

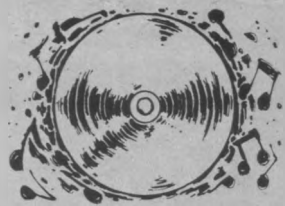
TWO VIEWS OF NEW NIN ON PAGE 2A

ARTS WEEK

The Arts and Entertainment Supplement to the Daily Nexus, For the Week of March 31-April 6, 1994.



A NEW DISTRIBUTION DEAL AS PART OF THE HOOPLA SURROUNDING THE TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF CREATION RECORDS WILL MAKE GROUPS LIKE SLOWDIVE (PICTURED) MORE READILY AVAILABLE, SEE PAGE 4A



NAILS OF DESPAIR

TWO RUMINATIONS INTO TRENT'S NEW DOWNWARD SPIRAL



Nine Inch Nails
The Downward Spiral
Nothing/TVT/Interscope

The new album by NIN is a way cool breakthrough in the commodification of rage. Not since ABBA or Bon Jovi have we had such lovingly crafted pop music, every note and sound mechanically arranged and placed to evoke maximum emotional reaction from the listener. But whereas ABBA and Bon Jovi sterilized puppy love and hip boy rebellion for lyrical focus, NIN churns out efficient, maximized nihilistic disgust.

Remember limitless existential nausea, those tasty moments of infinite despair? Well now, with NIN's new album, you can feel that way at a moment's notice, on the tape deck driving to work as you grow old.

If that doesn't bother you, however, and all you want is a light diversion, then what we have here is an above-average pop album by someone who has absorbed the last fifteen years of experimental/

industrial music and can now masterfully spout the vocabulary back at us in the shape of three- to six-minute poppy poppy songs. It's good, I like it.

Track six, "Ruiner," remains a favorite, as does track 11, "Eraser," where he (Trent Reznor) screams "Kill me" over and over while the guitars go chug-gugga-chug. It's all very tasteful, every retching noise placed just so. An impressive piece of work.

Expletive-free radio versions, shipped to KTYD the week of release, point toward the transition to be made from basic heavy metal grunge to cyberscape techno-angsty culture, dude. The common denominator is still there: What 14-year old won't relate to Trent singin' "Don't you tell me how to feel?" over loud drums? Make no mistake, though, this record is a breakthrough; pop music has never been quite this noisy before. Cathartic anger, brought to you way quick by the N&N Music Factory. Turn it up and have an American beer.

—Jon Leidecker

Nine Inch Nails
The Downward Spiral
Nothing/TVT/Interscope

First there was a *Pretty Hate Machine*. Then it was *Broken* (and subsequently *Fixed*). But now it continues the *Downward Spiral*. This is the third album release from Nine Inch Nails, aka Trent Reznor.

Once again, Trent, one of the master manipulators of mechanical mayhem, has outdone himself. The hype began when word got out that the album was being recorded at Sharon Tate's house in Bel Air, where the Manson cult murders took place. The television show "Hard Copy" even covered the location choice. Hype and fond memories of prior albums have made this a long-awaited release.

The Downward Spiral contains an excellent variety of tracks, from the intensely angry "march of the pigs" and "Big Man with a Gun" to the soothing sonic landscape of "A Warm Place," which is absolutely unlike anything NIN has ever done. This

new album finds a happy medium between the highly mechanical *Pretty Hate Machine* and the more guitar-oriented *Broken*. Hard-hitting drums guide many of the tracks, like "Ruiner," through the pensive, dark and often distorted Reznor lyrics.

Trent shows his vocal prowess by incorporating a variety of lyrical styles, from Bono-esque, distorted crooning in the beginning of "Heresy" (which is not a Pantera cover) to his anger-filled screaming, found on almost all the tracks.

For fans of industrial music, and especially those of past NIN work, *The Downward Spiral* is an absolute must. Trent Reznor's "never settle" attitude, combined with his innovative and experimental musical capabilities, makes for an awesome album. As Trent says, "There are no constants, except maybe that I'll sing it." This is how *The Downward Spiral* comes out when compared with his previous releases. Check it out.

—Pete Pistek

nine

nine

nine

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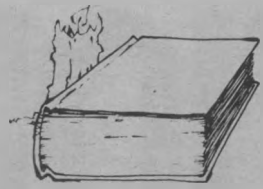
Warner Bros. Presents
A James G. Robinson Presentation A Morgan Creek Production A David S. Ward Film Charlie Sheen Tom Berenger Major League II Corbin Bernsen Dennis Haysbert James Gammon Omar Epps Eric Bruskotter Bob Uecker David Keith Alison Doody Michelle Burke Takaoaki Ishibashi And Margaret Whitten Music by Michel Colombier Film Editor Paul Seydor And Donn Cambren, A.C.E. Director of Photography Victor Hammer Production Designer Stephen Hendrickson Executive Producer Gary Barber Story by R.J. Stewart And Tom S. Parker & Jim Jennewein Screenplay by R.J. Stewart

MPAA PARENTAL STRONG CAUTION: Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 17

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Where to Eat, Drink & Make Merry?

You'll find out in the *Weekend Connection*, this Friday in the Daily Nexus.



YIPPIE!

Arch-prankster and fly in the political soup Abbie Hoffman was a counter-culture icon to some and a flamboyant pain in the ass to others. To Marty Jezer, a fellow traveller in the civil rights and anti-war movements, he was a bit of both.

Jezer's book *Abbie Hoffman: American Rebel* is a critical celebration of Hoffman's political involvement and a sympathetic account of his personal struggle with manic depression.

A participant in many Yippie (Youth International Party) demonstrations, Jezer was also an editor of WIN, a radical pacifist magazine of the '60s, and a founding member of Total Loss Farm, a "back-to-the-land hippie commune." While Jezer lauds Abbie's ability to create television news through political theatre and his commitment to grassroots organizing, he also criticizes Hoffman's uncompromising position against the Democratic party, his use of violent rhetoric and his need to be the center of attention.

Citing such famous pranks as the New York Stock Exchange disruption, in which a group of Yippies stopped international trade for a few minutes by showering hundreds of one dollar bills from the observation deck onto a grasping mob of traders, the 1968 attempt to exorcise and levitate the

Pentagon, the 1968 Yippie election of a pig for president ("Pigasus ... the only honest candidate") and the Conspiracy Trial of the Chicago Eight — then Seven — Jezer demonstrates Abbie's synthesis of art and life, theatre and politics.

"Abbie starred in his own political theatre; he helped invent, in fact, what is now all too preten-



tiously called 'performance art,'" Jezer describes. "His theatre was for the street, however. Unlike today's artists, what he risked by inciting controversy was not a loss of federal funding but years in a federal jail."

This street activism is demonstrated in the chronology of Hoffman's movement activity. Starting as a civil rights worker and an affiliate of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Hoffman was a member of a

support group that sent student activists to the South during the 1963 Freedom Summer voter registration drive. He continued as an organizer in the SNCC, protesting the 1964 betrayal of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party at the Democratic National Convention, until the SNCC adopted its Black Power ideology. Upon moving to

New York, he began organizing in Bohemian sectors, opening the Yippie "Free Store" and politicizing hippie dropouts.

Jezer gives a sympathetic and readable account of Hoffman's activity in contemporary progressive movements. Portraying him not only as a shrewd political tactician and a prankster but also as a subject liable to make mistakes and revisions, he humanizes a character who has become a modern myth. —Chris Dunlap



DuckFishSoup

Ever since the success of "The Simpsons" on the FOX network, television executives and producers have been tripping over themselves to have the next big prime-time animated series. However, as the dismal failures of such experiments as "Capitol Critters," "Fish Police" and "Family Dog" have shown, producing an animated series aimed for adults is easier said than done. More recent attempts have shown more promise, specifically ABC's "The Critic," now temporarily on hiatus, and the newest entrant into televised animation, "Duckman," airing Saturdays at 10:30 p.m. on the USA Network.

Produced by Klasky-Csupo, the same animation company behind "The Simpsons," "Duckman" combines the private detective genre with the traditional television sitcom format, with plenty of Simpsonsque cartoon-style wackiness thrown in for good measure. Based on Everett Peck's comic strip, the series features a hapless duck P.I., struggling to keep his business afloat while contending with his bizarre family, infuriating co-

workers and his own utter incompetence at the detective business.

"Duckman" boasts an unusual company of actors providing voices for the characters. Duckman himself is played by Jason Alexander, best known as the luckless schmuck George Costanza on the hit series "Seinfeld." Bernice, Duckman's sister-in-law and nemesis about the house, is voiced by Nancy Travis, seen in such movies as *The Vanishing*, *Greedy* and the perhaps better left forgotten *So I Married an Axe Murderer*. Dweezil Zappa plays Ajax, Duckman's dimwitted son, and Tim Curry of *Rocky Horror Picture Show* fame has a recurring role as King Chicken, Duckman's archenemy.

From the looks of the first couple of episodes, "Duckman" has a better chance of surviving the prime-time animation curse than any of the others did. The scripts are tightly written with an eye for what works in the animation format, unlike, say, the endless fish puns in the horrendous "Fish Police" series of a couple years back.

—Scott Tipton

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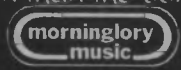
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hope y'all had a great time. i also hope that your skins are beginning to peel. go ahead and scratch! it feels so good! well, congrats go to Kevin for correctly answering our trivia question. for those of you who remember it, Louis Réard, the designer of the bikini, wanted his creation to command media attention when it came out on July 5, 1946. four days before, the united states began peacetime nuclear testing on the chain of islands in the pacific known as the Bikini Atoll. thus the explosive two piece was named after the name on everyone's lips. funny how the swimsuit created more concern & condemnation than the bomb itself! oh yeah! thanx to  for providing our prizes and for supporting the local music scene- peace!

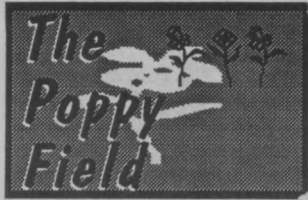


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THE CREATION

six pieces of the alan

The gap between talent and record store selection just got a little smaller. As part of the hoopla surrounding the ten-year anniversary of England's Creation Records, Glaswegian label boss Alan McGee has signed a deal with TriStar music (a division of Sony), which means that lots and lots of formerly unavailable Creation records will be in the shops.

Creation began in 1984, with 7-inch singles that jangled and popped on the way to a place of reverence. The Jesus and Mary Chain had an early single in this period. Primal Scream was born in these days, before Bobby Gillespie took E and became a psychedelic-dance godhead (and Jim Beattie went to 4AD's Spirea X), and so were the Weather Prophets, the Jasmine Minks, and McGee's band, Biff Bang Pow!

Since the jangling days, Creation has rocketed listeners with amazing music



left and right. Easily the most influential was the My Bloody Valentine album *Loveless*, which layered ecstasy noise on the anchor of a clean vocal. Seriously warped, dangerously beautiful, the influence of *Loveless* created an orbit of bands and albums to follow.

Creation has been such a chunk of English pop that the list just goes on and on. From early material by the Jesus and Mary Chain, the House of Love, Momus, Nikki Sudden and others to Felt, MBV, Ride, Slowdive, Swervedriver, Moonshake, the Telescopes, Medicine, Sugar, Teenage Fanclub, the Boo Radleys and the Jazz Butcher. This is the legacy that the TriStar deal is going to bring to us, beginning with a Jazz Butcher album and a reissue of the Telescopes. What follows are some individual views of a piece of that legacy:

My Bloody Valentine by Miz E.

This is about the ones who left the relatively safe home of Creation Records for the uncertainty of far distant horizons out in the wide, bad world. This is about My Bloody Valentine and their children.

After a series of misguided mini-albums and EPs on smaller British labels like Lazy, Kaleidoscope and Fever Records, My Bloody Valentine released *Isn't Anything* on Creation in 1989. It changed the face of "alternative" pop music for the next four years. *Isn't Anything* was sloppy, poorly produced and brilliant. It contained songs like "All I Need" and "Feed Me With Your Kiss" — sugarblown pop noise suffocating beneath feedback-laden, crunching guitar scree and pounding drums. The album was taken to heart by millions of British and American teenagers. Kevin Shields couldn't sing, so he mumbled, and Bilinda Butcher's voice barely rose above a self-conscious whisper. It wasn't that they didn't want you to hear what they were singing; it was just that the Valentines would rather concentrate on their sound, on experimenting with their electric guitars. *Isn't Anything* was an unrealized epic. It took the kids who heard it — who used that sound inspiration as a comparison, a blueprint for the music they would later create — to make us realize how important it was.

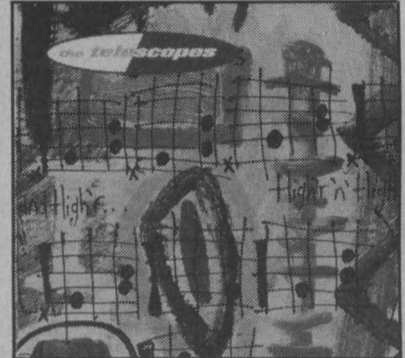
By 1990, some of the kids creating this music began to get noticed. People began referring to it as "dream pop," and My Bloody Valentine and Creation Records were on top of the cresting wave. Even 4AD, Creation's friendly rival in England, began signing less gothic and more guitar-based bands, like Lush and Pale Saints.

With the *Glider* and *Tremolo* EPs in



1990, the Valentines came closer to their miasmic magnum opus. There had always been a certain subversive sexuality to their sound — on "Slow," Kevin mumbles, "got the rush and I feel no shame/on

top of me and I don't even know your name." By the time they released their second Creation album, *Loveless*, in 1991, they had perfected it into a sensual, womblike atmosphere. The production was impeccable; everything glided in and out of itself. Everything was attached via an undulating umbilicus of carefully structured feedback that could sound like an underwater ham radio ("Touched") or a thousand butterflies on fire ("To Here Knows When"). By the time the album looped the hypnotic, pelvic-thrusting funky drummer backbeat of "Soon," the listener was ready for a prolonged sexual



release.

A million kids across the United States and the UK sighed in muted ecstasy. Bands like Lush, Chapterhouse, the Lilys and the Drop Nineteens gaped in awe as their mentors pushed the future one step further.

And then My Bloody Valentine left Creation Records. The two parted ways after a long struggle due to monetary difficulties, and the dreampop legacy began to collapse. Creation immediately began searching for a reasonable comparison, another band who could fill the need for ... *that sound*.

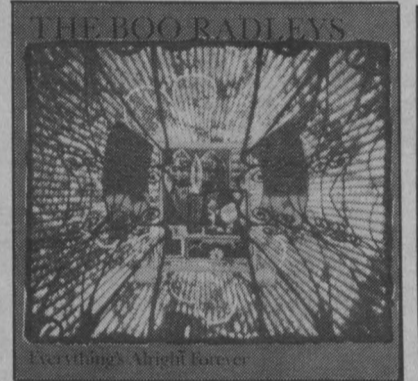
In 1990, they signed a little-known band named Slowdive, who took the Valentines' sound, leached of its sexuality, and created a more somber, oceanic swirl. Moonshake was found messing about in the studio in 1991. Creation signed them instantly, releasing the literally entitled *First EP* into the world — a slice of shivery, spastic My Bloody Valentine-isms so faithful to the "dreampop" sound that it garnered Moonshake and Creation the well-deserved title of "Best Bloody Imitation Of The Year."

In 1992, Creation signed an American band named Medicine who had succumbed to the "dreampop" phenomenon and become the Valentines' evil American twin. They took the Valentines' loopy aesthetic and scratched it with a scouring

pad. Where the former dreampop kings billowed and swooned, Medicine clanked bones together, threw in weed whackers, crickets, hurdy-gurdies, and anything else that would make a metallic sound. But Medicine couldn't hide behind their oh-so-familiar walls of futuristic grunge. They still had guy/girl vocals, weaving and oozing their way through the songs like so much plasma; they still had sticky-sweet pop songs hiding under all that noise.

Slowdive were the only ones that stayed. After plumbing the swirling depths of their sonic ocean, they have emerged into the more spacey territory of dub beats and ambient soundscapes on their new album, *Sowlaki*. Less important is the electric guitar; more important is the synthesized wash of sound.

Moonshake strayed from both Creation Records and their penchant for



creating dreampop after the release of that first EP. Like the Valentines, they cited a lack of fees and promotional interest as the reason they parted ways with the label.

And the Valentines ... ? Who can say what will happen to them? The last I heard, they were being courted by Island Records to put out an album. Creation Records has just made a distribution agreement with Tri-Star Music in America. Perhaps they will keep searching for the next My Bloody Valentine.

Ride and Slowdive by Radha Patel

Creation, being the fad-favoring label it boasts itself to be, tends to sponsor the elusively categorized, shoe-gazing young Brits to alternative stardom. In particular, Ride and Slowdive mastered dreamy guitar melodies, driving listeners to flock to their '91-'92 American tour. Ride's expertise consists of successfully marrying a catchy tune to tasteful ballerina lyrics. Their instrumentation provides for a simple sound that emphasizes each in-

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strument, extricating any effects of textured, extensively produced tracks.

For instance, Laurence Colbert's drumming is distinctly spotlighted in "dreams burn down" — pretty good for a former art student who began playing the drums only prior to creating the band. Though audience-shy, Ride have been successful crowd-pleasers. Currently, rumor has it they are due for a new release within the next few months.

Ride's opening group on their last North American tour was Slowdive, who, in contrast to Ride's simple instrumentation, layer colorful sounds, employing a sweet strumming rhythm. They strum away to create an ethereal aura, transforming anyone listening into a more relaxed state of mind. They're equipped with pleasant vocals, chanting what are probably great lyrics, if you could ever decipher them. All in all, Slowdive is a listening band, while Ride is a dancing band.

The Jesus and Mary Chain by Brian Pillsbury

The Jesus and Mary Chain are one of those bands that have used the *enfant terrible* image to make them known in the music world. Arrogant and aware of their possibilities is probably the best way to describe these brooding men who hail from the industrial wasteland of East Kilbride, Scotland.

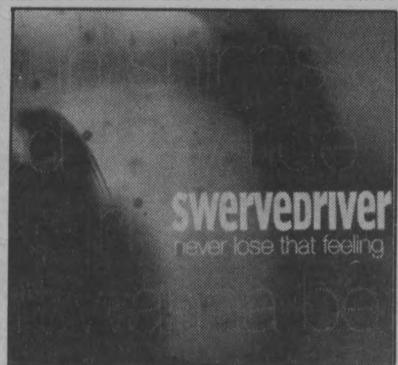
Brothers William and Jim Reid founded the group in the early 1980s, when many Scottish bands had long ago left their roots behind and were absorbed into the London music scene. The Reids describe themselves as too lazy to be rebels and discovered music as an alternative to their dead-end lives on the unem-

Hosted by Kevin Carhart

of the '80s. Playing live shows that usually clocked in at under 30 minutes, The Jesus and Mary Chain produced a sound that was likened to a chainsaw in a hurricane.

Widely criticized as pretentious brats who couldn't write a song, the band released the chillingly melodic *Darklands* as a follow-up to their brash debut album, *Psychocandy*. It had little of the whiplash and fury of *Psychocandy*, and instead allowed a flowing acoustic atmosphere to exist. The Jesus and Mary Chain have released four albums and several EPs since.

Showing that they could master the "wall of sound" of feedback made famous



by Jimi Hendrix, the band has matured but not lost the original elements that set them apart from others.

Jazz Butcher by Chris Dunlap

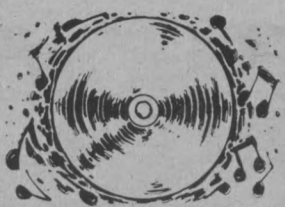
The Jazz Butcher ... Oh, Jazz Butcher! Lyrical drunk, witty bastard, silly-pop Star! And Max, melodic drunk, guitar maven! This is a band that likes to suffer for its art. David J, co-Bauhaus refugee with Peter Murphy, must have been schizo to perform with this exuberant, cleverly superfluous band. This is one of the most original and entertaining bands ever, goddammit!

Sugar by Brett Chapman

I first heard of Sugar when they played the Anaconda Theater last year. I went to the show to see opening band Throwing Muses, but came out with a new appreciation for the skills of Sugar frontman Bob Mould.

Soon after, I bought their first album, *Copper Blue*, and fell in love. The music is powerful, the lyrics are heartfelt, and anthems like "Helpless" never get boring.

Mould and the boys have also released several "short format albums," offering new listeners an inexpensive way to sample the band without forking out the money for a full CD. They deserve a spin.



CHOWFUL



The press kit for Rice and Beans is a detailed recipe that asks the reader to mix a few band members, like Fri Ri ("heavy fat chunky bass with sideburns. don't mess"), add Ohio Players' salt, simmer for eight years, wrap it in a George Clinton P. Funkadelic Brand all-corn tortilla, top with Cheech and Chong's tomatillo sauce and enjoy. The band being named after food and all, I thought, "Ha ha, pretty funny." Little did I know, these guys are serious.

I had only been talking with Soi Being, formerly Harold Lee of Los Guys, for two minutes when he began to give me cooking tips. "If you roast the rice, it comes out less greasy and more flavorful," he

said. "And don't soak the beans overnight." He admitted that they were all very good cooks, "Renowned chefs in our heads," and added, "We all have recipes!"

Not surprisingly, drummer Oscar Hermosillo ("James Bean") actually met Lee when they worked in the Ortega Dining Commons together. Who ever said nothing good came out of campus food?

Then there's the music. Mmmmm ... Mmmmm ... Guitar virtuoso Lee still rocks the chords he did for Los Guys, but the folk songs have been replaced by the heavy and funky sounds of Rice and Beans, who dish it out hard and loud. Bean Martin's fast rhymes are like rap on roll,

furious and swift. Definitely catch this cooked-up quartet before you have to pawn discs in order to pay for their bowl shows.

Rice and Beans have a busy April lying ahead, beginning with an April Fool's show at Dana, Jackie and Whitney's on 6798 Del Playa at 9:30 p.m. The rest of the month includes: 4/5: USC at 12:00; 4/7 and 4/10: Cat's Grill, San Francisco, at 9:30 p.m.; 4/15: Toe's Tavern at 9:30 p.m.; 4/16: Buster's at 9 p.m.; 4/25: Whiskey's Hollywood at 8:35 p.m.; 4/29: Mount San Antonio College at 4 p.m. For more information call the Rice and Beans hotline at 562-8664.

—Martin Boer

SMART SOUNDS

Crash Test Dummies God Shuffled His Feet Arista

Emerging from Canada, the Crash Test Dummies have gained recognition for their second album, *God Shuffled His Feet*. Prevailing throughout the album is an underlying theme of references to God and to individual people in their daily experiences and interactions with others.

The Crash Test Dummies make use of accordion, mandolin and harmonica among their array of instruments to create a free and easy compilation of correlative pieces.

Worth mentioning is the clever artistry de-

veloped on the album cover itself. Adopted from Titián's "Bacchus and Ariadne," the band members have been humorously incorporated into this classic painting.

The first single, "Mmm Mmm Mmm Mmm," is a difficult song to refer to without humming the catchy tune. Brad Roberts, songwriter and lead vocalist, uses his deep, largely monotone voice to describe the lives of three troubled and confused kids.

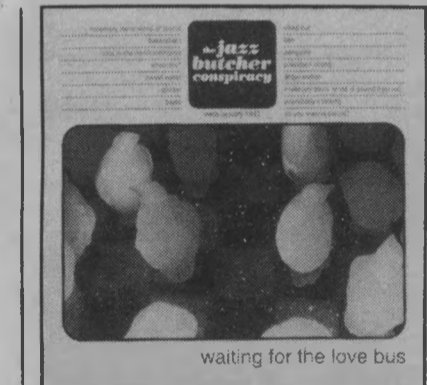
The title track, "God Shuffled His Feet," continues the unvaried vocal sounds and refers to the creation and God's interaction with human beings. This piece brilliantly fea-

tures the talents of Adrian Belew and his guitar synthesis.

"I Think I'll Disappear Now" again follows the general beat found in a majority of the tracks, and tells of an encounter with a possible ex-lover. Roberts describes the "aftertaste" experienced when someone is no longer around.

Ellen Reid, backing vocalist, complements Roberts in "The Psychic," a song about the past and future visions of one female telepath, as Roberts questions, "Would she keep it a secret if death stood before me?"

—Brenda Maxwell



ployment lines.

Known for their drenching guitar feedback and dark yet gently taunting harmonies, The Jesus and Mary Chain became one of the more notorious outsider bands

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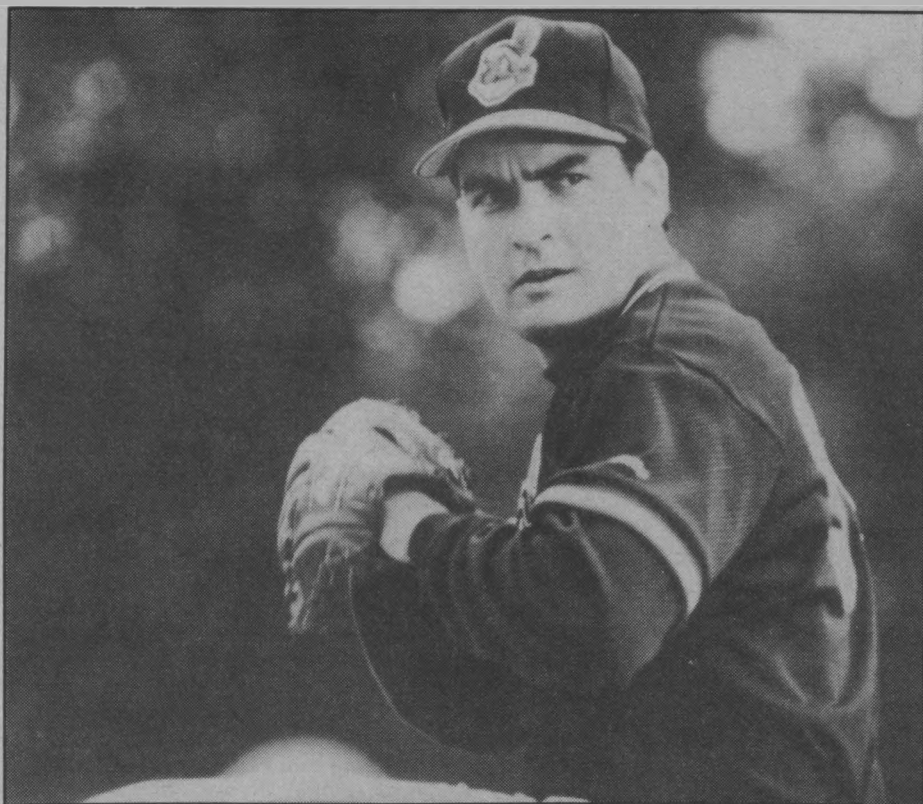
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Look, folks, a perfectly good tree died for the paper this is printed on, so I won't dilly-dally with unimportant details. Here's the deal: there has perhaps never been a movie sequel more heinous, more appalling, more completely unnecessary than *Major League II*.

Somebody should invent a thesaurus for movie reviewers that catalogs every poetic metaphor or bit of artful prose that has ever been used to slam a bad movie. That way, when a film as terrible as *Major League II* crawled hideously across the movie screens of America, nobody would be left spending hours trying to think of the perfect way to describe its stench. But I suppose such a volume has never truly been needed as much as it is for this stinker. Peeew!

I find nothing wrong with the idea of a sequel to the original 1989 hit about the crappy Cleveland Indians team that ends up in first place despite the owner's intent to ruin the team. True, the first *Major League* was a predictable yarn with the most tedious romance subplot since — well, ever. But it also had that kind of root-for-the-underdog charm that is, after all, the reason people go to see a sports movie. It was a good kind of predictable tedium.

And the acting in *ML2* is pretty good. Tom Berenger is solid as gimpy-kneed

catcher Jake Taylor, who can't play anymore but gets a chance to coach the team. Charlie Sheen turns in a respectable performance as Rick "Wild Thing" Vaughn, that ne'er-do-well ex-con who finds that it's not so easy being the rebel when you're making a million bucks and trying to land cereal endorsements. David Keith, whose acting credits include portrayals of Ollie North and Elvis, plays up the role of the two-dimensional designated villain nicely. Eric Bruskotter provides some wonderful comic relief as a country-boy rookie.

But if for some reason you think you might want to see this film, save yourself a few dollars and just rent the first one on video ... because they are the same movie! It's incredible to believe that a filmmaker would actually take a successful movie, change only the most superficial details, and package it as a sequel. But that's exactly what director David Ward has done with *Major League II*, which actually manages to lack the charm of its predecessor while being almost identical. The differences between the two movies are like the differences between a 1965 and 1966 Ford Mustang — very few and tough to pick out.

I wonder if even Charlie Sheen's career can survive this cinematic Titanic.

—Scott McPherson

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OMG A DAY'S WORK

Working for a newspaper is completely crazy, nothing short of ludicrous. No doubt about it. Riding the pulse of the media is a trip so twisted and thrashing that everything else falls by the wayside, be it one's family, friends or just good clean American fun. Just the other day a friend of mine, Doot, looking for a confidante, began telling a detailed story of some difficulties he was facing. I immediately realized the story potential and began thinking of a suitable nut graph, or how to go about writing it. Right as he got to the part where he had to go the hospital, I excused myself and rang my editor.

This psychotic drive into the depths of newsworld is depicted marvelously by Ron Howard in his hot and fast new media flick, *The Paper*. Those of you who thought *All the President's Men* or *The Front Page* captured print media's newsrooms are in for a surprise. Journalism is not about winning Pulitzer Prizes for Watergate, nor is it some comical farce. Instead, today's print media are actually a nervous and frantic pool of dysfunction that manages to throw in all the news that's fit to print, before deadline, under an inordinate onus of personal crisis, staff revolt, impossi-

ble sources and the ever-enraging egos everybody holds too dear. This is exactly the world embraced by the film's *New York Sun*, a *New York Post*-like tabloid, where the staff tries to produce a package of saleable sensation on a daily basis. At the center of this fraternity is Henry Hackett (Michael Keaton), the Sun's manic Metro editor extraordinaire, who tries to juggle urban tales rife with refuse with a job offer from the uppity *New York Sentinel*, a *New York Times*-like institution more easily available in Palo Alto than Brooklyn. Keaton's Hackett is a wonderful combination of youthful idealism and street savvy who would sell his mother for a good lead, but still lives for telling the story right, even for just one day.

His editor in chief, Bernie White (Robert Duvall), and managing editor, Alicia Clarke (Glenn Close), perform splendidly, adding new layers of breadth and depth where we could have easily found stock performances by rent-actors. Filmed in the heat of a New York summer, with clocks ticking through every backdrop, this film is a fantastic picture of what those who want to always be in the thick of things go through every day.

—Martin Boer

SHOOT DON'T SHOOT

Yes, it's the sequel you knew was coming — *The Naked Gun Part 3 1/3: The Final Insult*. What can anyone say about this movie? Sure, it's very funny, and yes, it's a big hit. But beyond that, there is very little to report.

Leslie Nielsen, the funniest straight man to reach the big screen in decades, reprises his role as nutty cop Frank Drebin for this *Final Insult*. Drebin retired from *Police Squad* between the second and third sequels, but he's easily coaxed away from his domestic life to help out old buddies Ed and O.J. Simpson on a case of extreme importance. This quite naturally upsets Frank's marriage to Jane, played by Priscilla Presley (who looks better and better in each film of this series). The fun and laughs unfold from there in classic *Naked Gun* form, with jokes and sight gags about anything and everything that has been in the mass media for the past two years.

But we've seen this all before. While the newspaper ads claiming that the movie contains "mostly new jokes" are true, the style of zany, madcap humor this movie gives us has become very familiar indeed. And it's not just the previous two *Naked Guns* that have been giving us this brand of farce. Since Nielsen first amazed us all with his tour-de-force performance in the 1988 original ("Nice beaver ..."), a flurry of

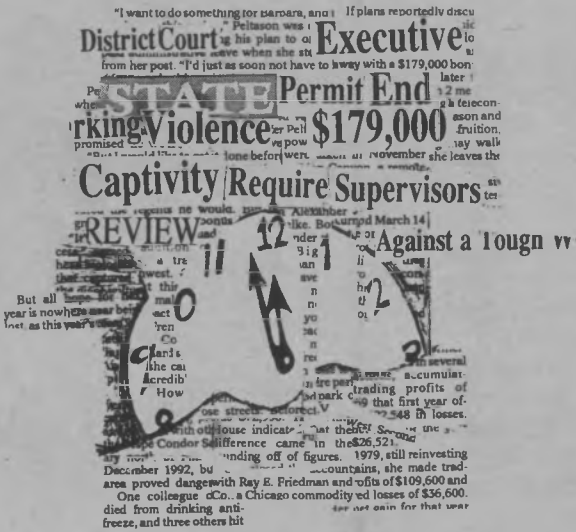
spoof movies has burst onto the scene: *Loaded Weapon I*, *Hot Shots*, *Hot Shots Part Deux*, *Wayne's World* parts I and II, *Fatal Instinct*, and the utterly forgettable *Car 54: Where Are You?*

The modern spoof movie has its roots, of course, in such fine cinematic achievements as *Young Frankenstein*, *Blazing Saddles* and the landmark *Airplane!* films. But never before have parody and satire been so popular and profitable in Hollywood. The trend has reached the small screen as well, as shown by the success of recent programs like "The Simpsons," "In Living Color" and the cult favorite "Mystery Science Theater 3000." We seem to have entered an age where poking fun at pop culture has become just as popular — if not more so — than the pop culture itself.

What's it all mean? Maybe we've all become so saturated by media messages that we can't help but take joy in watching those messages be lampooned. Maybe we're so devoid of imagination that our humor is now based on nothing more than takeoffs on existing movies or TV shows. Maybe it's just a meaningless fad.

Regardless, it seems clear that even if (and that's a big "if") this *Naked Gun* movie is indeed the final insult, other spoof movies will rise to take its place.

—Scott McPherson



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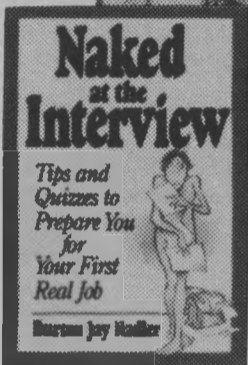
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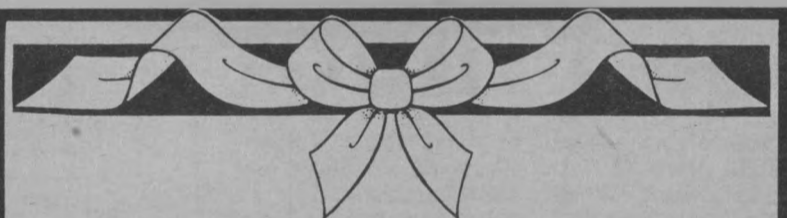
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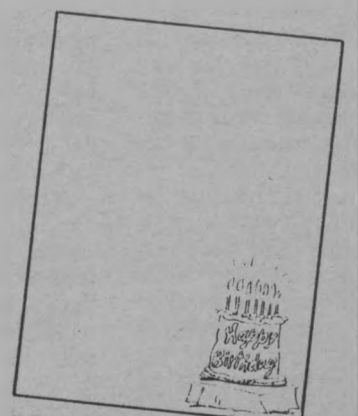
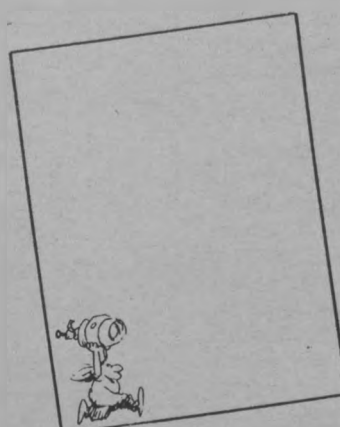


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