

# artsweek

arts+entertainment

## Not Just Another Bearded Lady @ Cirque du Soleil

Midgets in leotards, tiny Chinese pretzel children, a guy in a flame g-string – what more could you ask for in a circus? Not much, I say, and the latest installation of Cirque du Soleil has all this and more. Hard to believe that such an extravaganza of fun exists, I know, but Cirque du Soleil is enough to make Barnum and Bailey's look like child's play.

DollFace goes to the circus

Last week, I had the great pleasure of attending this internationally acclaimed circus of sorts in the magnificent Big Top under the Santa Monica Pier. While I thought I was merely in for a night of free dinner and obligatory parental time, Cirque du Soleil actually, for lack of a better term, rocked my world. I have never seen such a powerful and intense display of talent, beauty, artistic expression and freakishness.

The jesters, including a midget in sequins, a transvestite and a man who communicates only by breathing heavily into a megaphone, kept the audience in hysterics.

The acrobatic extraordinaires on trapeze soar majestically overhead. Little boys balance precariously on huge beach balls while doing back flips. Young girls catapult themselves, one-by-one, into giant human sculptures. This is entertainment you have never seen before.

With waterlike fluidity in choreog-

raphy, weirdly amusing talent showcases and death-defying stunts at every turn, Cirque du Soleil has a little works to incorporate cultures from all over the world. Each installation

A MIDGET IN SEQUINS, A TRANSVESTITE AND  
A MAN WHO COMMUNICATES ONLY BY  
BREATHING HEAVILY  
INTO A MEGAPHONE



something for everyone. There's even a Wayne Newton/Steven Tyler lookalike in a feathered Elvis suit flying across stage to serenade the audience. Fun stuff.

Cirque du Soleil originated in Quebec, Canada, and

a 3-year North American tour. *Dralion* has enlisted the services of young Chinese contortionists and gymnasts to accompany cast members from the far reaches of France,

SEE CIRCUS, P.3A

of the show adopts a new theme before embarking on its international tour. *Dralion*, the 13th installation of the show, began its reign in Quebec and has just arrived in Los Angeles for



ARTS WEEK | FILM | REVIEW

# PHALLIC AMERICA

ICE CUBE IS THE MAN IN THREE KINGS



reviewed john fiske

You really gotta hand it to those guys that make previews. This fall they already slaughtered the amazing "American Beauty" by shortchanging it as a trite family drama. Their latest casualty is "Three Kings." According to the preview, it's a Gulf War heist film about four soldiers who have a change of conscience and realize the pains of the Iraqi people. While it is a Gulf War heist film about four soldiers who have a change of conscience and realize the pains of the Iraqi people, you would have no clue as to how original and full of soul the film really is.

"Three Kings" begins at the end of the War, once the cease-fire has been called. After finding a map hidden in a rather precarious body part, Sergeant Major Archie Gates (George Clooney), an Army lifer two weeks from retirement, and three soldiers (played by Mark Wahlberg, Ice Cube, and Spike Jonze) set out to steal tons of gold bullion from one of Saddam's secret bunkers. Along the way, the four get caught up in an Iraqi revolution and are forced to make the decision: the gold or the people.

All of this sounds very familiar. The map to hidden riches. The grizzled and near retirement superior. The naïve youth. The gradual changes of heart. The torture scenes. Even the action scenes.

But nothing can prepare you for how new and original all of this is, thanks to the work of writer/director David O. Russell. His last two films, "Spanking the

Monkey" and "Flirting with Disaster" (possibly the funniest movie of the '90s) both show the same kind of situational humor that Russell is best adept to, and here he takes it to the hilt. He infuses each cliché, each convention, with so much humor that you're double-taking once the film's tone changes.

And change it does. Though it is a big budget Hollywood movie, "Three Kings" is actually quite controversial. In the same way that "Apocalypse Now" and "Coming Home" were the first Hollywood movies to

There are shocking visions of violence handled with much care, and not treated the same way its other action scenes are.

The cast is fine throughout, but Clooney really does something special. He has always seemed to play his roles as some variation on himself. In "Three Kings," he has a disturbing self-loathing that resonates like nothing else he's done. The press packet notes a story about an army colonel in tears from witnessing the slaughter of Iraqi citizens across a river that couldn't do anything due

to the cease-fire. Clooney has that feeling. He has the wearied nature of a man who has been through a lot, but doesn't exactly know why. This is his best work to date, and one of the better male lead performances of the year.

Also fantastic is the camera work by director of photography Newton Thomas Sigel (who did "The Usual Suspects" and

"Fallen"). Russel and Sigel worked together on creating a great visual texture that includes the same bleach process used in "Saving Private Ryan," and amazing ultra-deep focus visuals that are nothing short of astonishing.

Whatever problems I have with "Three Kings" are negligible in the long run (with the exception of its ending). It is truly fine; one of the most inventive films of the year, alongside "The Matrix" and "American Beauty." Don't miss it.

## IN ADDITION, GEORGE BUSH IS GIVEN QUITE A BEATING BY THE SCRIPT ...



critically look at Vietnam, this film is the first to do so with the Gulf War. In fact, Russell's script goes to many lengths to make the Gulf War out to be another Vietnam. In addition, George Bush is given quite a beating by the script for calling the Iraqi people to revolution against Saddam, and then leaving them in the dust once the cease-fire was called.

And this is no sanitized version of the war, the way "Courage Under Fire" was, though it's still a good film.

### Doonesbury

BY GARRY TRUDEAU



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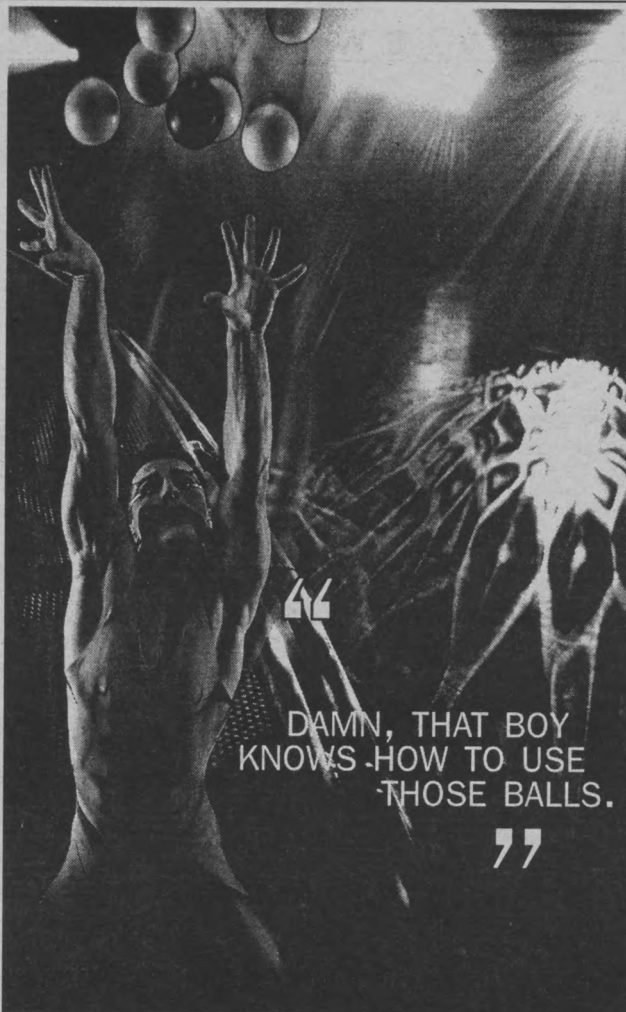
CIRCUS  
CONTINUED FROM P.1A

Brazil, the Ivory Coast and most places in between. The results are spectacular, to say the least. Cirque du Soleil stresses the fluidity and interconnectedness of transnational cultures as we approach the new millennium. As the program states, "The lions of the West are giving new life to the dragons of the East, changing our pace of life and the balance of forces." Thus, *Dralion* is born, visually and artistically expressing the continuity of a multicultural society through beauty and natural phenomenon.

Keeping with its multicultural theme, Cirque du Soleil alternates dancers and music selections from nearly every corner of the world. A tribal African dancer gyrates frantically between backflipping young lads and ancient Chinese dragons. A tiny Indian princess slides sleekly below floating trapeze artists. Human hybrids of the lion/dragon creation (East meets West) romp across the stage while children somehow do handstands on their backs. Each individual culture is accentuated with vivid costuming and a native musical soundtrack.

Now I've given you a brief teaser as to what you may find at Cirque du Soleil, but I have failed to remark on some of the *key* highlights of the show, one in particular: Flame Boy. Yes, that's right, the boy who juggles multiple balls in no more than a red flame g-string. Let me just tell you, in a Santa Monica crowd, more than just the ladies were oohing and aahing over that one. He juggles, balances and has his way with anywhere from three to ten balls. All I can say is, *Damn, that boy knows how to use those balls.* And we'll just leave it at that.

It took a few moments to catch my breath after the stunning talent displayed by Flame Boy, but the amazement of Cirque du Soleil doesn't stop there. How about



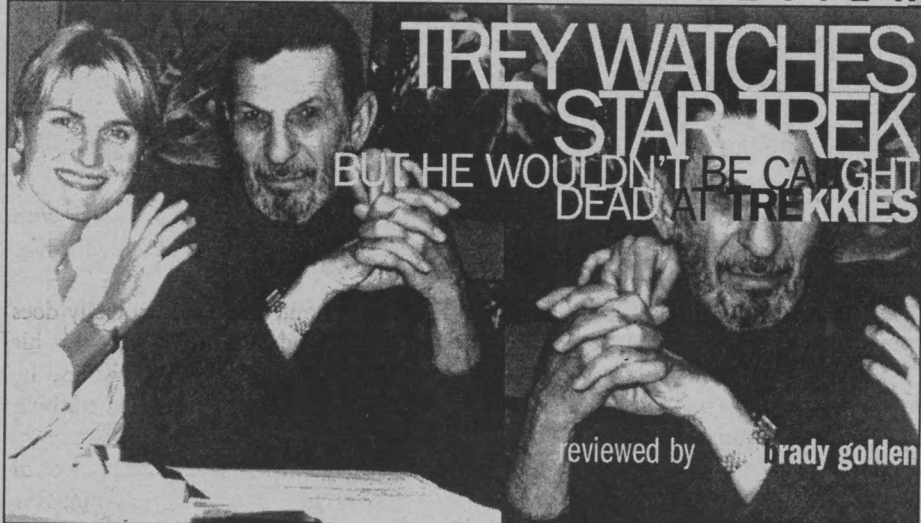
“ DAMN, THAT BOY KNOWS HOW TO USE THOSE BALLS. ”

girls doing the splits while balancing on the shoulders of another standing tiptoe on a light bulb? That's right, balancing on a *light bulb*. What about boys doing backflips through hoops while jump roping with two different ropes? Or a little girl balancing the weight of her entire body on one hand while twisting and contorting herself until you can't discern which side is front and which is her back? Not impressed yet? What about 22 men and women completely naked onstage, engaging in a massive bacchanalian orgy, complete with fire and sharp metal tools? Just kidding. It's not quite *that* impressive, but this show comes pretty damn close. Come on, this is entertainment for the *whole* family, not just the dirty old men and college students. But as far as clean fun goes, Cirque du Soleil is the place to be

All in all, *Dralion* is an unforgettable experience. Beats any night in Isla Vista (but then again, what doesn't?) The absolute beauty and finesse of the staging, costuming and performers keeps the audience open-mouthed from start to finish. The incredible combination of elements even brought a tear to my skeptical eye on more than one occasion. The showcase of talent found in this ensemble of performers is unprecedented and truly unbelievable. As far as the lack of a bearded lady, I personally got over the novelty of a woman with facial hair in my teenage years, after spending hours with my blonde-bearded driver's ed instructor, Thelma. Believe me, you aren't missing much.

DollFace is quitting college to join the circus ... and she will not be billed as The Bearded Lady.

ARTS WEEK | FILM | REVIEW



Flip through your TV Guide. Pick a show that sounds interesting. Watch it. Enjoy it. Watch it again when it is next on. Continue watching it until you are familiar enough with the show to be able to discuss its merits. Ta-da! You have earned the title of "fan," and may now introduce yourself as such. It's a respectable title, and one which only takes an hour or so a week to achieve; a painless process, really.

Painless, that is, unless the show you pick happens to be "Star Trek," or one of its many spin-offs. "Star Trek" fans, calling themselves "Trekkies," or "Trekkers," depending on whom you ask, have turned

fandom into a way of life. Trekkies adhere closely to the philosophy espoused by the series. They are known to wear costumes from the television show around in their day-to-day lives, and on any given weekend, they are holding conventions around the world. They've even made their way into the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and are the only fan group to have done so.

Their intricate subculture is the subject of "Trekkies," a documentary directed by Roger Nygard and hosted by Denise Crosby, who played Lt. Tasha Yar in "Star Trek: The Next Generation." Nygard examines several aspects of the lives of  
SEE TREKKIES, P.7A

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## ARTS WEEK | MUSIC | REVIEWS



Brad Mehldau | *Art of the Trio 4: Back at the Vanguard* | Warner Bros.

Brad Mehldau, part of jazz's "young" elite, offers up his second live album in his *Art of the Trio* series with a record culled from a six-night stand at the Village Vanguard. Mehldau, like so many of his predecessors, created a very tight trio from the beginning and has never looked back. With Larry Grenadier on bass and Jorge Rossy on drums, this is about as solid as they come, save maybe Keith Jarrett's trio. Mehldau is a very intense player and has worked hard to distinguish his playing from comparison (Bill Evans, Paul Bley), and even gets a bit obnoxious about it in his ever-arrogant liner notes. That said, Mehldau has every right to be arrogant: his classical influence, slightly discordant phrasing and polyrhythmic head-first style is a joy to listen to. Playing with Grenadier and Rossy day in and day out has allowed him to weave his way through such standards as "All The Things You Are" and Davis' "Solar" with a sort of jumbled grace that can careen into deep chasms of hard-driving improv, but also walk delicately along the edge with a slow, melodic grace. Included in this collection of originals and standards is Radiohead's "Exit Music (For A Film)," which Mehldau takes on with a surprising touch of eloquence. Mehldau, as he exemplifies in this recording, has become too mature a player to worry about comparison. Rather, I think he'll soon be the one upon which others are measured.

- Josh Baron



Method Man and Redman | *Blackout!* | Def Jam

Special Panel Review mediated by Trey Clark

Trey: What's up, everybody? I'm joined by Ma\$, Large Professor and some kid who simply calls himself "Strictly Underground." We're here to review Method Man and Redman's full-length collaboration titled *Blackout!* *Strictly Underground*, who are you and how did you get in here?

Strictly Underground: Wassup yo, I got in here because of who I am, and that

is the most hardcore underground hip hop head eva! Plus I been to four shows in the last three days and worn this same shirt the whole time, and security broke out like the bitches they are!

I see. Well, while you're here, what do you think about the album?

I used to think these two were like gods, yo. Now they are just wack. Look at Meth doing that track with Mary, and just the other day I saw Red in a Karl Kani commercial. That's bella wack, yo.

That's all well and good, but what do you think of the music?

Most of the songs would be good except that these two are sell-outs. They ain't underground anymore. Like my name says, I'm strictly underground, homie.

So you like the songs, it's just the image you don't like?

Right. I only listen to underground white emcees.

Ma\$, you're shaking your head. What are your thoughts about the album?

Ma\$: I can't hang with the subject matter, man. As you probably know I am going to be a minister now, and I don't approve of the material.

So you have a problem with smoking weed and the anti-PC punchlines?

Yeah, that and they need to incorporate more of a lisp in their style. Not enough rappers realize that a crazy lisp can make almost any two words rhyme.

Yes, you really had the lisp mastered on your two wack albums.

Thanks, but that's all in the past now. I'm going to be in the ministry for the rest of my life. Or at least until Puff gives me a deal equal to my offering plates.

Large Pro, what do you think?

Large Professor: The album is dope. But I have to say that I think they came out with it way too soon. It would be much better if they had taken their time and not put it out so quickly.

Could that opinion have anything to do with your album being delayed for the last five years?

Oh, you think that the record company delayed it? Naw, it's just me making sure it's perfect for all my fans and...

Are those notes your reading?

Man, I gotta say what the company wants or else they said they'd never release my album!

And there you have it, three important opinions to help you make your purchasing decisions. My personal thoughts on *Blackout!*: It won't change any of your life philosophies, but it makes for a fun listen.

-Trey Clark

Various Artists | *Process of Elimination* | Industry

Kool DJ EQ represents the Puttin' Out

Mad Releases Click with his latest compilation titled *Process of Elimination*. His third compilation released in the last three-and-a-half years, *Process* features most of the same people found on the first two albums, except this time around EQ handles less than half of the production. EQ released the album six months under the deadline to join the POMR Click, allowing him to be jumped recently. EQ joins Silkk the Shocker, Kool Keith, MC Breed and others in this prestigious collective.

The Quality Over Quantity Crew is rumored to have beef with EQ, saying that his second compilation was rushed after the success of his first, *Beats and Lyrics*. "There's no excuse for having three out of 11 songs with either Ed OG, Dres or both featured," stated a Quality Over Quantity insider, who wishes to remain anonymous. "Those two fools are about as exciting as watching grass grow."

EQ feels that it's not fair to compare the two, being that the first one was so good. "Judge my latest work with a clean slate," he pleaded at his release press conference.

He may have a point there. *Process of Elimination* is consistent, if not awe-inspiring. Yawners like the El da Sensei, Organized Konfusion, Mike Zoot and F.T. posse cut "Frontline," and the Kream's "No Ordinary Love" give the QOQ Crew ammunition to criticize, but nice tracks from Ab Rude, Swollen Members and surprisingly Ed OG top nearly every effort from EQ's second release.

While the two opposing sides remain stalemated on the issue, *Process of Elimination* has been released for review by a much more important source, Trey Clark. He has effectively given the album a "6 out of 10," proclaiming it "somewhat better than average."

-Trey Clark: The Bottom Line



Supersuckers | *The Greatest Rock and Roll Band in the World* | Sub Pop

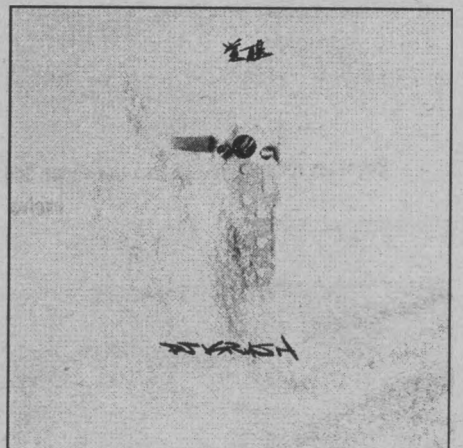
Well, here we are back again after an all too short summer reviewing albums by

bands that have too big a budget and too big an ego. Chuck Berry would probably be spinning in his grave if he heard this album. I first listened to the Supersuckers on last month's *Skratch* magazine compilation, and I was not terribly impressed with their style.

The album is rather guitar-driven and should be, considering it is rock 'n' roll bordering punk. I add the bordering-punk part because of the drumming style. A couple rock-a-billy songs sneak their way onto the album as well, adding another dimension to their playing. While it is a tight-sounding album, the constant soloing and rough transitions get on my nerves. The album features a lot of guitar solos and seems to pay more attention to the musicianship of the guitar player than the band as a whole.

I am guessing that lyrically the album has too little to say. I cannot understand the singer nor are the lyrics included, but I am able to pick up choruses that go "She's my bitch." So I do not think they are talking about proletariat revolution. Overall, I don't suggest picking this album up unless you are already a Supersuckers fan. I would almost rather listen to Britney Spears...well, it is not that bad.

-Dan Villain is self-hating



DJ Krush | *Kakusei* | Red Ink

To begin with, I think that it is only appropriate you all should be aware of this fact: I like DJ Krush. And I mean that everything he has ever released, I have found a special place for in my collection. For me it began with *Meiso* and has only continued to blossom into a sort of non-sexual infatuation. That is probably why I feel somewhat ashamed and guilty for how I feel about *Kakusei*. Everything is as it should be. The opening track, "Escapee" starts it off, and the sounds are crisp, clear and precise in every way; it is unmistakably DJ Krush. I have listened to it several times, and every time it grows on me and I decide that I really like the album. Then I go about my daily activities and somewhere along the line slowly change my mind. "Why?" you ask. Well, I think that it has to do with the fact that

## ARTS WEEK | A WEEK IN PREVIEW

today | thursday



Enjoy a croissant and a double non-fat latte (or a pitcher or two or three of Sam Adams) at Espresso Roma while digging the hip tunes of the Mades. A chick sings, some boys play. Best of all, it's entirely free. And Roma makes a great Caesar salad. 7p.m., Pardall Road

tomorrow | friday



Throw a luau in lieu of your typical I.V. kegger. First, bring your party over to Campbell Hall to catch Halau o Kekuhi in "Kamehameha: A Hawaiian Epic" at 8p.m. It's \$14 - \$20 for students, and after, you can keep up the Hawaiian spirit by roasting a pig and getting lei'd.



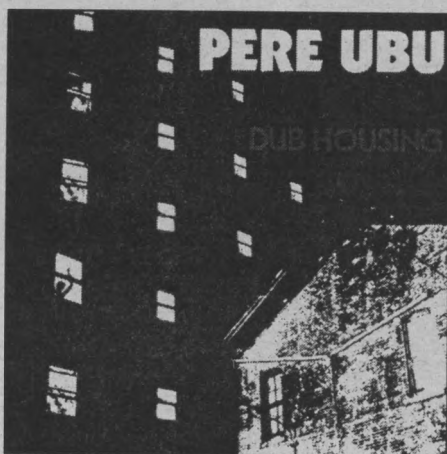


*Kakusei* gives me a different presentation of Krush than I have come to form in my small, underdeveloped pea brain.

Compared to *Meiso* and *Miligt*, *Kakusei* abandons what I was probably most looking forward to hearing on the album: emcees. Yes. There are no vocals, save the very last cut. But then I think about it and know that that can't be the reason, because I liked *Ki Oku* very much (which had no emcees and featured Toshinori Kondo on trumpet instead). So, I again ask myself what is it about *Kakusei* that makes me second guess myself, and the only answer that I can come up with is that I am retarded, which would make sense. "Final Home," a track that I have loved since I first heard it a while back, still captivates me. The vocal version with Esthero is flat out beautiful. DJ Yaz and DJ Hazu appear in the extravaganza of musical collaboration "No More," and Mista Sinista of the X-ecutioners shows up on "The Kinetics" for more added fanfare. Both of these tracks definitely stand out on the album.

*Kakusei* is definitely good, and it is certainly a must-have in the collection of any DJ Krush fan. But it may surprise some of you if you were hoping for a song like "Shinjiro," which features Mos Def, to be on it. Instead, *Kakusei* is exactly that: a sort of progression to another level, apparently a level which is present in DJ Krush himself.

- Robotsex reminds you to also transcend and evolve



Pere Ubu | *Apocalypse Now* | Thirsty Ear  
Pere Ubu | *Dub Housing* | Thirsty Ear

Not only was Pere Ubu born over 20 years ago in the proto-punk Cleveland underground, they were making "post-punk" music while punk was still in its early stages (that, I promise, is the last time the word "punk" will be used as a suffix - or at all, for that matter - in this review). They were absolute visionaries, throwing all sorts of weird and wonderful

sounds into a dirty glass and knocking down pint after pint. Those ingredients were the following: Scott Krauss and Tony Maimone, a rhythm section that could make you shake your fist and your booty; Tom Herman, a guitarist equal parts scraggle and fuzz; Allen Ravenstine, whose omni-directional synthesizer squiggles inexplicably seemed to be at once in complete opposition to the rest of the music and a vitally important part of it; and one David Thomas, a big, fat, beat-influenced, bird-voiced frontman whose voice vied with Ravenstine's synth as the hardest bit to keep in one place. *Dub Housing* is their second album, and their masterpiece. It starts off with a classic Thomas line: "I've got these arms and legs / they flip-flop flip-flop." And from there on, it don't stop. The loose song structures and their wobbly melodies hit the abstract noise full on, and are kept together by a propulsive backbeat. This album was recorded 21 years ago, and it's still at least 20 years ahead of its time and you can dance to it. Cheers, props, cookies and pats on the back to Thirsty Ear for putting it back in print.

As could be expected, things didn't stay this good forever. As inter-band relationships became more and more strained, the music suffered. They became almost silly in their artsy weirdness, and later, when Thomas was the only main original member left, they put out some bad albums of bland synthpop (incidentally, Thomas was, and is still, putting out strangely giddy and unique albums under his own name, some with a nearly identical lineup to Ubu's). Recently, the band has started to go back in the direction of the beginning, and is now at least a shadow of its former self. However, *Apocalypse Now* - a live recording from 1991 - stands outside of that entire history in a really nice way. A spontaneous off-day show on a break from a tour supporting the Pixies, it's almost entirely acoustic. Featuring the impeccable Krauss and Maimone combo, along with Jim Jones on guitar and former Beefheart crony Eric Drew Feldman on an out-of-tune honky-tonk upright piano, this recording is completely different from anything else in the catalog, and a pleasure to listen to. The focus is on David Thomas the songwriter, and he stands up pretty well. They play songs from all periods of the band's existence, and even do a really quick version of "I Wanna be Your Dog," which apparently used to be their closer in the late '70s (wasn't it everybody's?). You know, in England they have four-day David Thomas *festivals* (at which his latest album was recorded). I guess that's what you get with public funding of the arts.

-Josh Miller enjoys reviewing good music



Aphrodite | *Urban Jungle* | Egil\_Music

When I was but a mere freshman I ventured one night onto DP only to find myself at some jungle party on the early part of the 6500 block. I was excited; while the sounds of drum 'n' bass and jungle emanate from the occasional I.V. residence more these days, two years ago it was hard for a young tyke like myself to ever hear the sounds pumped loud and clear over a big P.A. system. To my joy, the DJ played the Luniz's "I Got Five on It" mixed with jungle breaks and beats.

What I thought was a DJ's brilliance in fusing the two turns out to be none other than Aphrodite, whose new album, *Urban Jungle*, blends together many of his jungle tracks and rap remixes with other artists' jungle sounds to create a fun, fun album. It's cheesy as can be (a lot of that oh-so-catchy jungle is, you know), but who cares? Get yourself a P.A. system of your own and blast Aphrodite's infamous remixes of the Jungle Brothers "Jungle Brother," N.W.A.'s "Gangsta Gangsta" and Luniz's "I Got Five On It" all over town. There are even jungle remixes of Aaliyah, Mack 10 and Ice Cube, if you're not sated with just Aphrodite's work. With the exception of the dreadful "Man of Steel" by Vinyl Syndicate (it sounds like a shoddy version of the "Star Wars" theme set to cliché drum 'n' bass), most of the tracks on *Urban Jungle* are full of those gritty pavement breaks and rumbling, raw basslines, with folks like Ice Cube, Sir Menelik and Jeru the Damaja rapping over the top. As said before, it's a really cheesy album, but it's like I.V. - if you're willing to drop your pride and integrity, you'll have a really good time.

- Jenne Raub is just being honest

Solex | *Pick Up* | Matador

Solex is the creative masterpiece and labor of love of the divine Ms. Elizabeth Esselink. This one-woman ensemble creates inventive and idiosyncratic sounds that border between folksy electronica, symphonic melodies and sug-

ary sweet vocals. Working out of her record store basement in Amsterdam, Esselink mixes, records and produces all of her own music with extraordinary results. The sounds of *Pick Up* will have



you tapping your feet and singing along before you know it.

*Pick Up*, Solex's second album, takes an alternative route to debut release *Solex vs. Hitmeister*, with wilder beats, wackier sound effects and greater complexity. Esselink samples a wide variety of sound bites, all taken from live shows, ranging from classical to metal. Combined with her quirky, non-sequitor lyrics, "Wish I had a brick served with cream, I said / and Chinese take-away is food for the gods to you, am I right?" somehow it all fits together into a wonderfully cohesive, multi-layered bonanza of just plain fun. Rumor has it that *Pick Up* was originally titled "Bathroom Desires" because the lyrics are all short sketches of imaginary conversations Esselink had while on the toilet. Bathroom humor or not, the sampling and keyboard wizardry of Solex is sublime and *Pick Up* is a must-have for the CD collection of your dreams.

-DollFace

KCSB | TOP 10

1. Magnetic Fields | *69 Love Songs* | Merge
2. Solex | *Pick-up* | Matador
3. Dub Narcotic Sound System meets Jon Spencer Blues Explosion | *In a Dance Hall Style* | K
4. Quasi | *Field Studies* | Up
5. Unwound | *A Single History* | Kill Rock Stars
6. Stereolab | *Cobra and Phases ...* | Elektra
7. Red Stars Theory | *Life in a Bubble Can Be Beautiful* | Up
8. Deerhoof | *Holdy Paws* | Kill Rock Stars
9. Adult Rodko | *The Kissyface* | Shimmy-Disc
10. Material | *Intonaumori* | Axiom

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weekend | saturday



Before romping silly down Del Playa, get your crazy freshman rump over to the Performing Arts Theatre at either 2p.m. or 8p.m. There, you can see Tennessee William's "The Glass Menagerie" at a meager student fee and get yourself some culture. It's like a pre-party!

already | sunday



DJ Wally mixes it up at the Wildcat. Get ready for some commercial techno breakbeats and get drunk. Or stay at home and watch "Felicity."



# American Pic



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## Phineas

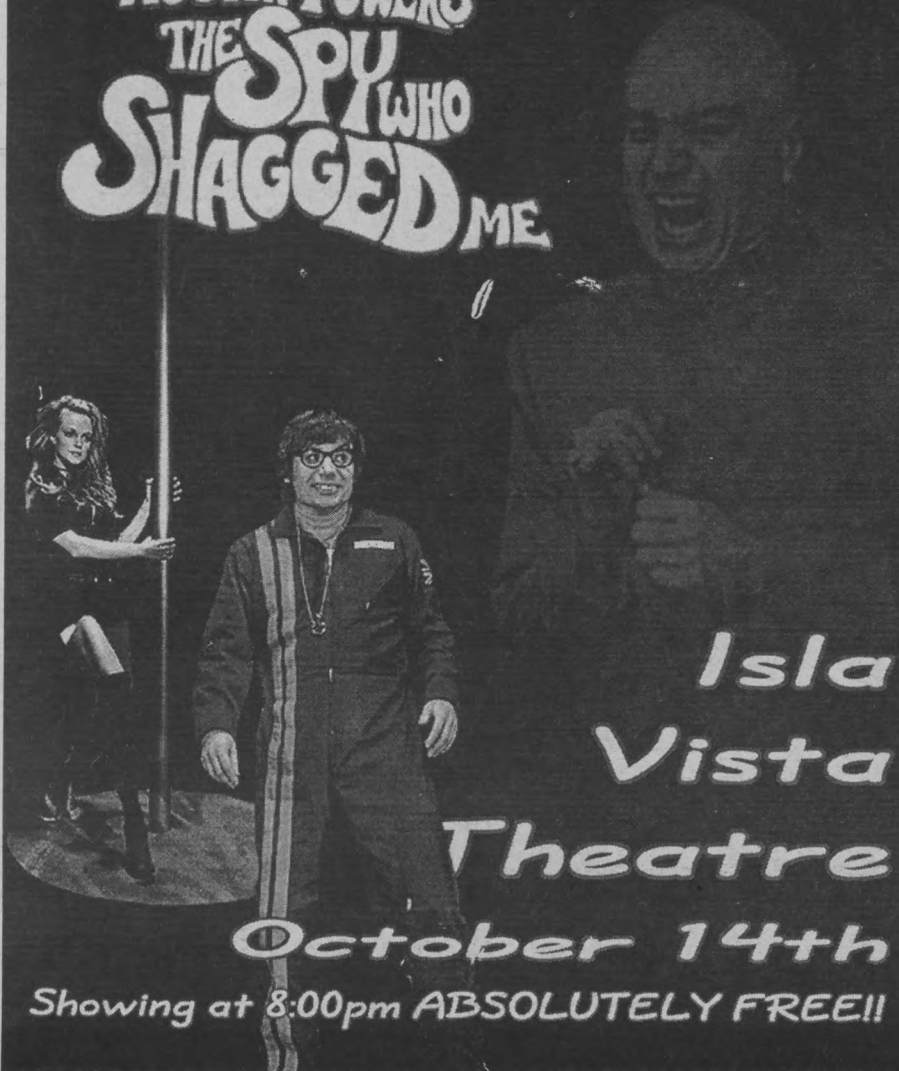
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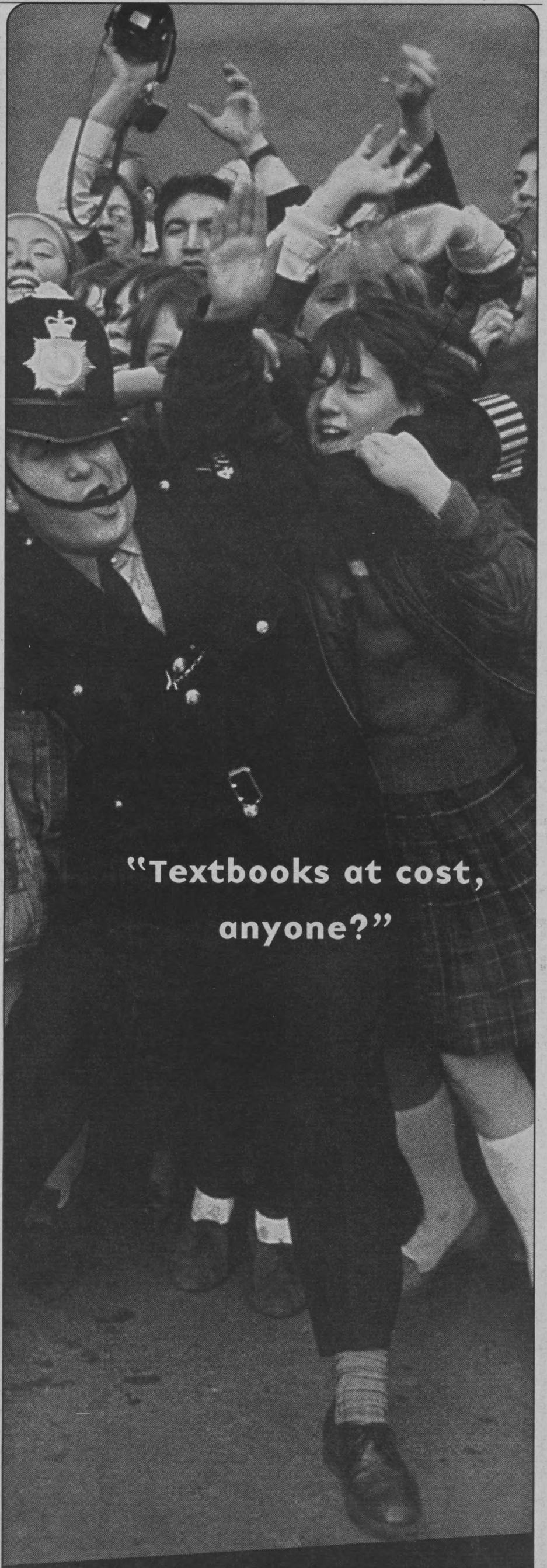
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TREKKIES  
CONTINUED FROM P.3A



"Star Trek" fanatics, from their frequent conventions to their homes to their day jobs. Many of the Trekkies that we meet over the course of the film are so ardently proud of their obsession that they refuse to remove their costumes even at the workplace. Dr. Denis Bourguignon went so far as to name his dental practice "Starbase Dental," and makes his employees wear Starfleet uniforms to work. Nygard pays particular attention to the now-legendary Barbara Adams, who won celebrity status after insisting to wear her uniform to court every day while serving on the Whitewater jury.

The film includes interviews with cast members from the original series, and from its spin-offs. Their reactions to Trekkie Madness vary, ranging from the dumbfounded George Takei ("Sulu") to the moved-to-the-point-of-tears James Doohan ("Scottie"), but they are all equally grateful to their obsessive fans. The most touching scenes in "Trekies" are with the late Deforest Kelley ("Bones"), whose dry wit has been

sorely missed by his fans since his death earlier this year.

Anyone who has seen Nygard's "High Strung" knows what a sharp sense of comedy he has; "Trekies" is further testament to this sense. It is a hilariously funny documentary, but it manages to hold the unusual society that it examines up to a comic light without being mean-spirited.

... WHILE WATCHING IT I COULDN'T HELP WONDERING WHERE ON EARTH I COULD BUY MYSELF A PHASER OR TRICORDER

““

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Nygard actually treats the Trekkies' devotion with a sort of reverence. I imagine that the fans featured in the film are actually proud of their portrayal, unlike the overeager teens on MTV's "Fanatic," who always wind up looking like tragic psychotics. By

the end of the film, the subculture, which at first appears to be fairly bizarre, is still, well, bizarre. How could it not, with a member who wishes he had the money to have his ears surgically altered to look like a Vulcan's, and another who had his name legally changed to James T. Kirk? Still, it's bizarre in a respectable way. The Trekkies are almost noble in their devotion to a television show that was cancelled before many of them were born.

"Trekies" is a clever, charming documentary that is hilarious and surprisingly informative. If nothing else, it works as a recruiting film. I know that while watching it I couldn't help wondering where on earth I could buy myself a phaser or a tricorder. Watch it with your guard up or you might find yourself leaving with an uncanny urge to learn how to speak Klingonese.

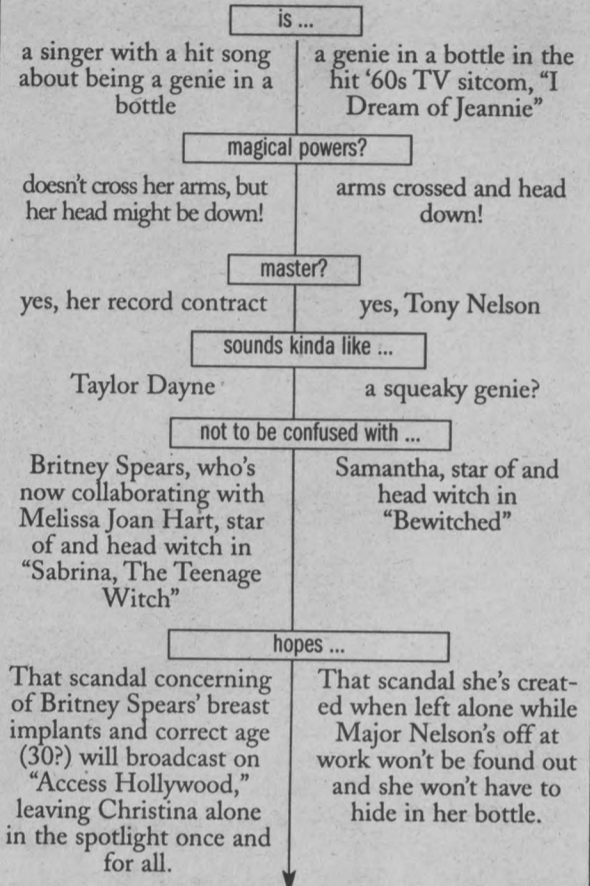
"Trekies" can be seen Sunday, Oct. 10, at Campbell Hall at 7:30 p.m. \$5 students; \$6 general. Tickets are available at 6:30 p.m. in front of Campbell Hall. Word.

When you're living in popular culture these days do you feel like you've seen it all before? What's "Popular" without "Dawson's"? \*surface without Wallpaper\*? FUBU without Phat Farm? At Artsweek we feel your pain, so we bring you the first installation of

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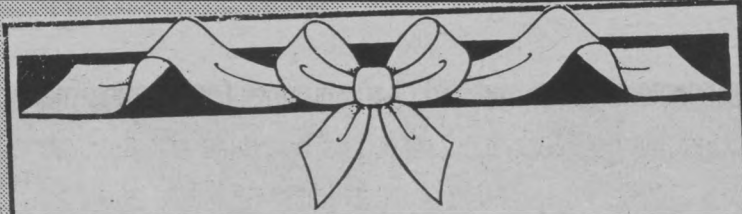
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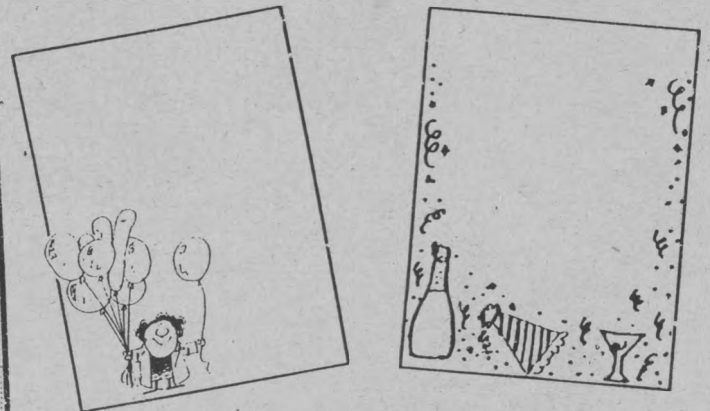
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