

Silver Jews fail to grab attention

BY JAMIE WILLIAMS
SENIOR WRITER

David Berman is known as the type of songwriter capable of crafting songs that stick around long after first listen.

Not that they are melodically catchy or anything like that — quite the opposite, actually — Berman just writes songs that grab your attention.

With his band Silver Jews, Berman has penned some of the most interesting declarations in indie rock.

He famously opened 1998's *American Water* with the line, "I was hospitalized in 1984 for approaching perfection."

And while The Joos' latest, *Lookout Mountain, Lookout Sea*, never comes close to the truly perfect *American Water*, it does have its moments, flashes of lyrical brilliance that help cement Berman's place alongside John Darnielle and Dan Bejar as one of the most creative and innovative songwriters of his time.

But, for all of those gems, there are just too many throw-away songs. And while I wouldn't pretend to be qualified to offer writing suggestions for Berman, it seems a bit of self-editing would have greatly benefitted the record.

Opening track "What Is Not But Could Be If" was a strange choice to kick off the album, offering nothing close to the memorable "Random Rules" from *American Water*.

In many ways, the song just meanders along, offering a bit of pace but none of the quote-ables that make up Berman's canon.

The band does its best to get

MUSICREVIEW

SILVER JEWS
LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, LOOKOUT SEA
FOLK/ROCK



on track with "Aloysius Bluegrass Drummer," which sounds like Berman's take on "Devil Went Down to Georgia."

The record doesn't truly hit its stride, though, until "Strange Victory, Stange Defeat," a song on which Berman wonders aloud, "What's with all the handsome grandsons in these rock band magazines?/And what have they done with the fat ones, the bald and the goateed?"

That's more like what we've come to expect; it just takes a bit long — five tracks — to get there.

Maybe the amount of less than stellar tracks around it makes the album's highlight, "San Francisco B.C.," stand out even more.

It's a tale of young love, told in a way only Berman is capable of.

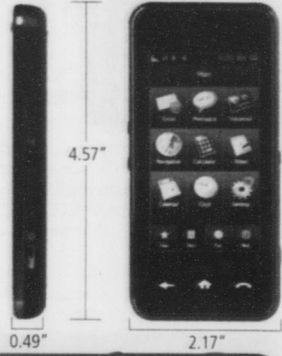
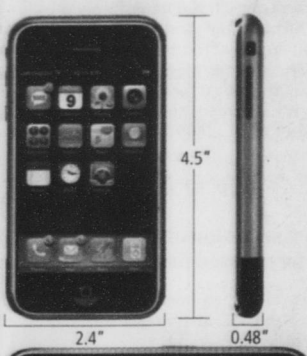
"Romance is the douche of the bourgeoisie was the very first thing she imparted to me," is the sort of couplet that catches the listener off-guard and makes up for some of the record's nonsensical junk.

In the end, *Lookout Mountain, Lookout Sea* is the type of record that hard-core fans will appreciate, due to the rarity of Silver Jews releases. And it certainly deserves a place alongside the band's other works, just nowhere close to the front of the line.

Contact the Diversions Editor at dive@unc.edu

Is the Instinct Really an iPhone Killer?

With the recent release of Sprint's Samsung Instinct, experts still have mixed reviews on its status as an iPhone killer. The Daily Tar Heel lets you decide.

Samsung Instinct Released June 20	VS	Apple iPhone 3G Will Release July 11
 <p>4.57" 0.49" 2.17"</p>	<p>Cost • Instinct Wins Through two years, the iPhone 3G will cost \$160 more than the original iPhone (due to the increased service plan price from AT&T) and \$200 more than the Instinct because of Sprint's unlimited plan.</p> <p>Design/Display • iPhone Wins Although the 3G is a little bulkier (4.7oz), the Instinct (4.4oz) has two-thirds as many pixels as the iPhone, which means it displays less information with limited display colors.</p> <p>Phone Calls • iPhone Wins The quality of the Sprint network is poorer than AT&T's. Sprint's network is not compatible with the dominant network standard overseas, while AT&T's network allows the iPhone to roam in more than 170 countries.</p> <p>Internet • iPhone Wins The Instinct's EVDO technology might be faster than the iPhone's EDGE, but the iPhone has a cleaner, easier navigation. Plus, the Instinct doesn't have Wi-Fi capabilities.</p> <p>GPS • Instinct Wins If you have a tendency of getting really lost, the Instinct's turn-by-turn feature will help you out much more than the iPhone's geotag photo application or Google Maps.</p> <p>Live TV/Video • Instinct Wins The Instinct can stream 30-plus live TV channels and shoots video, while the iPhone cannot.</p> <p>Music • Instinct Wins The iPhone only allows you to download music through a Wi-Fi connection, but the Instinct lets you download through any wireless network.</p>	 <p>4.5" 2.4" 0.48"</p>
SOURCE: USER REPORTS		DTH/BLISS PIERCE

'WALL-E' melts hearts, even metal ones

BY RACHAEL OEHRING
STAFF WRITER

After the barrage of "Shreks," "Madagascars" and myriad other animated movies featuring talking bees and sharks, Pixar is back with its newest animated offering, "WALL-E," to show DreamWorks who's boss.

Instead of ridiculous fast-talking insects making dumb jokes that entertain neither adult nor child, robots rule in this movie, namely WALL-E, a sad-eyed trash compactor that's the last robot left on an abandoned Earth.

Set in that not-so-distant future of all impending cautionary tales, Earth is an abandoned trash heap, populated solely by roaches and robots left to make some order out of the piles of corporate waste.

WALL-E is virtually the only being left on Earth, a quirky, "Hello Dolly"-watching machine whose monotonous trash-collecting life is changed forever when another robot, EVE (whose sleek, white, futuristic appearance is conspicuously reminiscent of a certain computer company's products), touches down looking for signs of biological life.

The complete lack of dialogue leaves little room for quick-to-stale pop-culture jokes, but the blips and beeps of the robots convey more sweetness and affection than any wisecracking donkey ever could.

It's sad that a couple of animated robots end up being the most sympathetic characters put on film so far this year.

Disney also pulls out all the stops on the animation. Shots of robots dancing around in outer space and a New York City where the piles of garbage are taller than

MOVIE REVIEW

WALL-E



the Empire State Building are quite breathtaking.

The animation is so seamless that you don't even notice when Fred Willard, playing the CEO of the long-ago global conglomerate, pops up on-screen in all his non-animated glory.

The soundtrack, filled with gorgeous orchestrations and sweet show tunes, subtly evokes a time in the past when we were all mesmerized by the thought of space travel, and all Earth's problems could be solved by colonizing outer space.

The movie, with its gentle message about being grateful for the beauty of our Earth and taking care of it while we have the chance, is digestible for even the youngest viewer in the audience.

Just like its classic predecessors, such as "Toy Story" and "Finding Nemo," "WALL-E" manages to be family friendly while injecting the

perfect amount of heart. While children will be mesmerized by the robots and spaceships, adults will appreciate the universal themes of friendship, loyalty and even love. Instead of pandering to certain target demographics with inappropriate jokes, "WALL-E" aims to tell a story, and it succeeds in a beautiful, visually arresting way.

"WALL-E" is so sweet, it's painful, but only in the best way. A charming oasis in the vast desert of modern animation, "WALL-E" brings personality and humor to a movie about hunks of metal.

Contact the Diversions editor at dive@unc.edu

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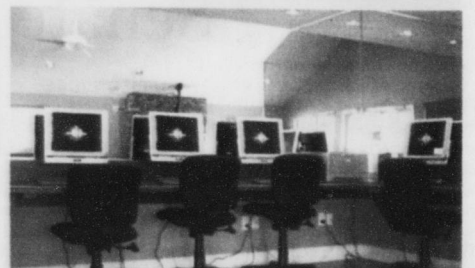
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- ★★★ GOOD
- ★★★★ EXCELLENT
- ★★★★★ CLASSIC

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