

MUSIC SHORTS

BIIRDIE



CATHERINE AVENUE
POP/ROCK

★★★★★

Combining refrains more massive than the Los Angeles hills with hooks as sunny as a Southern California summer, Biirdie is a band that exudes California.

The band's debut LP, *Catherine Avenue*, is essentially an ode to the Golden State, inserting innumerable geographic references in the lyrics.

But the more interesting references come in the instrumentation. The band combines surf rock with Bakersfield country in a way that makes the band's influences immediately recognizable. Biirdie is never able to rise above them, and that's OK.

The band knows it won't be The Byrds or The Beach Boys, but it still manages to create an enjoyable record, proving once again that it never rains in Southern California.

-Jamie Williams

said you needed physical therapy/Keep it in mind when you give me the extra key."

Overtly sexual innuendos throughout the album, making it a laugh from start to finish.

It's impossible not to snicker when hearing lines like "Wanna see me flex?/Then put me in your Rolodex."

P.D.A. wasn't meant to be a novelty album, but it was meant to be fun.

Some of the weakest moments, however, come when the laughs fall stale, and the duo ends up sounding more like a has-been '90s boy band with breathy, exaggerated sighs.

But those moments are few, and this album will bring anyone to the dance floor — its ultimate intention in the first place.

-Melissa Brown

THE AUDITION



CHAMPION
ROCK

★★★★★

On its sophomore LP, *Champion*, Chicago pop/rock outfit The Audition tries hard to please.

So hard, in fact, that it becomes downright painful.

Combining blatant Warped Tour copycat-ism with backwards post-grunge mentalities, the group tries to paste together as many drab elements of Top 40 rock as it can.

It's as if each song on the record was made in a process like this:

Well, who's popular right now? Fall Out Boy? Daughtry? OK, let's make a song that sounds like Daughtry singing Fall Out Boy.

Champion isn't just unoriginal but so obvious in its theft of other artists' techniques that listeners are likely to wonder why the band hasn't been arrested for copyright infringement.

Indeed, the only thing the record could be good for would be as evidence in The Audition's plagiarism trial.

-Jordan Lawrence

HEY WILLPOWER



P.D.A.
POP

★★★★★

The bizarre and cheeky Hey Willpower's full-length debut *P.D.A.* brings back electro-pop better than Justin brought back sexy.

The duo of Will Schwartz (Imperial Teen) and Tomo Yasuda (Tussle) creates a uniquely pleasurable album with a "dance now, think later" attitude that shines in mischievous lyrics, such as "You

'Money' steals viewers' time and cash

BY RACHAEL OEHRING

STAFF WRITER

"Mad Money" is the story of Diane Keaton, Queen Latifah and Katie Holmes and how they "beat the system" by stealing out-of-circulation money set to be shredded from the Federal Reserve bank where they work.

Too bad it feels more like your money has been stolen instead.

As unfunny as it is uninspired, "Mad Money" tries to teach us all a lesson about how even though the economy kinda sucks right now, we should all work real hard and not resort to crime to solve all our money problems. Aw, shucks.

Though, to its credit, the movie does skim some real issues which have yet to be explored in the movie realm. It is nice to see that Hollywood does realize that things like layoffs exist and that rich people are suddenly becoming poor.

But it's also a little offensive that we're supposed to feel sorry for upper-crust Diane Keaton and the fact that she has to bite the bullet and get a crappy job as a janitor at the Federal Reserve bank in order to get health insurance benefits after her husband gets laid off. Wow, people doing what they need to do to survive! Where is this lady's medal of honor?

Instead of changing her lifestyle to match her income, this insipid woman decides to steal millions of dollars and rope two other perfectly honest people into her ridiculous scheme in order to maintain a way of life that few viewers of the movie will sympathize with.

If this movie had followed the British example and been released as a made-for-TV movie, it might be slightly more forgivable, but putting it in wide release just seems like such a waste of money and of

MOVIE REVIEW

MAD MONEY

☆☆☆☆☆

the time of everyone involved.

Keaton and Latifah play caricatures of the same people they've always played. Keaton, a shrill, neurotic upper-middle class woman.

Only this time she plays the voice of recklessness instead of the voice of reason. So she's a shrill, neurotic, reckless upper-middle class woman this time.

Latifah plays the same sassy, strong-willed lady she always plays. Granted, it's never bad to see strong-willed ladies on-screen, but at this point it seems to be a shell she applies before going on camera, and even she seems bored with all the saucy quips she's forced to spout endlessly.

The real problem lies within Holmes. Not in her performance, really, just in her presence.

She's become such a tabloid fixture, and her marriage to Tom Cruise such a curiosity, that her performance (if you can call it that) is completely overshadowed by the cognitive dissonance of seeing her on Letterman with her bobbed hair and baby, trying to act like an articulate

grown-up, and then in this crappiest with her tacked-on baby voice and retardo-innocence, skimming over lines because she's probably too busy wondering what Tom thinks.

It's supposed to be three glowing actresses in the prime of their second-wind careers in a fun lady crime caper. Instead, you're hyper-aware that you're watching Queen Latifah, Diane Keaton and Katie Holmes go through the motions of some crappy morality play on the middle-class crunch (or upper-middle class, in Keaton's case).

The movie is without any substantial action, plot or otherwise, and every joke falls flat before it's even beamed out to the audience to be groaningly accepted and forgotten.

The only message here is that the economy sucks and everyone is suffering. Well, duh. Everyone's aware of that every time they cash their paychecks or try to get a sub-prime mortgage.

A bank-robbery-lite "comedy" with no real message and three actresses all but phoning it in is not going to make people any happier that they're struggling and that they just wasted their hard-earned money to see a terrible movie.

Contact the Diversions Editor at dive@unc.edu

LIFE OF THE PARTY



DTH/BRYAN REED

Chapel Hill indie-rock foursome The Honored Guests rocked Cat's Cradle in support of The Rosebuds with its textured rock sound, providing a welcome treat for those who made it out early. By injecting energy and emotion into its songs, THG outshone the headliners at times.

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