

BOMBADIL: START WITH SPARKLERS

Bombadil might share its name with a lesser-known "Lord of the Rings" character, but the eclectic band's engaging on-stage antics and rising-star status are far from fictional.

After a lunchtime set at Chapel Hill High School, the entire group sat down with staff writer Edwin Arnaud to talk about Tolkien, cinema love and nose flutes.

Diversions: I have to know, how into Tolkien are you guys?

Daniel Michalak: We are not into Tolkien. I guess we're not against Tolkien, we just — none of us have read the books.

We had a good friend who was also kind of our manager at the time who really loved Tolkien and thought we sounded like either music that Tom Bombadil would play or just the embodiment of Tom Bombadil, and we liked the word Bombadil, so the name stuck.

Stuart Robinson: This might be offensive to true die-hard Tolkien fans, but I was never really into Tolkien.

But then I watched all of the "Lord of the Rings" movies, back-to-back, and I made it through, and it wasn't terrible and it was actually pretty enjoyable, except the last 20 minutes, which were just uneventful and sort of dreadful, but I had a great time.

Dive: For those who have seen the film, were you guys a little ticked off that Tom Bombadil was not included in the films?

Stuart: Well, no. I didn't know who Tom Bombadil was when I watched the movies.

Bryan Rahija: I kind of like him being on the down-low.

The whole point of Bombadil to me is he's this mysterious guy who's in the woods, and he appears once and he's gone, and they're like, "Who's that and why was he here?" and the fact that he's not in the movies, I think sort of perpetuates that mystery about him, and I think it's truer to his character for him not to be in the movie.

James Phillips: What Bryan's trying to say is that it gives us indie street cred. (Everyone laughs.) This is me showing my glasses up my nose.

Bryan: I had, like, an emotional experience when I was watching the third movie, in the fight when the dude, the elf guy, slides down the elephant and, like, shoots some guy, and, yeah — I really dug the movies.

Dive: That was inspirational.

Stuart: What about when he grabs the harness and swings up backwards?

Bryan: Oh, yeah!

Stuart: And does a triple backflip and hits someone in the eye in the same breath?

James: We should take that one (on the road).

Stuart: I'm ready to watch them again. (Everyone laughs.) Twelve hours is not long enough.

Dive: Are there any other literary works that are key to the band, or any authors, fantasy or not?

Bryan: Let's see. We just passed around a copy of "All the King's Men." James and Daniel and I read it, and Stuart's partway through it, I guess. That's a really fun book, I

thought.

Dive: I know you play a lot of different instruments all through your sets. Are there any instruments that you plan to add to the Bombadil set?

James: Hold on. (Reaches into his pocket, produces a small orange piece of plastic, inserts its ends into his nose and mouth and plays a whistle.)

Dive: Nose flute?

James: Oh yeah!

Dive: Nice! (All laugh.)

Stuart: Good work, James!

Daniel: You should tell him about your other recent acquisition.

James: What, the, uh, tenor recorder? Oh yeah, we just started a new song, and I'm playing the tenor recorder on it. The tenor recorder is a very large recorder.

James and Bryan: A man's recorder.

Stuart: I've heard people say you shouldn't have regrets, but one of my biggest regrets is not buying a little steel drum that we saw in Florida.

Dive: Are there any instru-

ments that you think will never make it? I mean, never say never, but any instruments that you think might not exactly mesh with the Bombadil sound?

James: Bryan hates the melodica.

Bryan: Yeah, I do not like the melodica. But I made amends with the saxophone. And I used to really hate the saxophone, but I'm friendly with the saxophone now.

But the melodica — we're still kind of eyeing each other from across the room. I don't know if anyone else has any enemies in the music world.

Daniel: I don't really like the mandolin that much. We're not really enemies, just not my type of person.

Dive: Perfectly understandable.

Stuart: I can't think of anything. In terms of instruments I wouldn't want to use, all I can think of are, like, cannons? But I would definitely want to use cannons, so, I don't know how to think about this question.

James: Cannons would be really cool.



DTHALLIE MULLIN

Bombadil, the quirky quartet from Durham, will celebrate the release of its debut full-length, *A Buzz, A Buzz*, Friday night at Cat's Cradle.

Dive: Like, "1812 Overture" type cannons?

Stuart: Yeah! (Emulates an exploding cannon.)

Dive: Yeah, that could add some pep right there.

Stuart: That'd make me

happy.

Bryan: That's an idea right there! (Everyone laughs.)

Stuart: We can start with sparklers.

Contact the Diversions Editor at dive@unc.edu.

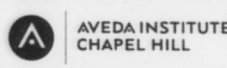


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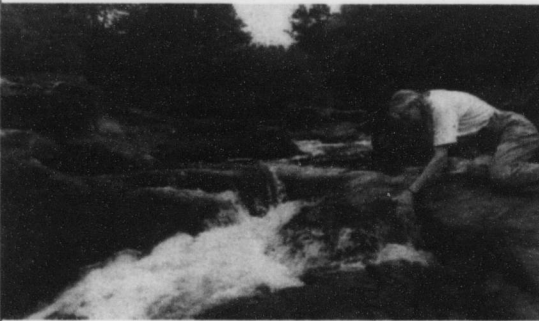
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