

ARTS WEEK

The Arts and Entertainment Supplement to the Daily Nexus, For the Week of February 10-16, 1994.



CCS LITERATURE LECTURER AND ALUMNUS ASKS YOU TO PLEASE UNDERSTAND.

A book review of *Understand This* and an interview with the author, Jervey Tervalon.

I am ordinarily a patient reader. Most stories develop with a predictable potency; there are good places to stop and start, reflective passages that allow for thought, food, drink and rest. Especially if there isn't going to be a test on it at 8 a.m. Especially if you have buckets of other work to do, as I do. Are you a patient reader? Beware of this book.

I did not get to sleep last night.

Understand This, Jervey Tervalon's first novel, is not an action-crammed *Jurassic Park* or hyper-romantic *The Bridges of Madison County*. It is compelling because its characters are so realistic and interesting ... these are people all of us know, or want to know, living in a difficult situation with reasonable hopes and dreams.

I'm not just saying this because Jervey is a member of our campus community — he is a 1980 graduate of the CCS Literature program, where he now teaches writing — but because this really is a terrific book.

I spoke with Jervey yesterday to get his thoughts about the book, and found him victim to a different kind of sleeplessness, the kind that accompanies any book release:

Artsweek: *It sounds like they've got you running around a lot right now.*

Jervey Tervalon: Well, you know, if you don't get this opportunity it means they're not going to sell your book ... you have to do everything you can to support your novel, otherwise it won't find an audience.

AW: *How long did it take you to write *Understand This*?*

Tervalon: Sixteen months. I wrote an original draft when I was teaching high school, but it was so bad that I never referred to it again. I wrote the second draft from memory, and it came out very differ-

ent from what I'd originally written.

AW: *The character of Michaels in the book seems like he might be ...*

Tervalon: Autobiographical?

AW: *Yeah.*

Tervalon: He has some strong autobiographical elements. (laughs) He's not me, but we're kind of like spiritual brothers.

AW: *How did the book start? Did it evolve from a series of short stories, or did you see it as a novel to begin with?*

Tervalon: Yeah, I knew it was going to be a novel, but when I started I didn't know exactly what I was going to do. After the first chapter I had a pretty good idea how it was structured, where it was going to end up, and the kind of voice I wanted to use.

AW: *You told me once that Faulkner was one of your major influences ... the shifting narrative style of *Understand This* is similar to what Faulkner does in *As I Lay Dying*. But other than Faulkner, what writers have influenced you?*

Tervalon: I really liked when I was in D.H. Lawrence class with Marvin Mudrick. I was also influenced by Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. And there were a lot of science fiction writers ... the inner city is kind of like science fiction in some ways.

I liked the immediacy of Hemingway. And, I think that if I had read her when I was younger, I would have been influenced by Toni Morrison. In hindsight, I kind of wish I were.

AW: *One of the things I really liked about the book was how successfully you incorporate drama into the lives of the characters instead of the other way around. Does that make sense? It seems the drama is secondary to the characterization.*

Tervalon: Yeah, they call that a character-driven novel. ... It's very different from screenplays, where plot is what they're looking for.

AW: *Yeah, I was thinking about that, actually — and I'm no expert on this by any stretch of the imagination — but it seems like the media — through, for example, movies like *Boyz in the Hood* or *Grand Canyon* — that the drama of South Central has been played up so much that it's easy to ignore the characters.*

Tervalon: Yeah ...

AW: *... but that there haven't been a lot of stereotypical characters, at least in the things that I've seen. ... I think the characters in *Understand This* completely defy that.*

Tervalon: I agree with you that there are often stereotypes. But it's not absolute, you know. In music you have characters like De La Soul, when they started out writing songs about being gardeners or whatever ... and that was unusual. It shocked people that they weren't talking about murders and drugs. ... I try to show that people who live in the inner city are like everybody, even though there are horrible things that happen, frequently.

AW: *Yeah. The situation doesn't seem any less scary, but it does seem more three-dimensional. I think that is probably what you intended, and it is helped by the way the reader's point of view shifts from character to character throughout the book.*

Tervalon: You know, I'm glad you read the book. I've been interviewed by people who haven't read the book ...

Jervey Tervalon is host for the CCS Literature Symposium, which meets every Thursday at 4 p.m. in Building 494, Room 136. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

There will be a book-signing with Jervey today, Feb. 10, at 5:30 p.m. after the literature symposium in Building 494, Room 136.

—Evan Machlan

Jervey Tervalon's *Understand This* is an in-depth and provocatively shocking look at the violent reality of love, birth, life and death in the disjointed and despair-ridden world of inner-city America.

Set in South Central Los Angeles, *Understand This* is a compelling and beautifully composed exposé of the clandestine inner voices that struggle and fight to grasp a semblance of hope amidst the depraved and seemingly endless tragedy of inner-city life. The serenely cacophonous voices of a chorus of narrators collide and mesh in Tervalon's first novel, to herald in litany a powerfully sublime testament to the desperation and insanity of a society on a collision course with itself and the world.

Unsettling in its voluptuous directness, *Understand This* pushes the maxim that 'access is not necessarily understanding' to its very edge. Tervalon gets inside his characters and conveys the truth of their voices with an elegant simplicity that opens for the reader a world too often seen only in the light of its most recent tragedy, spelled out flat and senselessly on the pages of the Metro section. Through the kaleidoscopic yet clearly defined use of multiple narrators, Tervalon shows us a baffling world of cause and effect, soaked to the bone in desperate reason.

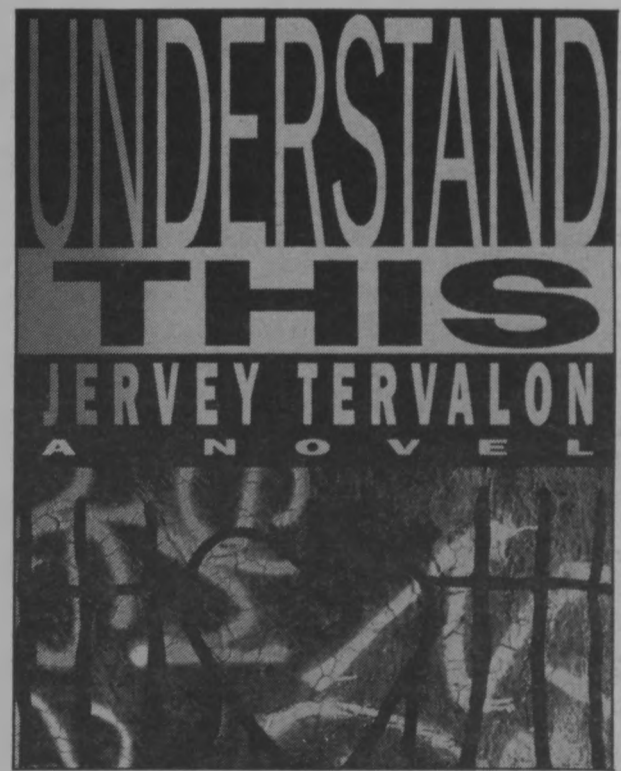
Invaginated in an Americanized shell of Kafkaesque complexity, walled in on every side by a legacy of violence, terror and self-oppression, the characters of *Understand This* are torn from the possibility of escape with every step they take toward it. We are brought into a world where sex and violence and drugs collide and explode time and time again with the exhaustive and disseminating search for self-definition, with the all-consuming and untenable need for a moment's

respite amid the insurmountable sickness of the real.

Tervalon has accomplished a work of majestic proportions and inalienable force. As an author, he has escaped just far enough to look back with a lush clarity and expose the vainglorious stupidity and heart-rending humanity of a materialist, escapist culture bent on self-destruction. Tervalon's finely tuned artistic sympathy has allowed him to transcend, in a sense, this cycle of senseless misery and elucidate the depths of a deadly serious, immediacy-driven search for love and identity in a world coming apart at the seams, while still held together by the thinnest and most delicate of threads.

selves that shape and define so much of the whole.

As the front pages of today's newspapers speak of the atrocities of a faraway Balkan war, Tervalon takes us into a graphically realized Balkanization of America and into the overgrown ruins of our own backyard. Through his insight and honesty, Tervalon's grippingly real portrayal of the lives of his South Central characters forces us to ask why, and even more boldly how this could be. In the midst of the shattered and directionless frenzy of urban American life, as the world cries for justice and liberty for places far away, we see the brutal chains of mass-produced materialist desire and the banishment of justice itself, for characters living in our own home,



His story is strong and rich, vivid and real. *Understand This* is a post-modern masterpiece that has cut up the pat image of inner-city life offered by politicians and the mass media, recombined and juxtaposed to create a lucid whole that is more than the sum total of its parts. It does this while gently reminding us that it is the life of the parts them-

characters driven to tragedy by a raw need to escape. Male and female wage war with each other and themselves in a desperate attempt to grasp and hold on to even the faintest semblance of an identity which they are brought up to believe is somehow secretly lodged in the heart of the ever-elusive and il-

See BOOK, p.6A

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The Poppy Field By **Kevin Carhart**

In the spring of '92, I would read about Slumberland records on the 4AD mailing list on electronic mail, then go do my KJUC show and pull out the label's 7-inch singles by the likes of Velocity Girl, the Lilies, the Swirlies, Jane Pow, Lorelei, Whorl, and Black Tambourine. Back then the net was raving about SpinART's CD compilation, *One Last Kiss*. The Slumberland pop bands and their contemporaries have always been well-suited to compilations, after the 7-inch single, and now there's a new one to take up the reins of *One Last Kiss*, *Pop Licks* and Keith D'arcy's compilation cassette, *The Moderna Wunda Major All-Automatic Convenience Centerette*. The new element is *Something Pretty Beautiful*, from Brilliant Records in Richmond, Virginia.

As a matter of fact, Small Factory's "Hopefully" and Tree Fort Angst's "Trampoline" were already on that cassette, so I guess this is the big CD debut. Tree Fort Angst have a low profile — the chiming, bouncing "Trampoline" is the only Tree Fort Angst I've heard since the anthemic "You Should've Seen the One That Got Away," on *One Last Kiss*, though they do have music out domestically on Velodrome. "Hopefully" by Small Factory has the sort of vocal singalong by Alex, Dave and Phoebe that made their singles (especially "What to Want," on the Slumberland one) and live show so good.

The Small Factory show in San Francisco in late June was as an opening act for Fudge, pictured below,



who have two songs on here. On their album, the "studio Fudge" plays very sweet, languid laments like "girlwish," songs that are powerful and strangely reminiscent of dune buggies going over sand dunes in the '70s. (Don't ask me why.) The live track, "shirts and skins," sounds like the "live Fudge" — they let their noisier side go in concert and play some punkier, battering stuff. Fudge are signed to Caroline — they're the only band with a "courtesy of" message at the bottom, so I guess they're the biggest name in sight.

Richmond and the surrounding areas have been kind of the center of this new thing. Mike Shulman has taken Slumberland from Silver Spring, Maryland, out to Berkeley, but a good deal of the stuff on the new comp is from Richmond, and almost all the tracks by the Richmond bands are great.

Schwa's "saccharine glue" has those harmonies down. The Tribbles' "In the Sun" sounds like Slowdive one minute and cymbal waves the next. Twitch Hazel's "nowhere" is a bassline-driven pop sprawl with teeth. The Petals sound slightly polished — in a good way, like Downy Mildew. (There's a band of modern-day hippies from Milwaukee called the Petals on November Rain Records, but this is different.)

The rest of the 19 tracks from Virginia, Mississippi and elsewhere are equally good. Notably, Black Tambourine have re-emerged as The Magpies, and I think it's Mike from Slumberland starting the West Coast epoch. Good music ...

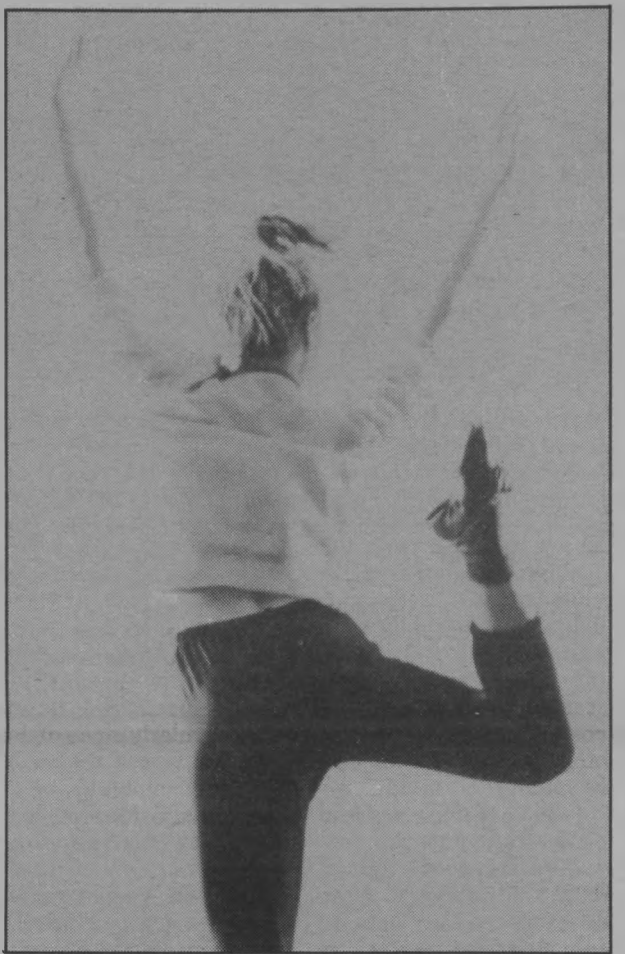
Brilliant Records is located at P.O. Box 17116, Richmond, VA 23226.

DANCE RIGHT

Mix a little classical with a splurge of modern, add a whole bunch of loose-limbed individuals who can twist and mold their bodies into the most dynamic extremes, and you produce one of the most exciting dance companies to hit America in a long time.

Composed of around 18 dancers, the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company will be hitting Campbell Hall with all of the vibrancy composed when the soul is in flight. In such pieces as "Four Ragtime Dances" and their new "Waiting for the Sunrise," the dancers move through their repertoire with playfulness and gay abandon, as well as a serious rebellion that one would only achieve in the world of dance.

To celebrate the company's twenty-fifth anniversary, three new dances have been added to the tour, each in collaboration with other major dance companies. "Waiting for the Sunrise," a collection of pieces danced to Les Paul and Mary Ford recordings from the '40s and '50s, was first formed with Mikhail Baryshnikov's "White Oak Dance Project," in which some of his dancers worked with the Lubovitch company. The eight songs in the collection, some performed by Johnny Puleo and his



Harmonica Gang, are moving pieces with slight touches of humor. "The Sabre Dance," which is included in this ensemble, is one wild joke, a definite highlight of the evening.

The other two works, "American Gesture" and "Sinfonia Concertante," are mainly New York-oriented. The first is based around the Pacific Northwest Ballet, and the second came into being as a collaboration for the 25th Mostly Mozart Festival.

One of the most entertaining dances in Lubovitch's collection of outstanding works is "Wrong Face" (which, I am sad to see, is not in the program sheet). Danced to Cole Porter's tune "It's All Right With Me," the dance depicts the smug, rebellious reaction of a girl against the world. Rebecca Rigert dances it with the facial expression that we all wish we could give to our detestable jobs, boyfriends and past relationships, but don't. Instead, she's every one of us who does this sort of "devil-may-care" dance in the privacy of our own bedroom.

Another face to watch for is Scott Rink. In "Waiting for the Sunrise," he is the sole supporter of the creative humor found in "Sabre Dance." With his chin hiked high in the air and his chest puffed out, he could put all other high-stepping knee-stutterers out to pasture.

"Miramba" steps away from the more campy dances, producing a more poetic line of imagery. At times, some of the dancers look like elements of some golden wave, dancing in the light. Although this dance is beautiful to begin with, the movements become as tedious and as repetitive as the music. I love a beautiful adagio as well as the next person, and after dancing with a ballet company for three years, I should know a little of which I speak. But even I have to admit that I kept looking at my wrist-watch, waiting for this piece to end.

Lubovitch does not emphasize costumes or setting, which, due to the harsh economic funding for dance, is easy to understand. The dancing really fills up the stage regardless, concentrating more on movement than on clothing. Actually, in "Waiting for the Sunshine," where the atmosphere is somewhat campy anyway, the thrift-store costumes actually add to the mood.

—Heather Siple

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This week Artsweek will begin identifying stories with user-friendly hand-drawn icons. This art was created by Illustrations editor Matt Ragland.

SOME MAGIC

An opera in English is like a bad musical. It's true. For the last two weeks, the UCSB Music Dept. has been putting on an English-language version of Mozart's "The Magic Flute" at Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall. While the production is well-done musically, the English translation leaves a lot to be desired. In English, "The Magic Flute" comes across not as the majestic and fanciful opera it should be, but as clumsy and awkward. Musically, the translation makes little difference — operatic singing styles blur the words so much that at times I found myself wondering if the singer had instinctively reverted back to German or some other language. The translation fails not in musical areas, but in dialogue.

Apparently, Andrew Porter, the translator of this production, chose to directly translate the dialogue from the original text. If not, he is quite inept. His dialogue is so bad, I hope that he has directly translated it and not created such horribleness himself. Rather than graceful and lyrically flowing dialogue, it is choppy and awkward. This version should be a handbook on how not to translate. Andrew Porter, wherever you are, give Herb Kretzmer a call for a lesson. Last I heard, his translation of "Les Miserables" is doing pretty well.

The story of "The Magic Flute" is this: A young prince named Tamino falls in love with the picture of Pamina, daughter of The Queen of the Night. The Queen informs Tamino that her daughter is being held captive by the evil Sarastro, and urges him to free her. Tamino agrees and sets off, with friend Papageno in tow. But once he finds Pamina, he discovers that it is the Queen who is evil, not Sarastro. After many trials and sufferings, Tamino and Pamina are united, and Papageno is also rewarded with a wife. The opera ends with the Queen defeated and the heroes victorious. Nothing too complicated.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for much of this production.

While the sets and scenic design were attractive, one could not help but notice several minor but distracting mechanical and structural failures stemming from overly complicated sets. I was particularly embarrassed by one scene in which one of the set doors refused to close. As a result, Papageno had to awkwardly close the gate moments before passing through it.

While visually stimulating, the lighting for "The Magic Flute" was also distracting. An overuse of patterns in the lights created a blurry and confusing effect. At some points, the lighting was effective, such as its use to create the idea of snow-covered mountains in the opening scenes, but on the whole, it was overused. The show's costuming was quite interesting, particularly many of the ethnic outfits. Tamino's Slavic look versus the more Egyptian look of Sarastro was quite exciting, though I could have done without Tamino's silly-looking hat.

Musically, this show is good. The singers are skilled enough and the orchestra is quite competent. Mozart's score is exciting and captivating. I never tire of hearing Mozart's music played by a live orchestra — there's something magical about it. Brett Mutinelli (Pamina) and George DeMott-Bovenzi (Tamino) were both very good in their respective roles. Mutinelli has a lovely

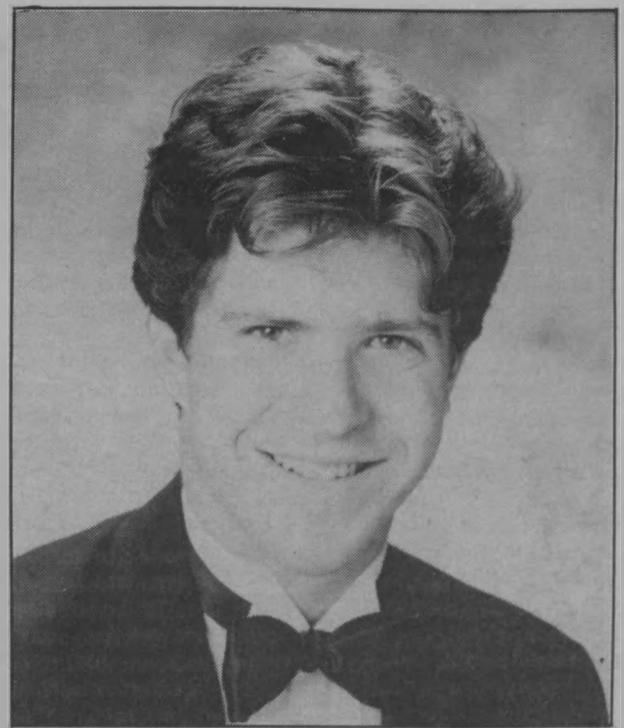
voice and was the only singer I didn't have a problem hearing. DeMott-Bovenzi played the heroic Tamino well and was the premier male voice in the show. Scott Reed as Papageno was the show's comedic element and he sang competently. As the Queen of the Night, Alicia Solomon was quite good, but at times I felt she could have projected better, as it was difficult to hear her.

On the whole, "The Magic Flute" was an average performance, which is to be expected — opera is a complicated and difficult medium to master. Still, this university rarely gets opera, and I had hoped that they would make up for quantity with quality. But 'twas not to be. I don't know, maybe it was just bad seats.

—Davin McHenry



Clockwise, Kerry Walsh as "The Queen of the Night," assistant conductor Edwin Outwater and conductor Heiichiro Ohyama.





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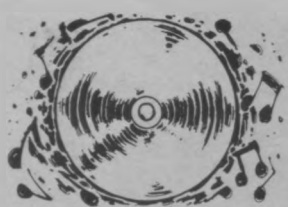
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OFF THE MARK

**Course of Empire
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I was planning out my schedule for next quarter when an ounce of depression set in. One of the classes that I needed was right after lunch, when "CHiPs" comes on. Then I noticed that one of my labs went until five; was I going to make it home in time for "The A-Team?" If something doesn't change by the middle of March, I am going to be unbearable to live with.

Then it dawned on me that other students must be having the same problem. Maybe that's why when I ride to school after "CHiPs," there's a large crowd of empty faces com-

ing the other way. I bet some people have even gone their entire college years without seeing "CHiPs" reruns.

I remember my unfortunate situation last summer, when "The A-Team" wasn't on. I started slouching, buying chainsaws and corncocks. Old friends noticed that I was hanging out with a less than savory crowd. Even my musical tastes changed, from Eddie Rabbit to Course of Empire.

Don't get me wrong, depression metal definitely has its place in your CD rack, but only when life is dealing you some rotten broccoli.

Fortunately, that's not me right now. Except for my class schedule next

quarter, I'm doing well. Every day I make it home in time for the shows. If every once in a while I am forced to miss either one, I'm honest enough with myself to accept it and hope that I make it until the next day.

I realize that it's not fair to pit the band Course of Empire against "The A-Team" and "CHiPs," but Course of Empire is not what I'd call good. Life is tough and only the strong survive. Maybe that's why some TV shows have faded away into that great cathode ray in the sky, and the strong are still playing reruns. I just hope that they bring back "The Dukes of Hazzard" soon.

—David Potter



CD REVIEW

**Angelfish
Angelfish
Radioactive**

Angelfish. They are a little heaven and a lot of bone. Inundated with eclectic overtones and harmonic vocals.

"I love you — you're so religious, I get a thrill when the curtain calls. I feel like a Roman candle, do your stuff while the empire falls." "Suffocate Me" has a deep, romantic, progressive sound that fills the room with lollipops and leather chains.

The female vocals resemble those of Concrete Blonde, dynamic yet playful at times, taunting the listener to experience new realms of passion. But not all the songs are sedately serious. "You Can Love

Her" hopscoches to Cranberries-sounding vocals, taking you through numbered squares, all the way, 'til it brings you back to square one with "King of the World." Now here's one hell of a tune. After one listen, you've got to hear it all day. With dissonant profundity, the melody plays upon the elevation of cymbals to take it to its bridge.

The sultry track "Sleep with Me" shows the diversity of the vocal style, drawing upon a slight country taste to spice up the program. Another favorite, "Heartbreak to Hate," starts out slow, winds up to whamming, U2-like guitars, and then slips back into mediocrity with the two theme words, "wo" and "ya," to bring it

to a close. Soft, amplified strings caress the ear as the light, Bangles-y harmonies of "Sun Won't Shine" contrast the harsh electric blanket smothering many of the other tunes.

One such tune comes to mind. On "Mummy Can't Drive," the guitar action is not so much distorted as it is disturbed. Like a mixer with the thrash button stuck, the song's only redeeming quality is its repetitive catchy beat.

The last number, appropriately titled "The End," brings the dreaded clichéd lyrics we all avoid to the surface, combined with supplementary segments of '50s swing and yodeling, to bring the curtain down on an almost enjoyable album.

—Jennifer Chedar

**The Solsonics
Jazz in the Present Tense
Chrysalis**

Back in 1991, bass player Jex Colin and percussionist extraordinaire Willie McNeil began playing on Sunday nights at a little Los Angeles club, then called the King King Cafe. The duo's jazz-funk style soon attracted a small but loyal following, and in no time they were jamming with talented musicians, members of groups ranging from Fishbone to Living Colour. After many nights of intense sessions, they nailed down a tight group of fellow funksters, and thus arose the Solsonics.

With the likes of Digable Planets and Guru's Jazzmatazz blowing up in '93 in a rather large way, and now US 3, many people are saying, "That jazz hip-hop thing has already

been done, man. It's played out." To them I say that bringing jazz into hip-hop wasn't just a trend or phase, but an effort to break new ground in music. It will never be played out as long as musicians like the Solsonics take music to new planes.

On their debut CD, *Jazz In The Present Tense*, the Solsonics soar above all the monotony of mainstream music and drop a crazy phat sound for all to enjoy. Essentially, this is a jazz album with heavy influence from many different sources, including hip-hop, reggae and straight-up soul. The result is a hybrid of what is good about a few different genres of music — a grand groove, if you will.

The title track, "Jazz in the Present Tense," is basically a funk jam with a laid-back beat, flute, horns, serious piano, and

a tasty vocal and guitar-matched solo. Every member of the band goes off somewhere on this track, which really embodies the Solsonics' sound. A few cuts are a bit more polished and refined, with smooth vocals such as "Keep the Rhythm Strong" and "Blood Brother," in which a call for love and tolerance is laid out, jazz style.

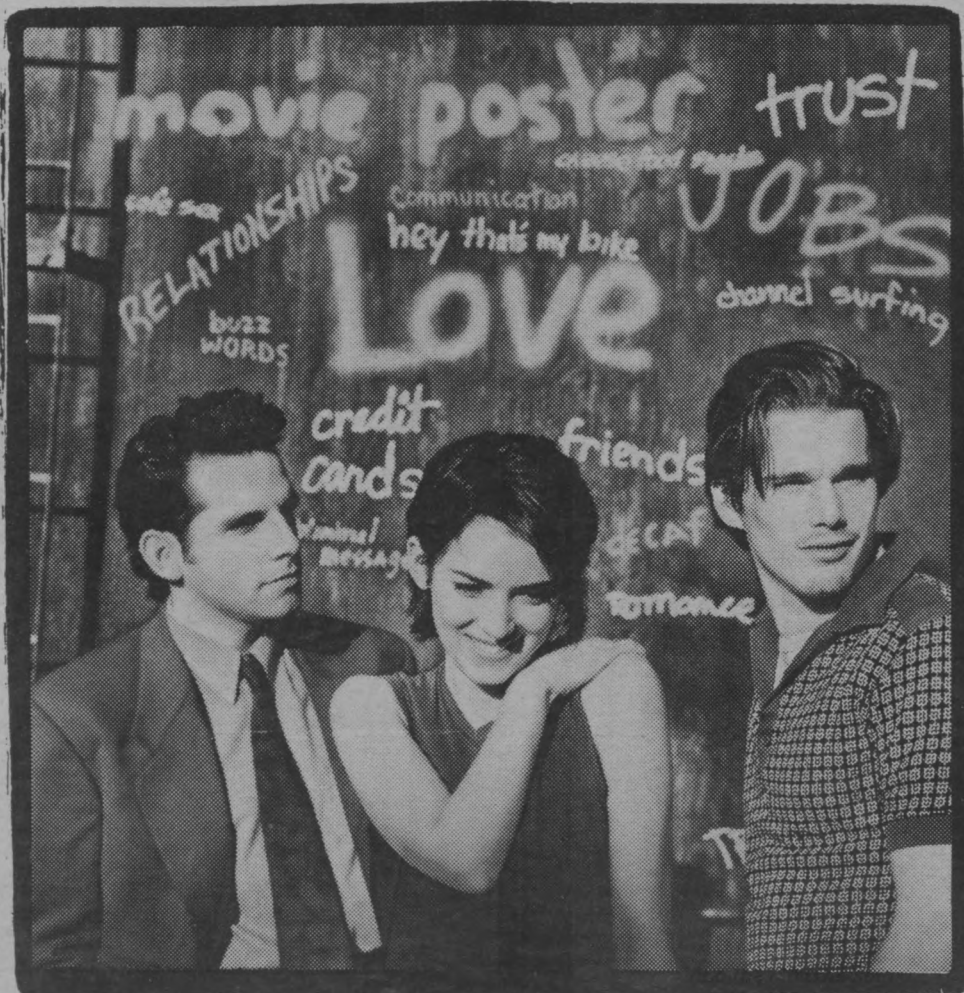
"Montuno Funk" cruises with a delicious Latin flavor, complete with salsa piano, belting horns and mad bongos. On the flip side, "Inside is a Stride" begins Cypress-style, with a dope bassline that jumps off on the strong hip-hop tip. The break beat is more emphasized and a guest rapper lays out a cool mellow set of verses for all the rhyme fans. The rest of the album

—Matt Turner

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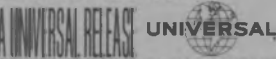
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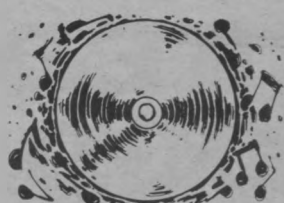
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Some Old Bullshit
Grand Royal

Remember when you first sang "Brass Monkey" and "Slow and Low (That is the Tempo)?"

In some circles there is no dope better than that Beastie dope. And if you include yourself in our ranks, a re-release of old pre-rap grooves is still a Beastie release.

Just check out these zany lyrics and tell me these aren't the same Beas-ties that played eggman:

yee haa

*oh shut up you pig fucker
you're so ugly, Adam,
you look like a zebra
your mother's a zebra
why don't you get
a haircut farm boy?*

As many rap fans already know, the Beasties have not always been down with the hip-hop nation and were first very much part of the lower N.Y.C. hard-core scene while poets like Too Short were already hawking rhyme tapes — though there are definitely punk (and rap) purists who hold



the trio are nothing but toy punk imitators.

Whether you label them as hip-hop, punk, both or neither, their release of 1983 licks is still here and yours ain't. Though Mike D and MCA are Adrock-less, the grooves have the bump of a "Gratitude" on speed or a "Paul Revere" kicking it in Manhattan's lower east side.

The tracks "Cookie Puss" and "Egg Raid on Mojo" subscribe to a punk

aesthetic that stresses the hard-core and the minimal over the glossy and the synthetic. It is easy to see how the Beasties made the switch into rap, as even in their punk phase the rockers were already toying with the mike and sparking the drum rolls.

While the songs are quite short and fast, the tracks together do constitute a record worth listening to.

—Martin Boer

Various
In Yo' Face!
Rhino Records

Rhino Records wins!! After monumental releases of Atlantic jazz, '70s punk, rockabilly and hard-core anthologies, they have delivered again. *In Yo' Face!*, a five-CD compilation, revives the sweatiest of '70s funk with an inaugural shot from the bop gun.

Born in the late '60s from a fusion of soul, LSD experimentation and Hendrix-inspired fuzz rock, the funk evolved from small-club local scenes in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles (notably the "Apple of Eve" and the "Total Experience") to greater appeal in other cities with large Black populations, and on to international crossover success. In fact, we are still feeling the aftershocks of George Clinton's Big Bang.

Twenty years later, a whole spectrum of funky people are paying tribute, including such diverse bands as Public Enemy (spinning a variation on the Isley Brothers' "Fight



the Power"), Fishbone (covering Curtis Mayfield's "Freddie's Dead," the theme from *Superfly*), the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Arrested Development, to name a few.

As any great anthology should do, *In Yo' Face!* not only rehashes the classic cuts, like Sly and the Family Stone's "Thank You Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin," James Brown's "Get Up I Feel Like Being Like a Sex Machine" and Parliament's "Tear the Roof Off the Sucker (Give Up the Funk)," among

others. It also introduces a wide range of new sounds for the unfunky. Among these, my personal favorite is "Dukey Stick (Part 1)" by George Duke, located on Volume 4.

This timely release opens a new front for Dr. Funkenstein's war against the unfunky forces of authoritarianism, racism and wage slavery. With the hope of creating "one nation under a groove," this anthology frees both minds and asses.

—Chris Dunlap

THIS ARTICLE SURE SUCKS



On Friday, Feb. 11, Mike Lackey and Rick Parker, the writer and artist of the new *Beavis and Butt-Head* comic book based on the infamous and wildly popular MTV television series, will be autographing comics at Comics on Parade, 933 State Street, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

In what is probably the most humanitarian event Beavis and Butt-Head have ever been involved in, Comics on Parade will be requesting a voluntary donation of 25 cents for the autographs of Lackey and Parker, which Comics on Parade will then match. All the proceeds will go to an American Red Cross

representative on the premises, with the funds earmarked for Los Angeles earthquake relief.

Along with the appearance of Lackey and Parker, Comics on Parade will also be holding a Beavis and Butt-Head look-alike contest, so start working on your costumes now!

The "Beavis and Butt-

Head" television program, broadcast on MTV, has slowly become a huge success since its debut in March of 1992, with everyone from David Letterman to Howard Stern singing the praises of the show. Not content with conquering the television, music and literary mediums (*The Beavis and Butt-Head Experience* was a recent success on the *Billboard Magazine* sales chart, while their first

book, *This Book Sucks*, was recently published), Beavis and Butt-Head made their debut last month in the pages of a Marvel Comics magazine.

Both the writer and the artist of the *Beavis and Butt-Head* comic book are experienced hands at Marvel. Writer Mike Lackey is a longtime editorial staffer, having worked on the Spider-man titles and written for titles such as *King Arthur*

& the *Knights of Justice*, *The Punisher* and *Web of Spider-man*.

Artist Rick Parker boasts even more experience in the Marvel Bullpen, having lettered nearly every title Marvel publishes over the past 17 years. Rick's art can be seen in *The Destroyer*, and his humorous comic strips are published in *Marvel Age* and on the "Bullpen Bulletins" page.

—Scott Tipton

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OPENS FRIDAY AT A THEATRE NEAR YOU



HEART BEATS



KNOCKED ON HOOD

When I heard that the film *The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg* will be premiering in Santa Barbara this Sunday night, I immediately remembered my life and times in a boiler room last year.

As a frugal student, I lived in a room adorned with pipes and other plumbing devices. In mid-March, paranoia ensued as a broken pipe showered my possessions with water. Everything I owned was drenched, and much of my dearest bric-a-brac remains stained to this day. While I was hurriedly schlepping things out of my room, I remember the fear that came over me when it first hit me — Allen Ginsberg's poem to me could be ruined. The words he had written across the title page of his *Collected Poems* volume could have dribbled off the sheet, ink and all. But as odd as life is, his book was one of the only things that remained pristine and pure, amongst piles of wet literature.

But Ginsberg has always been a survivor, a point that watching the film a little later only impressed upon me more. To start with, Ginsberg is arguably the most well-known living poet in the western world. His signature poem "Howl" set the mood for the entire beat generation in the '50s. His peers would later include William Burroughs, Jack



Kerouac, Ken Kesey and Neal Cassidy. Today at UCSB many courses in English carry his works.

In the film, director Jerry Aronson sketches the life of the poet in decade-wide blocks, along with the people he affected. Besides having Ginsberg read and explain his own works, a number of other personalities like William Burroughs, Norman Mailer, Joan Baez, Timothy Leary, Ken Kesey, Abbie Hoffman and Amiri Baraka make worthwhile appearances in the film. The angelic way that Ginsberg looks at life does

wonders among the fighting words of Tom Hayden or the hypersnobbery of William F. Buckley.

Although the documentary is fairly straightforward in film technique, the subject is so intriguing that students interested in areas outside of literature will still find the film delightful.

The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg is showing on Sunday, February 13, at 7 p.m. in Campbell Hall. The poet himself will be on campus February 24, at 8 p.m., also in Campbell Hall.

—Martin Boer

I approached *The Snapper* with some trepidation, knowing its reputation as the "feel-good" movie of the season. The trouble with the "feel-good" movie is how bad it makes you feel. That, I think, is its main characteristic — along with shameless sentiment and an ending as soft as a bag full of kittens. Actually this Irish/English production is not so self-indulgent. It has plenty to recommend it, even if it's not as funny as the critics say it is.

Directed by Stephen Frears (*My Beautiful Laundrette*, *Dangerous Liaisons*), it has light-hearted charm and is refreshingly explicit, with none of the dishonest sheen with which Hollywood covers anything to do with sex or the body. Roddy Doyle adapted the screenplay from his novel ("Snapper" is slang for baby) and captures well the horror and color of the people of Dublin, though I fear that many Americans may not get either the ac-

cents or the references.

Twenty-year-old Sharon Curley (Tina Kellegher) lives in a typically overcrowded Irish working-class household on a suburban housing estate. Her community is friendly and tolerant, for all its raucousness and tendency to argue. In between working at the local supermarket and squabbling with her family, her idea of fulfillment is to get insensibly drunk with her live-wire, post-punk, witchlike friends.

This rebounds on her one night, when lying back on a car hood, she is made pregnant by a man older than her father. This naturally distresses the said father (Colm "Star Trek" Meaney) who, along with everyone else in the neighborhood, gives her a wide berth, so to speak. However, impending grandfatherhood predictably brings him round, and all is resolved in the conventional way.

The humor is well observed with some cracker-

jack wit, but personally I did not find it uplifting. As each caricature shuffles on screen to do their comic turn, one is left with as much a sense of sadness as of release. The characters are lively and gregarious, but there's something desperate, too, in their togetherness — no space for dignity or for real insight.

It's a small-scale film. It looks like it was made for TV, and to be honest, does not gain from being seen on a large screen. Perhaps its greatest significance is as a record of the social and cultural changes made in Ireland over the last ten or twenty years, such as the reduced power of the Catholic church. (How many other films about southern Ireland have not a priest in sight?) A society less parochial to be sure, but one whose distinctiveness has been replaced by the ubiquitous Anglo-American cultural blandness.

—Martin Knight

BOOK

Continued from p.1A
lusury American pie.

Value, meaning and significance are pummeled by the violent and blind desire that accompanies omnipresent abjection. The heights of despair in *Understand This* are laid out flat across a grid of

cars and homes, and are overshadowed by the empty security and hollow sanity of endless artificial walls on both sides of which the vivacious reality of suffering humanity sinks, further and further, into itself.

It is the courage to step outside, to outgrow the recalcitrant shell of stupidity

and foolishness, to break down the walls and acquire for oneself the sanity of perspective, to think clearly with open eyes. That is what Jervey Tervalon has done, and it is the audacious challenge he offers the reader in *Understand This*.

—Kip Bauersfeld

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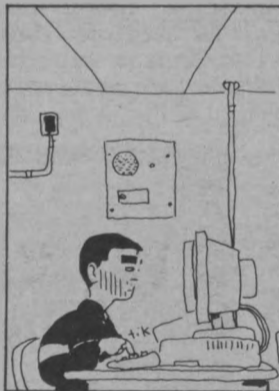
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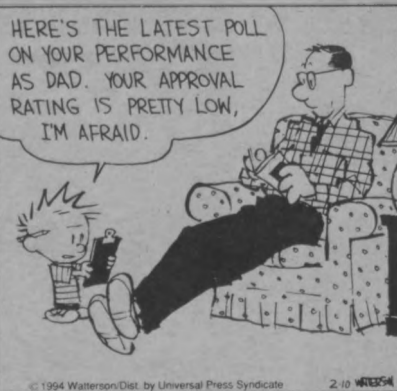
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CHILE'S INDIGENOUS TUNES SURE TO MESMERIZE CAMPUS

Picture this: You're standing on a ground of snow in South America's Andes, staring at serene mountains in front of you that seem to continue for miles and miles. You look at the condors soaring above you and the llamas wandering around you. You have finally found peace. All is tranquil — the only sound you hear is a soothing melody from a *quena* drifting to your welcoming ears.

But it's too expensive to fly all the way down there. So the closest you're going to get is witnessing Inti-Illimani, a seven-man Chilean band that will appear at UCSB's Campbell Hall to transfer indigenous tunes from their homes to Santa Barbaran listeners. The band formed in 1967 at the University of

Santiago in Chile, but was forced to relocate in exile to Italy in 1973 due to the administration of General Augusto Pinochet. The group remained in Europe until 1988, unable to return home.

The European influence is strongly evident in their songs, as the band employs such European instruments as the guitar, the harp and the saxophone. The African influence is also present with the percussion sound of the *Guero*.

The Andean instruments include the Incas' five-stringed instrument, the *charango*, which is similar to a small guitar and traditionally made from an armadillo shell. The *quena* may perhaps be the most memorable and recognizable of the Andean

instruments; it is a bamboo, flute-type instrument without a mouthpiece that carries the capability of releasing you into a dream-like state of mind.

The group has toured the world, bringing their music to Canada, Scandinavia, Japan, the United States and Australia. Now they will share the songs from their CD *Andadas* with the Santa Barbara audience.

Green Linnet recording artists Inti-Illimani will perform Wednesday, Feb. 16, at 8 p.m. at UCSB's Campbell Hall. General tickets are \$20/\$17/\$14, while the student tickets run at \$16/\$14/\$12. For tickets and information, contact UCSB Arts & Lectures at (805) 893-3535.

—Sonja Ellis



FRENCH FUN

When French superstar actor Gerard Depardieu makes a movie that is released widely in the United States, it's either a French film of the highest quality, or an American film that was good enough to get him into the cast. Either way, Americans have come to expect great things from the man who brought *Jean de Florette*, *Cyrano De Bergerac* and *Green Card* to the silver screen.

Which is precisely why *My Father the Hero* is so difficult to watch. It begins poorly and goes downhill fast, forcing Depardieu to wade through one uninspiring scene after another. The film has Depardieu as André, a French divorcé who takes his 14-year-old daughter Nikki (Katherine Heigl) on a Caribbean vacation. After giving the audience that much to work with, the film then falls into exactly what you would expect: an off-the-shelf storyline in which Nikki tries to act like a woman and find tropical romance while rebelling against the father that hasn't been there for her since the divorce.

Heigl is so convincing as the snotty and incorrigible teenage girl that one can't help but want to throttle her. Determined to be grown up beyond her years, Nikki constantly flashes the bodacious bod that puberty has recently bestowed upon her,

and succeeds in catching the eye of a local 17-year-old stud named Ben (Dalton James). Not surprisingly, a tedious tale of teenage romance follows.

But suddenly, about 45 minutes after the opening credits, *My Father the Hero* starts to work — and work well. Nikki tells Ben that André is her lover so that Ben won't think she's a square for travelling with her father, and as the lies start snowballing the film gets good — and Depardieu shines. His sheer charisma and screen presence are enough to carry almost any film, even a slow-moving comedy like this one.

The second half of the film features some very funny stuff, as André tries to keep up with Nikki's lies and support her stories — while everyone at the resort where they are vacationing shuns him as a child molester. It's not easy to keep up the ever-growing charade, but Andre vows to do anything he can to make his daughter happy.

There is a definite charm to *My Father the Hero*, despite its lethargy and sappiness. There is much about it that doesn't work, but there is enough good stuff to make it worth a matinee price. It will never rival Depardieu's better flicks, but he's so good that he makes this movie fun.

—Scott McPherson

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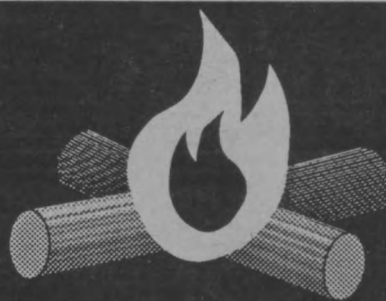
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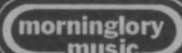


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1. NO PHOTOCOPIED BALLOTS. 2. Ballots must be dropped off at the Daily Nexus Ad Office, underneath Storke Tower, by Friday, February 11, at 5pm. 3. The "Best Of" issue will be published on Friday, February 25. 4. ONE Ballot per person. 5. Ballots must be filled out with reasonable completeness. Ballots with less than half of the blanks filled will be recycled with alacrity. 6. NOTE: The Nexus' "Best of UCSB" is intended to be a good-natured contest among business groups and others in the community. In other words, this is not a cutthroat competition whose results are somehow of deep and lasting significance. Please do not take it as such. 7. Decisions of Ballot referees are final.

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15. Best Chinese Restaurant _____
16. Best Hamburger Spot _____
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18. Best Sandwich Shop _____
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