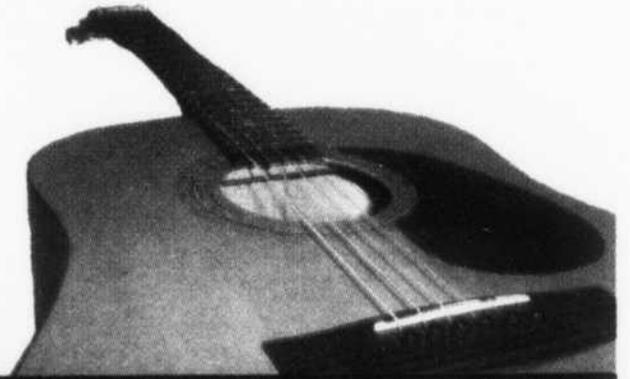


[flash]

Sept. 4, 2003

A glimpse of the biz
available to musicians
at upcoming conference

page 10



A NONSENSICAL TELLING OF A BAND

Juan Prophet Organization on a carrot chase, page 6

from the senior [flash] editor

[Lindsey Turner]

The best in the 'Boro ... again

It's too bad that almost all the copies of *Sidelines* were ceremoniously snatched from the stands Thursday. Most readers probably have no idea that [flash] kicked off the inaugural 'Boro's Best competition then.

But not to worry. We will run and rerun this ballot each week until the voting deadline. We're also rigging up a way for readers to download ballots online and submit them. In case you missed the explanatory spiel last week, here's a condensed version: Murfreesboro culture is unique. It's got small-town charm and big-city attitude all at once. It's time that the student population weighed in on local culture, highlighting the finer points of life in the 'Boro. Ballots should be turned in to the *Sidelines* office, in the James Union Building, Room 310, by Nov. 7. Look for the 'Boro's Best Awards issue early in December, when we'll reveal who and what you and your peers consider to be the 'Boro's premier band, venue, place to get beer and much more. ★

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[flash] is the weekly entertainment tabloid produced by *Sidelines*, MTSU's editorially independent student newspaper. *Sidelines* is published each Thursday and seeks to highlight local arts and entertainment. For information regarding [flash], call (615) 898-2917. To apply to work for [flash], e-mail us at sflash@mtsu.edu or apply in the James Union Building, Room 310.

the 'boro's best 2003 ballot

★ Please nominate as few national chains as possible ★

MUSIC

Best Murfreesboro band

Best Murfreesboro musician

Best place to hear live music

Best place to play live music

Food and drink continued

Best service (restaurant)

Best service (bar)

Best drunk/stoned food

Best grab-and-go lunch place

FOOD & DRINK

Bar with the best bartenders

Best cup of coffee

Best mixed drinks

Best happy hour

Best beer

Best atmosphere (restaurant)

Best atmosphere (bar)

Best breakfast

Best Mexican food

Best oriental food

Best sit-down meal in town

ART & ENTERTAINMENT

Best place to spend a Friday night

Best place to spend a Saturday night

Best place to spend a weeknight

Best place to pick up a date

Best place to take your date

Best place to cheat on your date

Best place to dance

Best place to rent videos

Best place to experience local culture

Best place to see local art

Best place to sit, chill out and read

You can submit your ballot to [flash] several ways. Drop it off at the *Sidelines* office in the James Union Building, Room 310. Mail it to *Sidelines* at 1301 E. Main St. MTSU Box 8, Murfreesboro, TN 37132. Fax it to (615) 904.8193. Download the ballot online at www.mtsusidelines.com. Just whatever you do, send in your ballot. Call (615) 898.2917 if you have any questions.

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'NFL Fever' easy to catch

By Jack Stone

On Aug. 27, I sat down to play *NFL Fever 2003* for the last time. Fond memories of comeback victories and obscene trash talk nearly overwhelmed me as I realized that soon I would be losing a dear friend. The next day, with a tear in my eye, I traded my dependable old game for *NFL Fever 2004*. Life has never been better.

Microsoft Game Studios released the new edition of their multi-platinum football title to a flock of loyal Xbox gamers who are currently locked in their basements, reaping the rewards of their long waits. The new game offers tons of exciting new features and improved graphics and sound, all while holding true to the unprecedented playability offered by its predecessor.

NFL Fever 2004 is more than just an updated version of *2003*. Microsoft has programmed some serious upgrades to the game's AI. Fans of the old game will find that they'll have to improve their passing skills to get around the new defensive adjustments. Also, the new *Fever*

allows for far less "bombs" than the old one, forcing players to work on their running games. The key to success now is to integrate a nice combo of pass and rush plays into your game strategy, not just "Hail Mary" the ball on every down.

One of the most impressive and innovative features in *2004* is "read and lead" passing. The new passing mode allows for a more realistic football experience. "Read and lead" passing works by putting the quarterback's view directly behind the center so the player can pick and choose his or her passes before going deep.

When a gamer finally selects the receiver, getting the ball to him isn't so easy. Instead of throwing the ball to a receiver, *NFL Fever 2004* forces the player to pass the ball to the spot on the field where he or she predicts the receiver will be. Locking onto a receiver and then moving an icon around his general position is how this is done. "Read and lead" passing is tough, but it can be turned on and off in order to accommodate players who suck.

Those who become profi-



Photo courtesy of Microsoft

NFL Fever 2004

★★★★

(out of four stars)

Microsoft Game Studios
Released Aug. 28

cient "read and lead" passers make for tough opponents. Gamers should teach themselves to use the new method so they may have an edge in *2004*'s much-improved online play. Just like the last game in the franchise, *NFL Fever 2004* supports Microsoft's online gaming service, Xbox Live. Players once again enjoy the possibility of becoming online football superstars as they fight for rank among thou-

A bustling online community and actual league competition make *NFL Fever 2004* a sheer joy to play.

sands of other gamers.

The new *Fever* is the first game in Microsoft's brand-spanking-new sports network, XSN. XSN allows players to create their own leagues and sign up for big-time online conferences. Gamers will now be able to play through entire seasons online instead of playing random game after random game.

Microsoft expects the network will revolutionize the sports gaming genre by opening the floodgates of real-time online competitive play.

Hands down, *NFL 2004* is the best football game I've ever played.

Microsoft has developed a classic by focusing on game play and accessibility instead of just graphics. You can do virtually anything and, thanks to XSN and Xbox Live, you can do it online. ★

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Joey's peek at fall TV

By Joey Hood

Let's confront the concrete truth, kids: television sucks.

After watching 10 minutes of the UPN network, you'll reach this inevitable conclusion. Let's face it; the Big Four are no walk in the park either. *Who Wants to Marry My Dad?* *Dog Eat Dog?* *Good Morning, Miami?* Must See TV, my ass.

But despite the usual cynicism fall television induces, the forthcoming slate looks somewhat promising. This isn't to say that undetected *Emerils* or *Baby Bobs* won't work their collective nausea on our viewing palette. However, a light can be found at the end of the tunnel.

And, if you still aren't satisfied, there's always HBO.

Here are a few possible hits, with the unavoidable turkeys thrown in for good measure:

ABC

'10-8'
Sunday, 7 p.m. CST

Starring: Christina Vidal, Scott William Winters, Danny Nucci, Ernie Hudson, Travis Schuldt, Alex Meneses

Plot: A rookie cop (Nucci) monitors the mean streets of Los Angeles under the direction of hard-nosed veteran John Henry (Hudson).

Possible Tagline: "Uhh, here's something to watch before *Alias* comes on."

Chances of Survival: 10:1. Sandwiched between the momentarily Saget-less *America's Funniest Home Videos* and struggling critical fave *Alias*, *10-8* is commercialistic

poison.

Alternative Viewing Options: You could watch *The Simpsons*. Or you could catch the Billy Ray Cyrus virus with *Doc*.

'Hope & Faith'
Friday, 8 CST

Starring: Faith Ford, Kelly Ripa, Ted McGinley

Plot: Two sisters attempt amiability after sister No. 1 (Ripa) is dumped by her daytime soap opera. Wacky hijinks supposedly ensue.

Possible Tagline: "Now Kelly Ripa can irritate America in primetime!"

Chances of Survival: 8:1 Are you kidding me? With that ankle tattoo, Kelly Ripa is gangsta.

Alternative Viewing Options: Seriously Jeeves.

See TV, 5



Continued from TV, page 4

you're considering staying home for *Dateline NBC*?

'It's All Relative'
Wednesday, 7:30 CST

Starring: Jenny Clarke, Reid Scott, Maggie Lawson, John Benjamin Hickey

Plot: Basically, *Dharma & Greg* with snappy gay parents to boot.

Possible Tagline: "Sisterfriend, gay people are funny with a capital F."

Chances of Survival: 6:1 Americans love watching gay men define themselves as court jesters (*Will & Grace*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*) because it's easier to laugh at gay people than to accept them.

Alternative Viewing Options: Instead of watching *Amos & Andy* gay-face through "ooh, talk to the hand" put-downs, further your worldly knowledge with *60 Minutes II*.

CBS

'The Brotherhood of Poland New Hampshire'
Wednesday, 9 p.m. CST

Starring: Randy Quaid, John Carroll Lynch, Mare Winningham, Elizabeth McGovern, Ann Cusack

Produced by: David E. Kelley

Plot: After hammering his patented courtroom drama into cardboard blandness, Kelley returns to quirky *Picket Fences* territory. *The Brotherhood* chronicles three Northeastern brothers, hence the title.

Possible Tagline: "Forgive me for unleashing the monstrosity you call *Ally McBeal*."

Chances of Survival: 9:1. David E. Kelley is gradually becoming television's John Grisham. And, like Mr. Grisham, Kelley is pure hype.

Alternative Viewing Options: Anything.

'Cold Case'
Sunday, 7 p.m. CST

Starring: Kathryn Morris, Jeremy Ratchford, John Finn, Thom Barry

Produced by: Jerry Bruckheimer

Plot: In the movie world, the words

"produced by Jerry Bruckheimer" usually indicate that things will blow up — like, real good. However, Bruckheimer's television track record is a sizable improvement (*CSI*, *CSI: Miami*).

Cold Case mirrors *CSI* as plotlines involve Philadelphia detectives using street smarts and slick gadgets to unravel unsolved murders.

Possible Tagline: "We were this close to calling it *CSI: Philadelphia*."

Chances of Survival: Even. *Cold Case* is bank.

'The Handler'
Friday, 9 p.m. CST

Starring: Joe Pantoliano

Plot: Narc prostitutes and drug dealers make interesting bedfellows. Joe Pantoliano (*The Matrix*, *The Sopranos*' Ralphie) deals with both sides of the gully American Dream, playing a wiry CIA handler.

Possible Tagline: "Hey dateless loser, what the hell else are you going to watch on Friday nights? The PAX network?"

Chances of Survival: 20:1. The Handler airs on Friday nights, a night when the target audience is elderly people and shut-ins. Plus, previous slot occupant *Robbery Homicide Division* died a slow, painful death.

Alternative Viewing Options: Last season's critical darling, *Boomtown*, vs. invincible newsbot Barbara Walters.

FOX

'A Minute with Stan Hooper'
Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. CST

Starring: Norm Macdonald, Penelope Ann Miller, Brian Howe

Plot: A former Andy Rooney-esque journalist (Macdonald) retires from the

limelight and heads westward to face his long-buried Midwestern values. His life then becomes populated with slack-jawed yokels and fervent Bush supporters.

Possible Tagline: "It's waaay better than *Norm*. We promise."

Chances of Survival: 4:1. If *Stan Hooper* is halfway funny, Norm Macdonald will have to reconsider *Dirty Work 2*."

Alternative Viewing Options: The poor man's *Buffy* (*Smallville*) vs. Andy Rooney's senile babbling (*60 Minutes II*).

'Skin'
Monday,
8 p.m. CST

Starring: D.J. Cotrona, Olivia Wilde, Rachel Ticotin, Kevin Anderson

Plot: An updated take on *Romeo & Juliet*. Sadly, Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes weren't available.

Fox's Legitimate Tagline: "And most of all, *Skin* is about skin."

Chances of Survival: 3:1. *Skin*'s soft-pornographic tone and ambiguous sexuality is the perfect match for lead-in *Joe Millionaire*.

Alternative Viewing Options: Machismo pigskin pastime (ABC's *Monday Night Football*) or Nikki Cox's long-awaited comeback (NBC's *Las Vegas*).

NBC

'Coupling'
Thursday, 8:30 p.m. CST

Starring: Colin Ferguson, Jay Harrington, Christopher Moynihan

Plot: Coupling highlights the messy dating world amongst six urbane 30-somethings. Sounds like *Friends*.

Possible Tagline: "Here at NBC, we copy our own shows. We have no shame."

Chances of Survival: 1:2 Thanks

to its Must-See TV digs, *Coupling* should survive to midseason.

Alternative Viewing Options: *WWE Smackdown!*

'The Lyon's Den'
Sunday, 9 p.m. CST

Starring: Rob Lowe, Matt Craven, Kyle Chandler, Elizabeth Mitchell

Plot: Designed with soapy melodrama and intellectual bric-a-brac, *The Lyon's Den* operates inside the confines of an inner city law firm. With Brad Grey (*The Sopranos*) at its helm, *The Lyon's Den* might not delve into law drama stereotypes.

Chances of Survival: 6:1. Opposite ABC's reconstructed and similarly themed *The Practice*, one could assume that *The Lyon's Den* is a goner. But then again, *The Practice* is, like, 'so last decade.'

UPN/The WB

The Mullets
(UPN) Tuesday, 8:30 p.m. CST

Starring: Michael Weaver, David Hornsby, John O' Hurley, Loni Anderson

Produced/Written by: Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein (*The Simpsons*, *Futurama*)

Plot: *The Mullets* are blue-collar *WWE Smackdown*-bred clan who sport wicked mullet hairdos in the name of irony.

Chances of Survival: 2:1 UPN can finally wash itself of *Homeboys From Outer Space*.

Alternative Viewing Options: Former *Simpsons* writers? Dude, I'm so there.

Tarzan
(The WB) Sunday, 8 p.m. CST

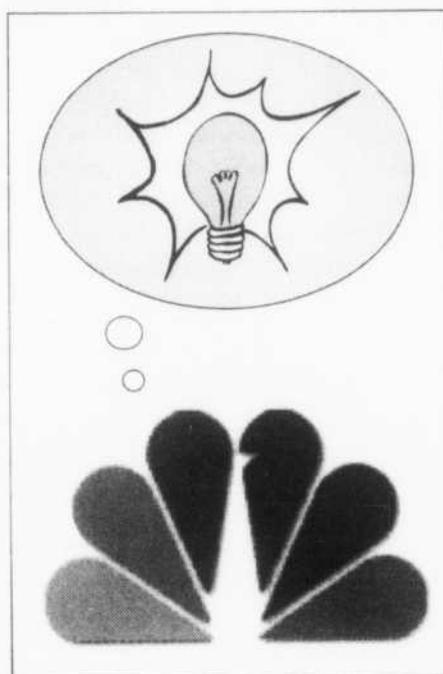
Starring: Travis Fimmel, Sarah Callies, Miguel Nunez, Mitch Pileggi

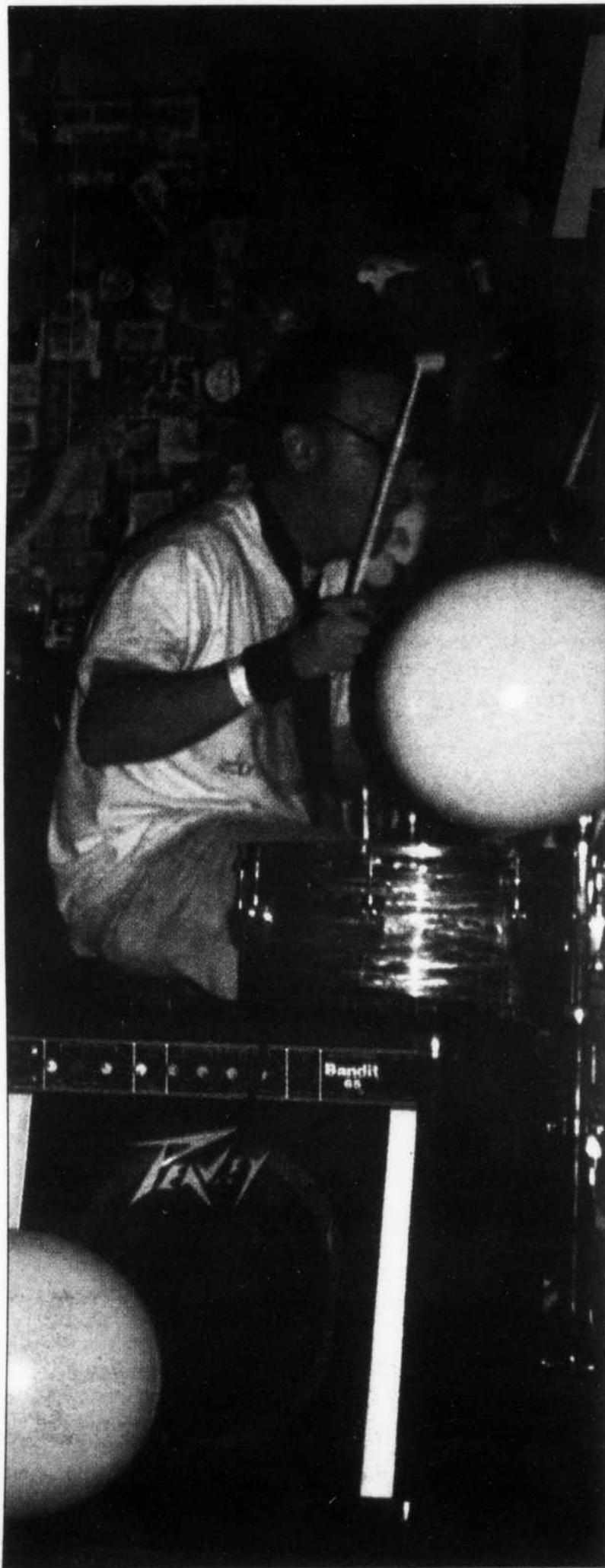
Plot: Former Calvin Klein model Travis Fimmel has another excuse to walk around shirtless in this updated adventure series.

Possible Tagline: "At the WB, we have hormonal teenage girls on lock."

Chances of Survival: 5:1 Shirtless boys fare well over at the WB. ★

www.mtsusidelines.com for more





A NONSENSICAL telling of a band

Juan Profit Organization on a carrot chase

By Leslie Carol Boehms

The carrot and the stick: an object of desire – said carrot – dangling from your standard wooden stick. The “metaphor” was in reality a way for farmers to get the somewhat ignorant and lazy mules to plow the field. The mule saw the object of desire dangling just a few inches from his nose – close enough to incite want, far enough away that he couldn’t reach his desired object.

Now, that we’ve got that cleared up, I must elaborate on the exact nature of this article: local band Juan Profit Organization. But you see, there’s really not much one can actually write about this band (I know, I know, you want an article – I’ll get to it, I promise). But you see, these guys (and gal) are so eccentric so, crazy messed up in the head, that I just have a hard time beginning this piece. So, I know this is a little non-traditional, but let’s face it, so is this band.

When you see the carrot, it really makes you crave the carrot. Even though you cannot reach it.

When I arrived at the practice space/living headquarters for the Juan Profit Organization I was greeted by a cluster of anonymity – except for the ever-elusive and oh-so-sultry Grayson White. Grayson is the only female in the group – she’s also someone I’ve known off and on for a few years now. She sings, plays violin, keyboard and other sundry

sounds.

Kris White (is he the brother? Is he the husband? It’s like Murfreesboro’s own version of the White Stripes-except they really are siblings) is well, a character to say the least. When I saw JPO at the Boro Friday night, he donned a baby blue choir robe as he led the rest of his band-mates on a stick-versus-carrot chase around the bar. His role in the band encompasses guitar, bass, vocals, banjo, piano and trumpet, just to name a few.

Jeff Holt was, well, asleep on the couch when I arrived. He seems to be quite an interesting, yet somewhat, well, inebriated person. From what I can gather, Jeff and Kris split the songwriting duties for JPO. Which is bizarre as there is still an even consistency, or balance, that is felt strung between the majority of their material. Jeff is also responsible for guitar, bass, vocals, accordion, glockenspiel, clarinet, and, well, you get the picture.

It was Josh Foreman’s birthday. Josh plays drums. He’s also a super-rad, laid-back kind of guy. That’s pretty much all I gathered on Josh. However, he was the only one to tell me the truth (sort of) about the carrot as it is in relation to JPO.

The mule just follows the carrot, never realizing that he’s stupidly doing the work he once resisted without any sort of reward.

There are no real answers to most of my questions. This is, I guess, in a sense, sort of a bullshit article. There’s a basis, a reason, for



Photos by Jessica Watson

(Opposite page) Drummer Josh Foreman during a show at the Boro Bar and Grill Aug. 29.

(Left) Juan Prophet Organization performs amidst balloons and booze at the Boro.

(Below) Violinist Grayson White also sings and plays keyboard for the band.

doing things. But no real response. For instance:

Me: "What's the meaning behind your band name?"

Grayson: "Check out clause 34 under the articles of the Prophet."

Jeff: "I was sworn to secrecy by the Prophet himself."

Do you see what I mean now? I don't get to partake of the carrot either.

Example Two:

Me: "How did you guys all come to play together?"

Kris: "By carefully balancing our schedules."

Attempt Three:

Me: "What is the basis, theme, derivative of your sound?"

Jeff: "I think we bring left field to the home plate and try to smack it out of the park."

Kris: "Juan Prophet Organization is a music factory."

So, I think you're beginning to see the difficulty in classifying music by a group of people who, combined, are so radically insane (no offense, I really think they're amazingly cool people, it's just, they're all out of their frickin' minds).

In a somewhat half-hearted way, I suppose I should inform you, the reader, of some musical titillations that are narrative of the Juan Profit Organization. So, in another non-traditional manner, here are the facts:

1. JPO started four years ago this month.
2. There are four core members of the band (Grayson, Kris, Josh and Jeff). However, there are always more players on the stage. More often than not, these participants are Matthew Crisanti and David Jellema.
3. When I first heard the band, they reminded me a lot of Mr. Bungle (the band agreed that this was a fairly accurate comparison).
4. The four core members are also all from Louisiana.

So, in essence, it's all a mind game. Trying to get the carrot. The desire for the carrot. Never actually achieving that object. Being nullified, being content with just following it around. Stupidity. A mule. A carrot and a stick. ✪



Talented Tennesseans bring art alive

By Melissa Coker

Two local hotbeds of culture will showcase several creative works in the upcoming weeks as they unveil unique art with a special focus: the state of Tennessee.

The Frist Center fires things up with displays of items ranging from pottery to silver and textiles to paintings (many are depictions of such Tennessee notables as Sam Houston, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, David Crockett and others).

Covering prehistoric times as early as 10,000 B.C.E. to the present, according to Mark Scala, Exhibitions Curator at Frist, this *Art of Tennessee* display will include somewhere in the neighborhood of 250 artistic representations when it begins its run on Sept. 12. It was constructed by Scala, Benjamin Caldwell and Robert Hicks. Both Hicks and Caldwell are collectors and scholars in the field of Tennesseana.

"Our premise was to position the art history of Tennessee as exemplifying the American experience, in which things like art, language and beliefs are mobile, and are unrestrained by political boundaries," Scala said.

In keeping with this line of thought, the exhibition includes works by native Tennesseans, people who moved to Tennessee from elsewhere or those who created art that relates to the state. It begins by showcasing Native American works found in Tennessee, then travels on to view works of the frontier and antebellum periods.

A section devoted to Tennesseans on the National Stage deals with the time from Jackson's rise in the 1820s until the Civil War, when the state was very influential in shaping the course of the nation.

The 20th century galleries then get under way with Tennesseans who traveled to New York, Philadelphia or Europe to receive their training, as well as people from other places who came here to further their careers, Scala said. Modern and contemporary galleries focus on artists who lived and worked, or still do, in the state. A selection of the art showcase is part of the Tennessee State Museum's collection as well.

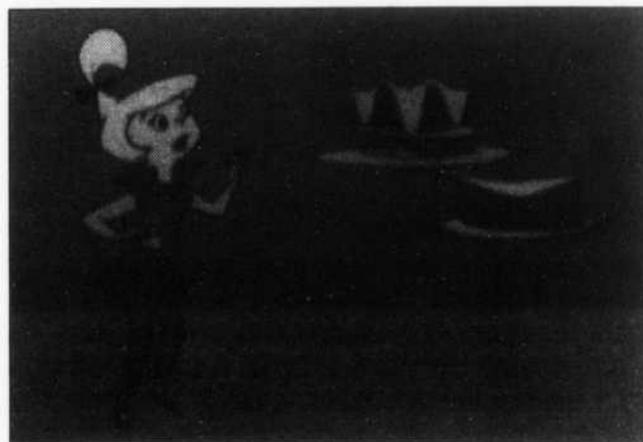
A few of the creators will even be on hand to lend their perspectives on their work. One special spotlight for these talks will be "Off the Wall: Conversations with Contemporary Tennessee Artists," held the second Wednesday of every month beginning Oct. 8. All talks are free and begin at noon. Artists appearing are Robert Durham, Sylvia Hyman, Jane Braddock and Suta Lee.

The Frist isn't the only establishment to bring the creative results of some local talent out of the woodwork. Sparking up Nov. 8 at The Parthenon in Nashville is some fabulous furniture showcased by 17 artisans, all of whom are from or have ties to the Middle Tennessee area.



Photos courtesy of Lila Hall

(Above) Nov. 8, The Parthenon will begin showcasing furniture – an art form in itself – crafted by Middle Tennesseans. (Below) The Parthenon will also explore the art of animation beginning Sept. 7.



From Woodbury to Wartrace, there's something for everyone here. There's even a sink (although it's a bit more elaborate than the standard kitchen variety).

Displayed in the East Gallery through Jan. 31, the exhibit's 22 works demonstrate diversity, craftsmanship and tal-

ent from the furniture artists and sculptors in wood in the Cumberland region of Tennessee. Combining utility with form, the juried furniture display features pieces made not only out of wood but also of stoneware, fabric, leather, marble and other materials.

"Many materials are what you might expect while others are more untraditional," said Lila Hall, registrar and assistant curator of The Parthenon.

Most of the artists will be at the exhibit's reception, which takes place Nov. 29 from 6 until 8 p.m.

Making a splash through October is something pretty fishy: the "Catfish Out of Water" City Art Festival, sponsored in part by The Parthenon. Area teachers, including a few from MTSU, are also making waves as they help to educate about the value of clean, healthy water, particularly that of the Cumberland River.

Fifty-one colorful, 7-foot fiberglass catfish sculptures can be found in Nashville's parks, street corners, local plazas and gathering spots around the city. Each one was decorated by a Middle Tennessee artist and sponsored by an area business, organization or person.

Add to that some animated activity from Sept. 7 to Nov. 1 when The Parthenon presents *From Mickey to the Grinch: The Art of the Animated Film*. A part of the Erie Art Museum's George Nicholas Collection, it explores the art, history and process of the American animated film from the 1930s through the 1970s.

Nicholas (1910-1996) was a pioneering animator who worked in every major animation studio in Hollywood. The exhibit highlights animation cells, animation drawings and model sheets from such films as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Lady and the Tramp*, *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas* and television shows such as *The Flintstones* and *The Jetsons*. The exhibit also includes an Animation Station, where visitors can create their own animation, film it, view their scenes on a TV monitor, then record them on video to take home.

The Parthenon is open from 9 until 4:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and on Sunday from 12:30 until 4:30 p.m. until the end of September. They're closed Sundays October through March. Admission is \$3.50 for adults. Visit their Web site at www.parthenon.org or call (615) 862-8431 for more information.

Normal hours for the Frist Center for the Visual Arts are Monday through Saturday from 10 until 5:30 p.m., Sunday from 1 until 5 p.m., and extended hours on Thursday, when they're open until 8 p.m.

They also house a café that keeps a similar schedule. Access them online at www.fristcenter.org or by phone at (615) 244-3340. Admission is \$4.50 with a college ID and discounted valet parking is available. ★

Weird? Or just Canadian?



Some bands show off their mind-boggling talents and techniques. Others like to flaunt good looks and fashion sense. There are even some who lack musical talent and sex appeal, but make up for it with beautiful words to convey their messages.

The Weakerthans' biggest strength, however, is that they're weird. That's not to say that they can't play; the Weakerthans know how to put a song together. But there are many bands with far greater musicians. The Weakerthans won't be winning any beauty pageants or poetry contests any time soon, either.

What makes them shine above the rest (or at least away from the rest) is their strangeness. And, being unique in any way is important in today's sound-a-like music industry.

Reconstruction Site, the Weakerthans' third studio album, contains bizarre names for songs, such as "Plea from a cat named Virtute" and "Our retired explorer (dines with Michel Foucault in Paris, 1961)." Those of you who

The Weakerthans 'Reconstruction Site'

Epitaph Records
Released Aug. 26
☆☆ (out of four stars)

By Joe Freisinger

listen to this album for the first time might say, "Hey, where did these crazy guys come from? Crazyland?" I would reply, "Sort of — they come from Winnipeg, Canada."

John K. Sampson's lyrics match the peculiar nature of the song titles in "The Reasons" with romantic poetry: "I know you might roll your eyes at this/ but I'm so glad that you exist."

I'm sure he swept his girl off her feet with that one.

Sampson continues the insanity in "Reconstruction Site," singing (actually, talking): "Go tell the nurse to turn the TV back on and throw away my misery/ It never meant that much to me/ It never

Photo provided by Epitaph Records

(Left to right) Jason Tait, John Sutton, John Sampson and Stephen Carroll of The Weakerthans will be in Nashville Oct. 18.

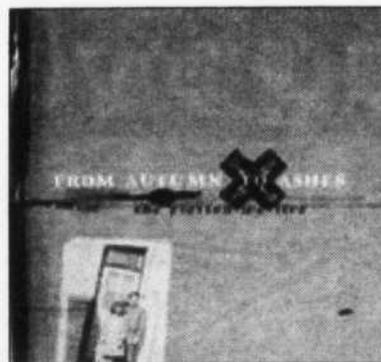
sent a Get Well card."

The band, as well as Sampson, is firm in its commitment to defy normalcy. For, in addition to the required vocals, guitar, bass and drums, The Weakerthans incorporate keyboards, lap steel, pedal steel, vibes and a glockenspiel.

I give the Weakerthans' *Reconstruction Site* two stars because they certainly are unique, but the album lacks a little substance.

If you're already a Weakerthans' fan, and are thinking, "I can't believe this writer didn't get how political the lyrics are," then I apologize. Good for you that you can understand John K. Sampson's lyrics.

The Weakerthans are coming to The End in Nashville Oct. 18. ★



From Autumn to Ashes 'The Fiction We Live'

Vagrant Records
Release date Sept. 9

☆☆ (out of four stars)

I scream, you scream, we all scream for 'The Fiction We Live'

By Joe Freisinger

Long Island: home of the New York Mets, vacation spot for rich people and birthplace of Jim Brown.

It's also home to the emo/hardcore/pop/punk band, From Autumn to Ashes.

From Autumn to Ashes isn't your average emo/hardcore/pop/punk band, however. They have two guitarists, a bassist, a drummer and a growler, but the drummer also sings.

While vocalist Benjamin Perri makes vomiting/burping/coughing noises — I assume with his mouth — drummer Francis Mark sings in his whiny emo voice.

Because of these dynamic changes in musical character, From Autumn to Ashes has never quite felt like they fit in with other bands that do exclusively emo, hardcore, pop or punk music.

This has led guitarist Scott Gross to make such remarks as, "We're like a band going through an identity crisis."

How true that is.

On the first track, "The After Dinner Payback," of *The Fiction We Live*, From Autumn to Ashes kind of sounds like Slayer, whereas the second track, "Lilacs and Lolita," sounds more like Sunny Day Real Estate.

During the third song, "No Trivia," From Autumn to Ashes

regresses a few years to make music like Def Leppard.

As silly as vocalists Perri and Mark sound sometimes, their voices fall perfectly into the styles of hardcore and emo, respectively. Much more competent as a drummer than as a vocalist, Francis Mark lays down some solid rock grooves.

Mike Pilato is a strong bass player, and guitarists Scott Gross and Brian Deneve are well versed in the suspensions, power chords and scales of metal.

As a musical unit, excluding singing, From Autumn to Ashes has talent.

The one song that neither Perri nor Mark sing on, "Autumn's Monologue," is the

As a musical unit, excluding singing, From Autumn to Ashes has talent

best song, musically.

FATA brought in a female voice for that one, and her voice with their instruments could take FATA far in the music world.

FATA's *The Fiction We Live* is pretty good instrumentally, but the lyrics are hard to understand. The singing, with the exception of "Autumn's Monologue," isn't wonderful, so I give it 2 1/2 stars.

If you're a big fan of FATA, and I mean big, then get tickets to the St. Louis concert on Sept. 21. St. Louis is the closest they come to Murfreesboro this season. ★

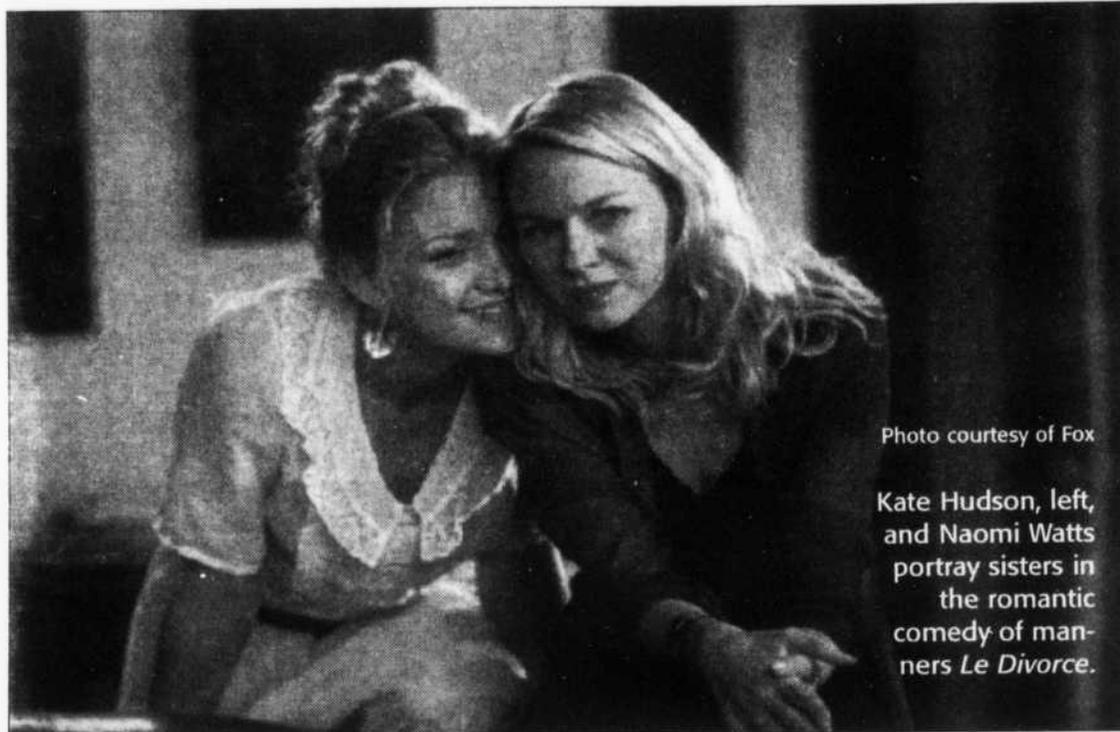


Photo courtesy of Fox

Kate Hudson, left, and Naomi Watts portray sisters in the romantic comedy of manners *Le Divorce*.

'Le Divorce' le forgettable

The best way to describe this film, in the words of the comely young lass by my side as I sat through this Merchant and Ivory production is as follows: "This film made no sense."

The film tells many stories, or at least makes an attempt to, as the main protagonists sisters Isabel (Kate Hudson) and Roxy (Naomi Watts) deal with a variety of things in this comedy of manners.

The main problem with the film is that it feels as though someone took the scripts for a romantic comedy, a serious thriller and a bittersweet drama and pasted the pages together at random, leaving the viewer with the sensation of having channel surfed through three different films.

The first story deals with Isabel arriving in France the exact moment Roxy's husband Charles-Henri de Persand (Malvil Poupaud) decides to ditch his family for a gibberish-speaking temptress.

Isabel then decides to get a job with the writer Olivia Pace (Glenn Close) and, between

Le Divorce

Starring Kate Hudson, Naomi Watts
Rated PG-13
 Fox Searchlight Pictures
Released Aug. 29
Rating ★★
 (out of four stars)

sleeping with Pace's bohemian assistant Yves (Romain Duris) and commenting on the social and moral differences between Americans and the French, she has time to begin an affair with a older man (Thierry Lhermitte).

Meanwhile in the second film, Isabel's parents and brother, (*Law & Order*'s Sam Waterson, *Stockard Channing* and *Reno 911* star Thomas Lennon) fret over a painting, which may or may not be worth a fortune and they enlist the aid of Piers Janelly (an extended cameo by British comedian and frequent *Whose Line is It Anyway?* star Stephen Fry) to help them.

And in the third film, the

husband of the woman who Roxy's husband left her for (Matthew Modine, looking like a slightly less insane Gary Busey) shows up and threatens most of the female cast while stealing umbrellas and disappearing for long stretches of time.

Director James Ivory tries to make a good romantic film, but he fails on almost every level, filling the film with characters you don't care about and almost completely wasting the French locale. Aside from a few shots of the Eiffel Tower, most of the film takes place inside.

The script, which was written by Ivory himself and frequent Merchant and Ivory partner Ruth Prawer Jhabvala screams with lost potential.

The cast is good and everyone at least tries to make their scenes memorable, but it all plays out as if they were unaware of just what kind of movie they were starring in.

In the end, even if you enjoy Merchant and Ivory films, this one isn't worth the car ride to the theater. ★

A glimpse of the biz available to musicians at upcoming conference

By Lindsey Turner

It's every musician for him- or herself next week during the third-annual Nashville New Music Conference.

Area musicians of all types will vie for the attention of music industry professionals — courting them with demo tapes and showcase performances — and try to glean some career wisdom from them.

According to the conference Web site, www.2nmc.com, the conference "was founded as an event to empower independent bands, musicians, songwriters and others in the music business through education on promotion, marketing, legal and business aspects of the industry."

Conference director Jenni Leeds said the conference was originally created when the founders — David Hooper, Jeff Sellers and Jim Stamper — agreed in 2001 that Music City's lack of a professional music conference was a travesty.

Leeds and the staff set forth on a path to create a multi-genre music event that would not only provide musicians with information on how to make it in the brutal music business, but that would also directly connect the artists with major music industry players and give them a chance to showcase their talent.

Shawn Whitsell, an MTSU senior recording industry major, is heading up the urban music portion of the conference, and said that the event offers important opportunities for musicians.

"I think it's very important for conference attendees to focus on networking and building relationships, instead of just listening in on the panels," Whitsell said, "because in the music business, it's about who you know."

Whitsell said the conference is offering an urban music symposium this year to focus on issues specific to hip-hop, R&B and rap music.

"The conference is making strides to fill a void in the Nashville urban music scene but it definitely needs the support of the people," Whitsell said. "In the past, aspiring urban music artists and executives have had to travel out of the area to network with urban music industry insiders."

Whitsell said he — along with coordinators for each genre — went through a long process of listening to artists' demo tapes to decide who to pick for the showcases each night.

"I just basically allowed my ears to tell me what the truth was," he said, noting that there were a few acts that really stood out from the rest.

Whitsell said artists who are looking for their big break as an artist or even as an executive should put their energy into "developing innovative ways to get noticed, because there [are] a million other hopefuls vying for the exact same spot. ..."

Leeds said the conference, still in its infancy, has been met with outstanding support from the community. She said that each year the conference organizers are able to tweak and improve what the conference offers. This year, they opted to increase the number of panel sessions and decrease the showcases. Leeds said this was because, before, there were so many showcases at the same time in different venues that attendance was sometimes thin.

Pre-registration for the conference will close tomorrow. For more information on registration, visit www.2nmc.com. The conference runs from Sept. 10-Sept. 14 at the Doubletree Hotel in downtown Nashville. Students with a valid college ID can register for \$100, while standard registration is \$250. ★

Visit www.mtsusidelines.com for a list of conference events



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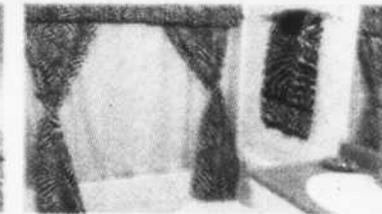
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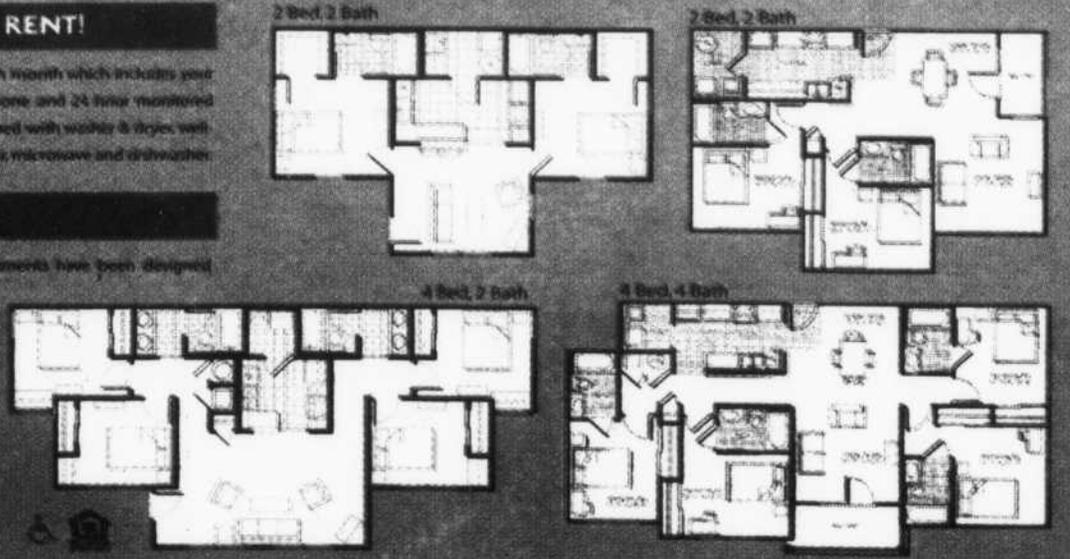
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