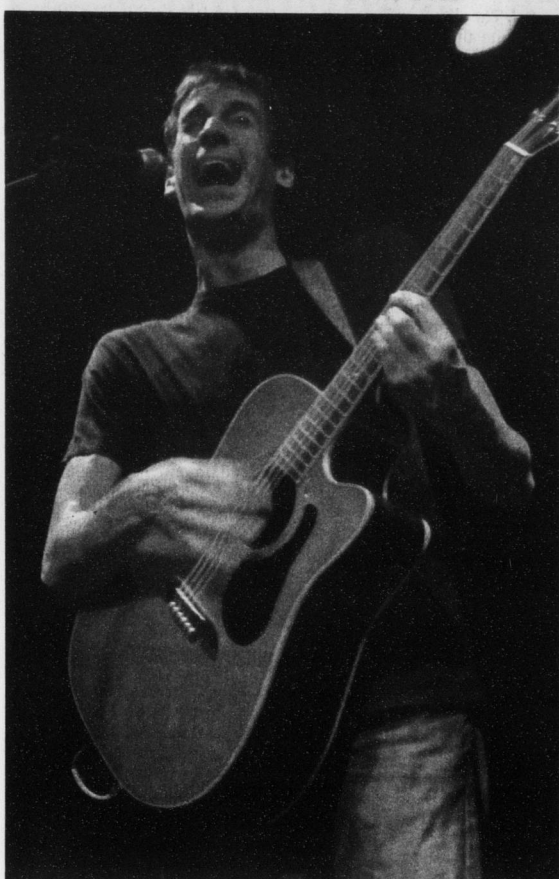


A TOP THE THRONE



DTH/JORDAN LAWRENCE

Lead singer Shayne O'Neill of Durham's regal "acoustic-core" champs The Future Kings of Nowhere spits out his lines at machine-gun pace during a performance at Local 506 last Wednesday. O'Neill and the rest of the trio opened the show before a set from Knoxville's Tenderhooks.

MOVIESHORTS
PRIDE AND GLORY

★★★★☆
In an interview, Declan Quinn, cinematographer for "Pride and Glory," talked about the difficulties of making the film unique, and not like "something we've seen a hundred times before."

Unfortunately, "Pride and Glory" is indistinguishable from all the subpar police thrillers already in existence.

Edward Norton stars as Ray Tierney, a top detective who is assigned to investigate the shooting of four officers following an attempted raid on a drug house. He runs into trouble when he discovers that the officers, under the command of his brother Francis (Noah Emmerich), might have been corrupt.

Cue the basic cop movie clichés: moral codes are tested, family ties are strained, and Norton smolders with generic intensity.

The dialogue is laughable and the action is over the top. There are no fewer than three accidentally hilarious scenes in which characters have emotionally-charged arguments in public bathrooms, flinging accusations and knocking things over.

The usually-reliable Norton sleepwalks through his performance, as if defeated by the hammy lines he's forced to spout. Jon Voight and Colin Farrell aren't bad, but fail to turn in outstanding performances.

The best turn comes from Emmerich, who emerges as perhaps the only likeable character, certainly the only one who is fun to watch.

"Pride and Glory" isn't a taut drama, but it refuses to descend entirely into the realm of camp cinema. Instead it hovers in some sort of entertainment purgatory, disappointing those looking for dramatic thrills as well as those just hoping for some flashy shootouts.

-Mark Niegelsky

A GIRL CUT IN TWO

★★★★☆
With "A Girl Cut in Two" French director Claude Chabrol uses the talents of François Berléand and the looks of Ludivine Sagnier in a somewhat successful attempt to bring a dark, saucy drama to the screen.

Sagnier plays Gabrielle Deneige, a young TV weather girl caught in a love triangle with a famous author, who's older than the girl's mother, and a young aristocrat who spends his time wasting the family fortune.

What has made Chabrol so successful in previous films is his commitment to suspense.

"A Girl Cut in Two," however, can't decide if it's a suspenseful drama or a soap opera.

Chabrol does well portraying Deneige's painful loss of innocence, and Sagnier carries herself well. But the vastly important supporting roles in the film oscillate between caricatures and question marks.

Rather than creating suspense, Chabrol often fails to instill necessary characterization in some of the film's most critical roles.

While "A Girl Cut in Two" is intriguing and often satisfyingly shocking, the lack of strong characters makes it difficult to come away with any consistent understanding of anyone in the film.

After all, if you're going to watch a soap opera, the point is to love or hate each character, or at least know enough about them so that you can decide between the two.

-David Bergart

high schooler. No one watches these things for documentary value anyway, though, so no big deal. Right?

Unfortunately, "Senior Year" just happens to fantasize about the most clichéd and cinematically misunderstood time in high school.

"Tweenboppers" will eat it up, of course, but anyone who has actually been a high school senior will have a hard time stomaching the mood of melancholy running through the whole movie.

If senior year is "the last chance to get it right," as one of the many mediocre musical numbers says, then why are most real high school seniors less interested in getting it right, and more interested in getting it over with?

As always, the real-life circumstances surrounding the production are more interesting than the money-grubbing myth-making going on in the actual song and dance.

The possible return of Vanessa Hudgens in the role of Gabriella was complicated for a while after a scandal involving some nude photos she took of herself that were leaked on the Internet last year, a nagging misfortune that's probably more common to high school life than the problems facing Zac Efron's character Troy (picking between a basketball scholarship at a jock school or a music scholarship at Juilliard).

The tension that this back-ground provides the movie is interesting enough to merit a star. But unless you're a middle schooler, that's about it.

-Jonathan Pattishall

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 3: SENIOR YEAR

★★★★☆
It goes without saying: as a Disney production, the third and final installment of the High School Musical trilogy engages in wholesale fantasy about what it means to be a

SAW V

★★★★☆
There is a list of movies somewhere, a list of the best pieces of cinema ever produced by man or beast, a list that includes such undeniable classics as "The Godfather," "Casablanca," and "A

Streetcar Named Desire."

Let me tell you, "Saw V" belongs on that list, without question.

This is, quite simply, a stunning and inspired piece of filmmaking. The level of nuance displayed by both the director and the young men and women that ... I'm sorry.

There are bad movies, and then there are really bad movies, and then there's "Gigli."

Only after you get past that one do you arrive at "Saw V." And "Saw I-IV." My god.

I'm not going to discuss the actors, or the director, or any of the other things that people read movie reviews for, because they don't matter.

Chances are, if you want to see "Saw V," what I say about it won't matter to you.

This movie is so bad that I couldn't finish it. This movie is so bad that Dick Cheney tried to use it against suspected terrorists. This movie is so bad it made the entire A-Team cry, including Mr. T.

In a nutshell, this is a snuff film. It's the kind of movie you see when you want your date to cling to you extra tight or if you're so supremely bored that watching people get torn asunder by ridiculously complicated death traps actually sounds like fun.

A bit of advice: Save your time and your money. Go eat a sandwich or something.

-Evan Hughes

STAR SYSTEM

- ★ POOR
- ★★ FAIR
- ★★★ GOOD
- ★★★★ EXCELLENT
- ★★★★★ CLASSIC

DIVESTAFF

- Jamie Williams, Editor
843-4529 | dive@unc.edu
- Jordan Lawrence, Assistant Editor
- David Bergart, Rachel Arnett,
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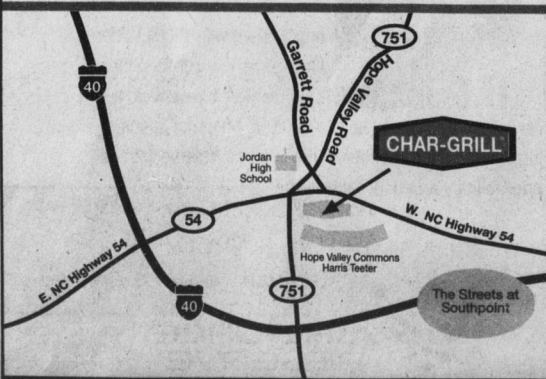
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