involvement the group wants to encourage.

To support Townley, Punk Voter links to his Web site, <http://www.townleyforcouncil.org>. Whenever that site is highlighted on Punk Voter, Townley said, his campaign donations via PayPal increase.

"A lot of them have never dealt with politics before, and it's their first political contribution," Townley said. "It's very flattering."

Townley added that he has been working hard to go out and speak to many of the residents in his district.

"Identifying with a political figure is rare, and by talking to them, they have a chance to identify with me on a more personal level."

Townley said he is one of the individual endorsers of Punk Voter, and The Frisk, the band he's currently in, was one of the first groups to sign up for *Rock Against Bush Vol. 1*.

"The sales from the CDs and DVDs show a real hunger for more info that's not been filtered through the media outlet of your

choice," he said, adding that while Punk Voter has an anti-Bush orientation, he believes in open debate and discussion.

"Punk is a pretty open-ended term. I don't mind having conservatives involved, and they can't be denied a place at the table. I welcome talking to people, and I don't mind saying, 'Here I am, here's what I believe in, here's my e-mail.'"

Russ Rankin of the bands Good Riddance and Only Crime said such philosophies are key in attracting new voters. Both of Rankin's bands are members of Punk Voter.

"Voting can be intimidating. There are these personalities that kids may look up to, and in that aspect, it's a very important thing," Rankin said.

"There are people in the punk community with a lot of sway, and they're starting to talk."

Rankin said it's important to keep people educated about politics and their world, especially since he thinks the mainstream media

doesn't do enough to inform people about candidates other than Bush and Kerry.

"The debates are a great example of the whole political landscape that bullies people into thinking they only have two choices," he said.

Rankin wrote a column for Amp magazine titled "Mid-Term Election Hangover" that discusses the media and its "scare tactics." Punk Voter asked him if it could run on the site, and he agreed.

Rankin said that while Punk Voter leans more to the left, he's a proponent of using the right to vote to voice one's own opinion for change.

"So many people are voting against what they hate instead of something they care about," he said. "My vote is too important to use it like that."

Punk fan or otherwise, there are a multitude of resources directed at participating in the elections and exercising the right to, as Chuck D once put it, bring the noise.

Wilson said that while bands have built-in forums to express their opinions, average people don't. That's why, she said, they need to view political participation as a way to make their voices carry.

"Voting is an expression of using your voice."

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

DIVERRECOMMENDS

■ William Shatner, *Has Been* — In his latest spoken-word album, William Shatner boldly surpasses all expectations for both the spoken-word genre and his musical career.

Throw away the ideas of Shatner battling an unrealistic 6-foot lizard, or of spoken word being a domain solely for beatnik boys with bongos and pretense. The album is produced, largely arranged and co-written by Ben Folds.

It turns out that William Shatner has led a life rife with the full range of human emotion — pulling through pain comparable to the anguish you probably felt after watching his Priceline commercials. With precise timing backed up by Folds' blissful pop sensibility, Shatner has turned out a tale worth telling, and certainly worth listening to.

■ "Love Me If You Dare" ("Jeux D'Enfants") — True romance in American film is hard to come by. It is almost always watered down by the addition of a zany friend or terminally ill mother — unnecessary and overused elements.

The French, on the other hand, seem to get it right more frequently. In "Love Me If You Dare," director Yann Samuell appeals to the heart of romantic sensibility in his tale of Sophie and Julien and a game of dares begun as children.

As the two get older and more susceptible to the mundane, the game and the fairy tale become madder, and their acts become increasingly dangerous and enthralling. The two embark on a roller coaster of love straight to hell, and it's beautiful.

■ "A Walk in the Woods," Bill Bryson — This is the story of an overweight and overly cynical travel writer who decides to hike the 2160-mile Appalachian Trail. An even more overweight recovering alcoholic serves as his travel companion.

Throw in a rampant fear of hypothermia and bears parched from want of the blood of tubby bearded men, and you get the wit Bryson brings effortlessly into all his travel writing.

His comedic spark is well balanced with an honest admiration for the beauty of the trail and admonishment for the death of the American wilderness.

■ Tower of Power — Huge in the early '70s, Tower of Power is one of the most successful and most daunting R&B acts you'll find.

Most of their songs consist of praising a choice lady for being wonderful and marvelous, then throwing in a monster horn section, soaring smooth vocals and hard rock guitar solos.

To get the full experience, pick up 1974's *Urban Renewal*, featuring the song "There's Only So Much Oil in the Ground." Oh, yes, it is about the 1970s oil crisis.

Funk about fossil fuels. Your soul vaccination awaits.

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Smile with Dr. T

by Peter A. Tzendzalian, DDS

Q: Can eating disorders cause dental problems?

A: Yes. Bulimia and anorexia nervosa are two serious eating disorders. Each can cause problems in your mouth. Anorexia nervosa is an unnatural fear of gaining weight. Bulimia is a condition in which a person compulsively overeats and then induces vomiting to get rid of the food. Some anorexics also induce vomiting. The danger to teeth comes from stomach acid that is regurgitated into the mouth by vomiting and severely eroding tooth enamel. Women from their teens into their thirties are most at risk for developing eating disorders, although males are also included. A dentist may be able to restore eroded teeth, and may also raise concern over possible eating disorders. Depression often accompanies eating disorders and affected people, whether bulimic or anorexic, will often develop poor oral hygiene habits. Problems like periodontal disease can develop. While a dentist can treat the appearance of teeth with cosmetic dentistry, the underlying causes of enamel erosion may require medical intervention. Regular dental checkups should be part of your plan for maintaining your overall health.

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