Working hard for no money...

meet the latest recipient of the artsweek award of excellence in our probing, hard-hitting interview.

will miss isla vista accept a date with artsweek?

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Sometimes I can spot a rap album is going to suck just by looking at the cover insert. Up Close and Personal is one of those albums.

OK, I have heard Angie Martinez attempt to rhyme before, so I had more than the insert to clue me in. But still, let's check out the insert to find clues about the weakness of this album. The cover is a good start — there's Angie, five layers of make-up caked on, looking contemplatively onto the streets of New York. Inside, there is a collage that looks like the "who's who" of today's popular hip hop scene. I can just see Angie's A&R scheming: "We'll make her dope by association!" I guess all these pictures also go along with theme of "jazzing:" "We'll make her dope by association!"

Truth be told, there is usually very little to be said about the latest releases in house with the exception of an opinion (Is it worth downloading? Purchasing? Playing Frisbee with?) and a brief description of the sound (Funky breaks? Progressive house? Electro downtempo?). Global Frequencies: Tokyo doesn't necessarily bring anything remarkable to the deejay mix album genre, but it's a good album all the same.

The Electronic Music Festival takes place Saturday, May 10 at the San Diego Sports Centre, 9 p.m. to 4 a.m. $20 concourse level; $40 floor level. 125 VIP. For tickets, visit TicketMaster. For more information, visit <www.emf2001.com>.

SOUND- SOUNDSTYLE*

From the manner of release to, more importantly, the music, Dreamweavers is completely intriguing and completely dope. Give up your anti-commercialism ideals and buy this album. [Joy Clark]

SOUND- SOUNDSTYLE*

For those of you who follow music way too closely and form opinions of new acts by what label they are on, check this out: Dreamweavers' label is NC Clothing, a skate clothing designer. Is this a sign of a new level of bastardization of hip hop, the style of music, which, along with various forms of electronica, is the soundtrack of choice for car and clothing TV ads? NC Clothing may very well be attempting to profit on the conglomeration of skating and hip hop, but if Dreamweavers is to be the result, then count me in as a supporter. Dreamweavers is made up of spacey rhymer L-Ron's and spacey producer Elusive, and together they make, well, spacey hip hop. But they are no Outkast or Kool Keith imitators. They aren't trying to be aliens; they just sound different — dreamy. Thus the group's name. L-Ron's flow is complex, yet so smooth you have to give his words full attention in order to follow his tales. Elusive provides the groundbreaking beats, combining weird drum patterns with weirder samples.

Mark Lewis | Global Frequencies: Tokyo | Platt Phunk

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Global Frequencies: Tokyo is the first in a series of albums aimed at capturing the newest sounds in house from Mark Lewis' new label, Platt Phunk. Mark Lewis, to give a brief history, got his start with all the other big-timers (Carl Cox, Paul Oakenfold, Doc Martin, DJ Dau) in the Los Angeles area, deejaying at many raves and on Sunday nights at a little club called Logic in Santa Monica. Having now traveled the world over to spin his unique blend of techy, house, tribal and progressive trance, Mark Lewis brings his cultural knowledge and curiosities to the decks again for this mix.

What did you think of all these different articles? Did you know you can post your responses directly on our website, <www.dailynexus.com>. In addition to the forum we provide for you, dear reader, we like to provide tons of links to other sites so that you can continue to be the culturally-savy hipster that we all know you are. So go ahead — disagree with us! And suggestions are always welcome — artsworld@dailynexus.com.
is everything you've heard before and everything you'd want to hear again. For
the rest of us, however, 1995 is 1995. Once the North Bay Hardcore props are
given, we'll give up — sadly, nostalgically — on the Bay. [Do Fadil will represent NBHC
only if someone else will]

Brief digression: AFI sweatshirts
embazoned with the East Bay Hardcore
(EBHC) logo seem omnipresent in the
city of Santa Barbara, which is odd
because, well, there're no bays to speak of
on the South Coast. Nevertheless, AFI
is from Ukiah, and it takes a major carto­
graphic revision to place that town in the
Bay Area.

But I digress: This six-song CD is
slick, cleanly produced hardcore replete
with mosh breakdowns, very frill bottom
basslines, a ruthless drummer and a voice
that makes my eyes stare wide open and
my fists clench. I listen to this genre of
music to get pumped up for a game or
that makes me want to kill the intensity. So next time
you're in your mom's car and crave some
natural adrenaline, listen to Korn or
Slipknot, because these guys just don't cut it.
[Alex Makeyev]

Someone should let these guys know
that if their lyrics are simply going to
rock, they should scream and blur them
together like the rest of the grungy, heavy
bassline-hitting hard rockers. I can't stand
Unloco's half-ass job at being poetic; therefore, I
can't stand Unloco.

The lead singer never seems to shut up
when his mediocre voice is not whining
about hate and personal limitations, it is
erratic music stylings make it tough to
think I'll save my 15 bucks. I miss the
music to get pumped up for a game or
that makes me want to kill the intensity. So next time
you're in your mom's car and crave some
natural adrenaline, listen to Korn or
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They knew how to bait me. The good people at Artisan Entertainment assem­bled a cast bigger than life for "Cutaway," and as soon as I laid eyes on that beauti­ful poster I was hooked and ready to be reel ed in.

Tom Berenger, Stephen Baldwin. Dennis Rodman. Casper Van Dien. These guys are superior individual actors, but together they form a Voltron for fans of the video realm.

Berenger is the head, the leader. His filmography is ridiculously long and stacked with critical acclaim in 1986 when he was nominated for Best Actor for his work in "Platoon." He turned his focus to rentals in the mid-'90s with "Chasers" and "The Substitute," feature films showing his ability to move to the straight-to­video realm.

The right arm is Baldwin, one-fourth of the legendary Baldwin Brothers. Baldwin used to dazzle in feature films like "The Usual Suspects" and "Fled" but is the story crazy enough to bring out his full potential? You better believe it.

Baldwin plays Vic Cooper. A U.S. Drug Enforcement agent try­ing to make a drug bust in Miami. After some ill-fated attempts at making an arrest, he theo­rizes that the drug kingpin is par­ticipating in the Hindu goddess of love, Kali, and will make a convincing depiction of a poor farm in Russia. Beyond this, the lighting cues were off and allowed the audience to see the transitions on stage and the unnecessary move­ments of the cast frantically trying to set up for the next scene.

After a career of stunt doubling and sky­dive coordinating, Gay Manos uses his first directorial opportunity to glorify the sport of skydiving. He sticks with what he knows. "Cutaway" runs about 140 min­utes, and at least half of that is filled with sky diving sequences.

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Lenny Wolpe's portrayal of the dairyman Tevye is truly the jewel of the entire production. His enthusiastic nature and charismatic character draws the audience into the show. In contrast to Wolpe's almost effortless por­trayal of Tevye, Marsha Waterbury's role as his wife Golde is somewhat inflated and resembles the movie portrayal a bit too much. The three daughters, Tzeitel (Rebecca Greenwood), Hodel (Cindy Robinson) and Chava (Cara Nicole Sigmuind) give great performances, lending an air of youth and independence to the performance.

The lighting, set design and sound of the production lessen the show's dramatic effect. The vocal talents of the cast members were very muted at times overpowered by the music. Redline's decision to tone down the lighting cues were off and allowed the audience to see the transitions on stage and the unnecessary move­ments of the cast frantically trying to set up for the next scene.

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The press notice made it sound too good to be true. Hallowed Hollywood studio DreamWorks was going to put me and a bunch of other college journalists up at a hotel and pamper us with movie screenings, celebrity interviews, free beer, free food and the like. And what did they want out of it again? A piddly feature? No problem.

I arrived at the hotel Saturday afternoon and sat down to the perfunctory, "So where you from?" banter with peers from Princeton to Pomona. The frenetic pace of the weekend was soon started, however, as we were whisked by three enthusiastic DreamWorks interns onto a bus bound for a screening of "Evolution" at Universal Studios. Waking up from a bus nap, I found myself entering a posh, amazingly comfortable screening room with magenta curtains and carpet.

After a brief introduction by director Ivan Reitman ("Ghostbusters"), the 40 or so of us watched this prospective summer blockbuster unfold. Basically a pulp science-fiction film about a pair of community college professors who try to thwart an alien takeover of their small town, "Evolution" is the kind of bumbling, pointlessly gory film instead of giving us a pep talk and distributing promotional bouncey balls and plastic cups.

After a hasty reprieve at the hotel, DreamWorks Tours chauffeured us over to a Westwood theater for a screening of "Shrek," a new animated fairy-tale comedy with voices by Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, John Lithgow and Cameron Diaz. My barely minted friends and I were skeptical about seeing some PG cartoon movie with fairy-tale themes of dragons, princesses and the makings of true love, but no movie with Myers and Murphy in it was going to be lame, and "Shrek" turned out to be witty and hilarious. Murphy supplied the voice for a wise-cracking donkey who accompanies an ugly ogre (Myers using his Pat Baudart voice from "Austin Powers 2") as they save a princess (Diaz) from a vain lord (Lithgow). "That's the funniest I've seen Eddie Murphy in 10 years," somebody quipped.

Sunday morning found no rest time allowed for the Sabbath. At 10 in the morning, the corps was transported to the trés chic W hotel for press interviews. Sitting at four round tables in a room of pastel lime green and steel gray, three of the stars of "Evolution" sauntered in. Orlando Jones ("Bedazzled"), Sean William Scott ("Road Trip") and Duchovny took 10-minute shifts at each table to give us the promotional lowdown.

""DREAMWORKS WAS GOING TO PUT ME AND A BUNCH OF OTHER COLLEGE JOURNALISTS UP AT A HOTEL TO GEAR YOU UP AND PAMPER US WITH MOVIE SCREENINGS, CELEBRITY INTERVIEWS..."

""Evolution" is the kind of bumbling, pointlessly gory movie instead of giving us a pep talk and distributing promotional bouncey balls and plastic cups."

Sporting a simple gray shirt, sporty black sweats and stubble that was well past five o'clock, Duchovny approached the table. Since "Evolution" was such a lame movie, it was hard to come up with good questions, so I just sat back as all my peers tripped over each other in their eagerness to ask something intelligent. He answered everything with that removed, deadpan Mulder-cool, speaking in a confident monotone and interpenetrating his speech with clever remarks. "Can I talk about my next film?" he asked an icy blonde adjacent to the table whom I guessed to be his publicist. She shook her head "no."

Next up, was the "dude" himself, Scott. He asked me where I was from, and I told him Santa Barbara. "Nice! I was up there for New Year's!" he said in his same "American Pie" persona. Scott humorously recalled his job as a host at the Glendale California Pizza Kitchen and at Home Depot (plumbing section) prior to his breakthrough with "American Pie." Just having finished filming for "American Pie 2," he mentioned starring in the upcoming heist movie "Stark, Raving Mad." He told us he was very happy, though I observed his head bending over noticeably every time "Dude, Where's My Car?" was mentioned.

An hour later, the magnanimous and elegant Lithgow gave us a succinct speech on the pleasure of being the villain in "Shrek." Having only put 12 hours into the movie, he humbly thanked the animators as the real stars of the film. Toward the end of the conference, he gave cautious advice to the aspiring thespians. "If you're going to be an actor, don't make it the center of your life. You will be disappointed. I have developed this habit purely to save my soul. It's all ephemeral. It's wonderful when it goes well, but goes well very, very rarely."

Following this last interview was a technical display about the painstaking computer animation that went into making "Shrek." I was on my way to a midafternoon nap when I decided to venture out into the invigorating L.A. sunshine, passing through the most ostentatious hotel lobby I'd ever seen. I sat out by the pool amid speakers hidden in the rocks, lithe poolside waitresses and pastel cabanas and wondered about the great and fascinating lengths one goes to impress.
Ever since computers have given filmmakers the tools to expand the realm of the believable, on-screen, this technology has offered these same auteurs an all too tempting crutch: Take an inarticulate and bumbling script, add special effects up the wazoo and presto — you have a box-office smash.

Writer/director Stephen Sommers has employed this formula with profitable results in "The Mummy Returns," which grossed over $68 million in its first weekend. While Brendan Fraser, Rachel Weisz and the WWF's The Rock may be the flesh stars of the movie, whatever entertainment the film provides comes from visual effects maestro John Berton. A movie poster truly indicative of the film's merits would feature his face (whatever he looks like) superimposed over the actors' faces. After all, without Berton's limitless cache of amazing visual techniques, this sequel's skin would show itself as it is: A juvenile and forgettable movie wholly caught in its desire to loudly entertain its viewer.

Purveyors of the idea that you can't have a good movie with a bad script will find fresh ammunition with "The Mummy Returns." Sommers' dialogue is so cheesy, so filled with bland one-liners and fluff that one can almost picture Fraser, Weisz and company rolling their eyes off-screen. Just as some of us only feel comfortable doing certain embarrassing activities under the cover of inebriation, these actors seem to only feel comfortable delivering their lines comfortably if they overact.

The plot is stupid and utterly pointless, so I'll try to condense it: Picking up eight years after 1999's "The Mummy" ended (which pulled in $414 million worldwide), Rick O'Connell (Fraser) and Evelyn (Weisz) are now happily married, living in London and raising their curious little son, Alex (Freddie Boath). Meanwhile, back in Egypt, a group bent on world domination has exhumed the body of Imhotep (killed by Rick and Evelyn in the first "Mummy") and brought him back to life. After a slapstick combat scene with Rick, Evelyn and their trusty desert sage Ardeth (Oded Fehr), Imhotep and his followers kidnap cute little Alex and bring him with them to Egypt. It is here that Imhotep will try and summon up the powers of The Scorpion King (The Rock) and conquer the world for the powers of evil. Yes, it does sound familiar: Sommers' plot has an uncanny resemblance to an episode of "G.I. Joe." At one point, The Rock raises his fist and yells, "Cobrrrrraaaaaaaa!" Well, actually he doesn't, but I was hoping he would.

To its credit, expensive productions like "The Mummy Returns" always have a lot of nice scenery to take in, and this one is no different. Allan Cameron's production designs are superb in their detail and glamour and provide an attractive backdrop for the mundane unfoldings on-screen. As the action shifts into Egypt, Berton steals the show as he superimposes The Rock's face onto a surging river and creates terrifying skeletal pygmies, mummy warriors and all kinds of insects you hope you never come across.

While Berton's work might give him a sweep of the special effects awards at the Oscars, there's no way it saves this otherwise silly, overdone and abominably acted film. Besides, when's the last time a PG-13 movie was any good?

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SHY PILGREEN, MISS ISLA VISTA 2001, WINS MORE THAN JUST A CROWN

Talent, personality and how hot the girls looked in “Friday Night Fun Wear” were all taken into consideration as 16 of I.V.’s loveliest ladies duked it out for the Miss Isla Vista crown, $500, a role in the upcoming Britney Spears movie and (most importantly) the prestigious 2001 “Artsweek Recognition of Excellence Award” mixtape. At the end, it was Alabama import Shy Pilgreen of Gamma Phi Beta who shined a little bit brighter than everyone else. After winning the title, she sat down with Artsweek for a little heart-to-heart.

Artsweek: Are you excited about being in a movie with Britney Spears?
Miss I.V.: I’m very excited about it! I like her music, and she’s a really good dancer too! I think she’s from Tennessee, too, huh?

Yeah, she’s definitely southeast style, like you. So, what was your beauty regime for the pageant?
Oh my god! Well, let’s see. For the talent part, I only had five minutes — so I didn’t really do anything. Um, the Friday outfit part took me about 45 minutes. I’m really clumsy with make-up, sooo, it took me a while to put it all on (laughs).

Who is your style icon?
Style as in actress, or ...
Anyone.
Julia Roberts. She gives me hope, cuz she’s from Georgia.
What advice would you give to the average Isla Vista guy trying to pick up on Miss I.V.?
I don’t go out too much in I.V. because of the way guys treat girls here. I don’t respect it at all. I’ve been out a couple of times, but not in any way that I would like anyone that I’ve seen. ... You go into these parties and it’s just like guys on girls, and umm ... I mean it’s fun to dance, but then it goes a little bit more than that. I don’t really like that very much.

Sweet. Name the seven dwarfs.
Dopey, um, Curly? Is he one?
No.
Dopey, Sleepy ... no, I can’t. I’m too “on the spot.”
That’s OK. Puppies or kittens?
Puppies! Puppies are great! Little ones that don’t get big!
How much money would it take for you to pose nude in Playboy?
Oh no, I wouldn’t do it.
How about in Artsweek?
No, my dad would fly out here himself and come get me.
Do you know who won first and second place for “Best Arts Section” at the California Intercollegiate Press Association awards?
The Nexus?
Yes! What’s your sign?
Pisces.
What are you doing Friday night?
I’m working Friday night. Sorry.

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