

THE QUICK AND DIRTY

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MOVIES

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A fun film that puts North Carolina in spotlight. **page 8**

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The sort of trash fit for the cutting-room floor. **page 9**

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Maybe some day it will be one of those cult classics. **page 10**

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A legend returns and makes an awesome rock album. **page 8**

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There's nothing to like (and nothing to hate) here. **page 10**

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Lo-fi anti-folk themes strike hard in this fine LP. **page 10**

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Over-the-top theatrics don't overshadow this act. **page 8**

SIGUR RÓS

This is what live shows are all about. One of a kind. **page 9**

dive recommends

[**BECK, GUERO**]

On par with *Odelay* in terms of its lighthearted and quirky feel, Beck's 2005 release finds the artist more refined and focused than on some of his earlier albums. Each track flows seamlessly into the next and the album works as a complete package rather than as an amalgam of hit singles. Standouts include "Qué Onda Guero," and "Girl," which benefit from production by the Dust Brothers.

[**KANYE WEST, LATE REGISTRATION**]

Despite West's recent outburst in the media, he can still craft a fine album. *Late Registration*, which drips with layered production, interesting guest appearances and downright fun lyrics, is no exception. Anyone who liked *The College Dropout* should definitely pick this one up.

[**"ENTOURAGE"**]

If you missed it the first time around, don't worry. An encore presentation of the second season of HBO's hit series started up Tuesday.

Contact Jim Walsh at walshjp@email.unc.edu.



'Brothers Grimm' not quite fabulous

Even Damon can't save flick

BY ALAN HAYES
STAFF WRITER

Terry Gilliam's movie, "The Brothers Grimm," may best be remembered as a film with tremendous potential that failed to live up.

The movie brings a lot to the table. Director Terry Gilliam is a former member of Monty Python and director of the critically acclaimed "Brazil." Matt Damon and Heath Ledger play the lead roles, which should attract a few females to the flick. If that wasn't enough, the film's source material comes from some of the most well-known and popular stories of all time: the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm.

But the film's potential does not translate into greatness.

This is not a terrible movie by any means, but it is one that is probably worth a rental rather than an expensive night at the theater.

The film begins, predictably, with "Once upon a time ..." followed by a "Jack and the Beanstalk"-esque scene (a fairy tale not written by the Grimms, by the way) that sets the tone for the brother's relationship throughout the film.

Jacob (Ledger), the elder Grimm, comes home with a handful of magic beans, having traded them for the money that was meant to be used for a doctor for his sister. Will (Damon), his brother, never forgives him for this.

The brothers later become traveling hucksters, tricking people to believe in their own superstitions, until a French general forces them to rescue a group of missing girls from an actual enchanted forest. The personas of the two brothers, however, are not entirely fleshed out until the latter half of the film, and by this point it is too late for an audience to identify with the bumbling protagonists.



COURTESY OF DIMENSION FILMS

Despite the star power of multiple A-list celebrities such as Matt Damon and Monica Bellucci, 'The Brothers Grimm' packs little punch.

Anyone familiar with Gilliam's previous work is aware of the type of visual world that he typically creates in his films.

This is the largest budget he has ever had access to as a director, but surprisingly, the Gilliam world doesn't measure up. Visual seams run through the movie and are highly visible.

Gilliam's shots are frequently bathed in a glut of orange light, and the computer-generated effects fail to mesh with the real-life actors and sets.

The special effects look like special effects.

But "The Brothers Grimm" is not without redeeming qualities.

It has a lot of potential to eventually — say 10 or 20 years down the road — achieve the status of other cult B-movies, like "The Evil Dead" or "The Neverending Story."

MOVIE REVIEW
'THE BROTHERS GRIMM'
★★

It's got the type of over-the-top acting, bad writing and cheesy special effects that can actually be quite appealing.

When this movie comes on TNT 10 years from now, check it out.

The suits in charge of Dimension Films probably didn't intend to spend more than \$70 million on the movie's production, but given the innumerable delays and complications the film suffered, they'll take what they can get.

At one point in the movie, Damon says his supposedly enchanted homemade armor is "not magic, just shiny."

It seems appropriate in a movie like this, which had the makings of a gem but, in the end, lacked enchantment.

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

Sunny LP glides over dark themes

BY BEN PITTARD

ASSISTANT ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

"Exploding the teenage underground into passionate revolt against the corporate ogre since 1982."

The mantra of long-time DIY record label K Records perfectly encapsulates the theme of the latest release from ex-Moldy Peaches member Kimya Dawson.

Dawson has been pandering her particular brand of lo-fi anti-folk since the turn of the millennium, collaborating with the likes of Ben Kweller.

With her latest outing, *Hidden Vaganda*, Dawson takes her music and moves in the direction of a very blunt, very sunny protest.

The tracks deal with an array of themes including the fallen victims of the Iraq war, economic hardship, corporate rule, the current state of government, loyal fandom and girl crushes.

"Viva la Persistence" discusses the troubles of families, using her own as an example, that struggle in the lower rung of the U.S. economic ladder.

Dawson chirps over a sunny guitar beat so easily it could incite the local anarchists to skip down the street on their way to destroy the machine.

"And mass graves make strong foundations, for the giant corporations, that own all the TV stations," she sings.

In "Singing Machine," Dawson speaks her opinions on meddling corporate executives who control the direction of their artists.

The song specifically focuses on everyone's favorite forgotten son, Julian Lennon: "Some producer said to young Lennon, they can't all be ballads Julian."

Although many of the tracks display something of a sunny disposition, sometimes weighty subject matter burdens the listener.

"Moving On," for example, is the frighteningly realistic tale of a woman trapped in an abusive

MUSIC REVIEW

KIMYA DAWSON
HIDDEN VAGANDA
★★★

relationship with an alcoholic husband.

Dawson recreates disturbing scenes of violence during a conversation of a man returning to a wife ready to leave her trapped existence.

Thankfully, the album picks up its pace again with a few more rollicking tracks.

One such example would be "5 Years." The song is an album highlight with clever wordplay by Dawson. It's here that she details her schoolgirl crushes on Strokes guitarist Nick Valenti and Isaac Hanson. She goes on to detail a happy married life with the former teen-ic. This kind of disarming charm and crafted songwriting is what pushes Dawson to the head of the neo-folk pack.

But even these aren't enough to save the second half of the album, which drags on with themes that were reshaped in earlier tracks.

The sing-song style of "Parade" is simply too reminiscent of "Viva la Persistence" to truly move the song beyond anything but a throwaway.

Hidden Vaganda is an album that, considering the wholly depressing and often inflammatory subject matter, impressively avoids taking itself too seriously. As a whole, the album is a cute and blissful romp through modern folk that listeners are sure to enjoy.

The LP is instantly accessible and listenable for any audience, despite otherwise heady content.

Dawson displays a knack for putting a sugar coating on a distasteful spoonful of bad medicine, which is perhaps her greatest strength as a songwriter.

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

Derivative power pop yields useless album

BY BEN PITTARD
ASSISTANT ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

MUSIC REVIEW
ROOFTOP SUICIDE CLUB
ALWAYS LIKE THIS
★★★

"The rooftop suicide club is a band. It is not a real club. Please do not commit suicide."

So reads the disclaimer that runs with a packet of information on *The Rooftop Suicide Club*, an indie pop outfit from Massachusetts.

The band, like its disclaimer, is a bit too cheeky. The throwback sensibilities it attempts to imbue fall short and it has little to offer lyrically.

With its latest release, *Always Like This*, Rooftop Suicide Club makes a play for the hearts and minds of the college youth demographic.

Citing influences from Wilco to Air Supply, the band fails to do anything original, and falls back too easily on singalong choruses and overly choreographed harmonies.

One tune churns out after another with few attempts at depth — that is, beyond the obligatory

piano overlay during such tracks as "Plea for my Life."

While not necessarily anything special, the band isn't anything particularly bad either. Suicide Club plays a formulaic brand of indie rock that is completely nonoffensive and fails to challenge listeners.

Multi-instrumentalist Chris Haskell is harmless enough as a vocalist, singing simple pop songs with no preconceived notions that they are in fact pop songs.

That is the band's selling point and its Achilles' heel. The music itself presents nothing new to the already cluttered indie music world.

Haskell's vocals won't cost the listener any peace of mind, nor will they cause any thought. Like the majority of the record, they're underwhelming at worst and mediocre at best.

In the grand scheme of things, *Always Like This* isn't a bad record at all. It just seems completely unnecessary.

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

CONNECTS

FROM PAGE 7

content-management system for student affairs.

He said that he talked to a student painting the cubes near the Pit one day and asked him if his group had a Web site. The student said no, adding that he didn't know how to set one up. Payst asked him if his group would create a site if they had the tools to do so, to which the student responded enthusiastically.

"So I thought that maybe I was on to something," Payst said.

He took the idea to Student Body President Seth Dearmin and members of his Cabinet and talked about the potential to use the software for student groups.

Dearmin said the desire for an organized system for student groups to communicate among themselves and with the public has always been strong on campus.

"Anybody you talk to, if you ask what their top three priorities would be to make student organizations as effective as they could be ... 99 percent of the time they're gonna talk about a system of gaining information about other groups ... and having a centralized location to find that info."

The hope is that by taking the technological burden off students' shoulders, more groups will be able to use cyberspace for better communication.

Not unlike the templates offered by popular blogging services Livejournal.com and Blogger.com, Mambo is designed so that even

novices can use it.

"I have no absolutely no background or skill level for technology, and I can go in, create a Web page and update it," Dearmin said.

Even with the cubes, fliers, listservs and Pit-sits, it's often difficult for students to find out specific information about all the activities on campus.

Laabs echoed the sentiment that a program like Mambo would be a helpful tool in alerting students to the bevy of events happening every week.

"There's huge amounts of things going on on UNC's campus, but the most likely time to find out about them is the day after when someone who actually heard about it told you how great it was," he said.

One of the features of Mambo is that it's able to publish news and events that students post on their Web sites as real simple syndication feeds. Those feeds allow the posts to be automatically e-mailed to other group members.

That feature also means that when a group updates its own personal calendar, the information is automatically collected into a larger calendar. The main calendar will be searchable by date, event or organization, he said.

"Essentially, the most effective campus calendar that can be created," Dearmin said.

Laabs said he thinks students will want to use Mambo because it offers so many useful features.

"Mambo is more effective than a listserv because it keeps records of everything that is posted on the Web site."

He also said the software supports public and private sections, so groups can post content that the public can access easily, as well as a private section that group members can use to plan and organize. According to Payst, the program

will encourage student groups that moved away from UNC's web services in order to host their own sites to return to the University's online community.

"The largest sites were finding that the University didn't support their needs and were going outside," he said.

"Now what the office of the vice chancellor is trying to do is provide those supports and encouraging student organizations to come back in to the University URL."

Payst said that Mambo also makes it easy for groups that already have a Web site to move their information over to a site powered by the software.

"It used to take six months for me to turn around a new departmental site ... now I can redesign a Web site in an afternoon."

Though there is no set date for the launching of the initiative, Payst and Dearmin both said it should be ready to go soon.

Jon Curtis, assistant director for student activities and organizations, said that after all the student groups are officially recognized for the 2005-06 year and the equipment is in place to offer Mambo to students, postcards will be sent out with information about the program. Sept. 23 is the deadline for all groups filing for recognition.

So while the kinks are worked out and the planning approaches its final stages, Dearmin said he is awaiting the launch of what he hopes will be a powerful tool to unite students on campus.

"This fits into the broader goal of facilitation of student government, and working with other student organizations to provide leadership ... and to make campus events a more collaborative effort on the whole."

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

All services are free & confidential
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