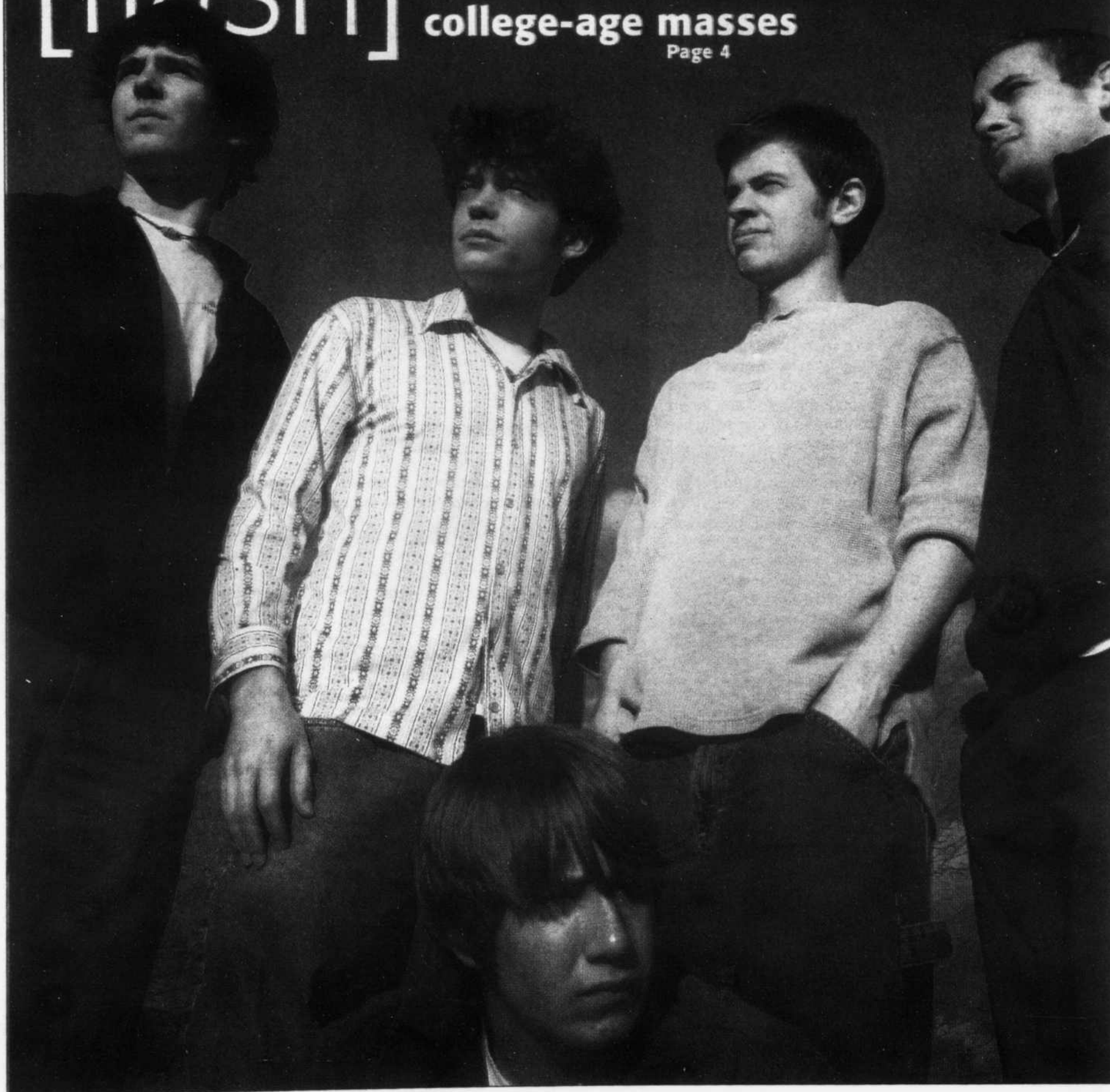


March 31, 2004

[flash]

The Cry Room
emotes for the
college-age masses

Page 4



Movie is high on King, but low on scares

By William C. Fancher

Johnny Depp is a mess in *Secret Window*. His character, famous author Mort Rainey, is in the middle of a divorce, having caught his wife in bed with another man.

Then one day John Shooter (John Turturro), a stone-faced man in a large black hat, shows up at Mort's doorstep.

"You stole my story," he says in a labored Southern accent. In his hand is a story that is improbably similar to one Mort wrote years earlier.

Shooter is deadly serious in his accusation, and soon proves to be a real threat to Mort and everyone he knows.

A New York private eye (Charles S. Dutton) is hired to find out who this guy is. Is he a lone nut?

Was he hired by the boyfriend of Mort's ex-wife (Maria Bello) to intimidate him? Or is he something

'Secret Window'

Starring Johnny Depp,
John Turturro

Rated PG-13
Columbia Pictures

Rating ★★ 1/2
(out of four stars)

more sinister?

Secret Window is based on a short novel by Stephen King, who has a great talent for the ridiculous things people think and say when confronted by horrifying circumstances.

Writer/director David Koepp, who adapted such mega-hits as *Jurassic Park* and *Spider-Man*, preserves Mort's absurd inner monologue from the novella.

Depp's performance is a bundle of ticks and babble, but not much else. The entire film suffers from that

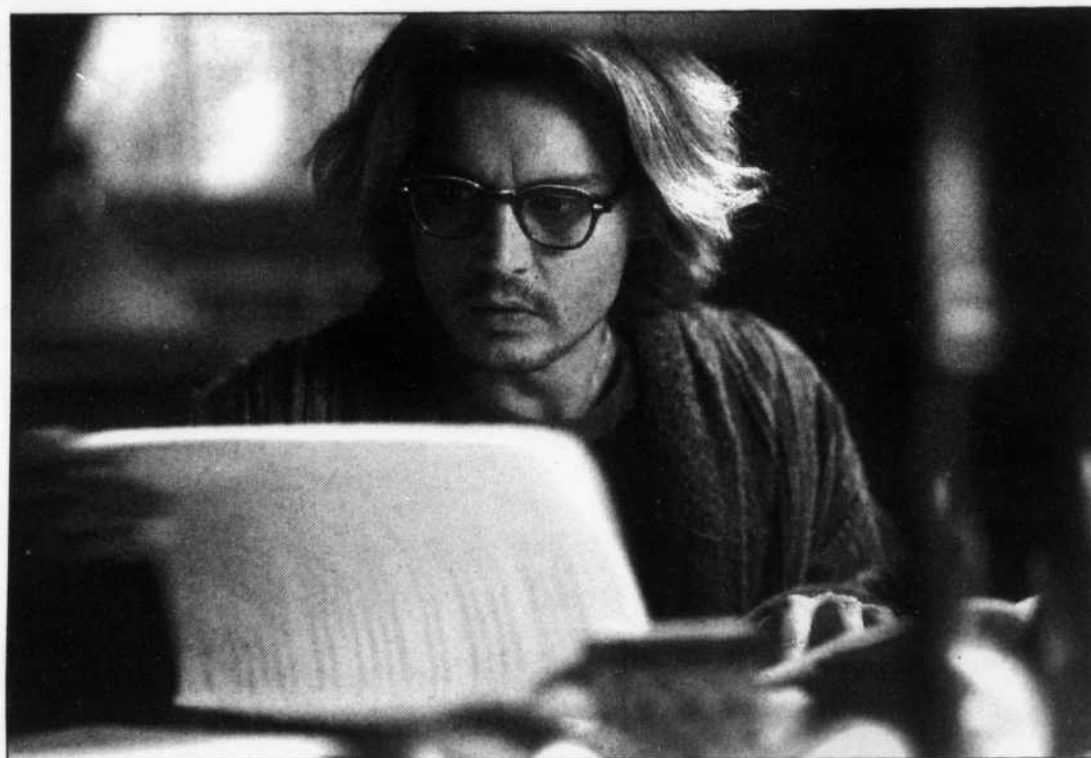


Photo provided by Columbia Pictures

In David Koepp's adaptation of a Stephen King short novel, *Secret Window*, Johnny Depp plays a paranoid writer in the throws of a disastrous divorce.

same shallowness. It feels like an episode of *The Twilight Zone* stretched out to an hour and forty minutes.

Another of Stephen King's trademarks is that his stories exist in a universe where people watch horror movies as much as we do.

However, Koepp's film does not. Every horror convention is here in full force.

Moments of quiet tension, when the killer may or may not be there, are prematurely broken by Mort's freaked-out commentary.

Fans of Stephen King and Johnny Depp will be happy with *Secret Window*. It has plenty to offer for both the Depp fan and the King geek.

Fans of John Turturro will recognize his cartoonish

Mississippi drawl from *O Brother Where Art Thou*.

However, fans of good horror will be disappointed in the use of bland scares and predictable twists.

The ending is the punchline to a joke you won't realize the movie is telling — one so delicious I wouldn't dream of spoiling it for you. ★

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[flash] is the weekly entertainment tabloid produced by Sidelines, MTSU's editorially independent student newspaper. [flash] is published each Thursday and seeks to highlight local arts and entertainment. For information regarding [flash], call 615-898-2917 or e-mail sflash@mtsu.edu. For advertising information call 615-898-2533.

McKay injects fresh air into the music scene

By Andrew Young

If you haven't heard of Nellie McKay, chances are you will soon enough.

The 19-year-old's debut album, *Get Away From Me*, has received glowing reviews, and she signals a growing trend towards young, female songwriters who don't have to resort to skimpy clothing or vocal histrionics to attract attention.

Genre-wise, Nellie falls conveniently into the idiom of jazz pianist/vocalist, but Norah Jones she isn't. (The title of Nellie's album, *Get Away From Me*, is an obvious pun on Jones' *Come*



Away With Me).

On her double-disc debut, Nellie deftly combines jazz, Tin Pan Alley pop, disco, reggae and hip-hop rhymes to create music that is unique, offbeat and remarkably original.

The stunningly beautiful McKay (pronounced "mac-kai") has been referred to

Nellie McKay 'Get Away From Me' Columbia Records



(out of four stars)

as equal parts Doris Day and Eminem. She can evoke a sultry jazz siren one moment, and fling unexpected profanities the next.

Even at her most beguiling, she is prone to making humorous observations and offbeat jokes.

"Yeah, I'll have my coffee black. / Hey look, we're

bombing Iraq," she croons.

The 18 songs on *Get Away from Me* reveal a stylistic depth that is uncommon for someone of Nellie's age.

The album opener "David" combines Nellie's sultry jazz sound with a buoyant reggae rhythm.

"Sari" is Nellie's attempt at hip-hop rhyming, while "Baby Watch Your Back" and "Waiter" add a bit of disco to her repertoire.

"Manhattan Avenue" and "I Wanna Get Married" are classic jazz, siren torch songs.

And that's just the first disc.

The second half reveals

even more surprises, such as the surprising hook in "Toto Dies" or the beautiful, sublime "Suitcase Song."

As a young, socially aware, sarcastic New Yorker, Nellie's lyrical themes deal with social justice, non-conformity, philosophy, feminism, politics, emotional insecurity and love.

Her unique and refreshing combination of musical styles, subject matter and oddball humor, combined with a wallop of genuine musical talent, makes *Get Away From Me* one of 2004's must-hear albums. ★

WMTS Playlist

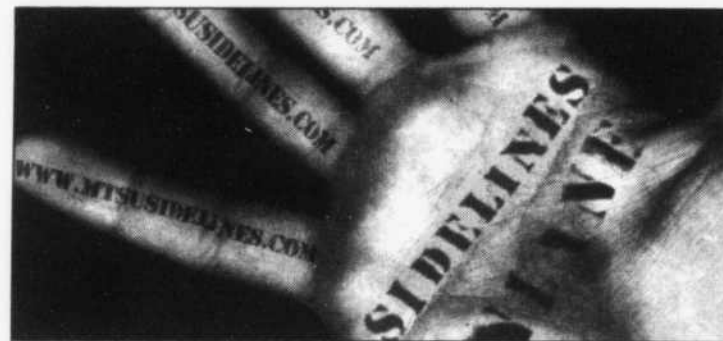
- 1 **Air** *Talkie Walkie*
- 2 **Get Up Kids** *Guilt Show*
- 3 **Dan Sertain** *Dan Sertain Versus the Serpientes*
- 4 **Walkmen** *Bows & Arrows*
- 5 **Elected** *Me First*
- 6 **Features** *The Beginning EP*
- 7 **Aireline** *Winter Song EP*
- 8 **Lambchop** *Aw Cmon*
- 9 **Crystal Method** *Legion of Boom*
- 10 **Apollo Up** *Light the End and Burn It Through*

Compiled by Jozeph Ash, WMTS 88.3 music director. WMTS is MTSU's student run radio station.

Grimey's Top Sellers

- 1 **The Bens** *The Bens EP*
- 2 **Lambchop** *Aw Cmon*
- 3 **Lambchop** *No You Cmon*
- 4 **Various Artists** *Night Train To Nashville: Music City R&B 1940-1975*
- 5 **Butterfly Boucher** *Flutterby*
- 6 **The Yeah Yeah Yeahs** *"The Maps" (single)*
- 7 **Franz Ferdinand** *Darts of Pleasure EP*
- 8 **Jonny Greenwood** *Bodysong*
- 9 **Liars** *They Were Wrong, So We Drowned*
- 10 **90 Day Men** *Panda Park*

Compiled by Grimey's Record Shop owner, Doyle Davis. Grimey's is located at 2825 Bransford Avenue in Nashville.



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The Cry Room

and the
orchestration
of rock

or, how I learned to stop listening
to the crowd and love the music

By Leslie Carol Boehms
Photos by Sean Johnson



“I always
tell people
to picture
music not
sucking”
—Aaron Esche

The Cry Room emotes for the college-age masses

The Cry Room is not emo, they are not indie rock, they are much more of a conglomeration of experimentation with cross genres than anything else.

This five-person band formed a year and a half ago. Aaron Esche (guitar, samples; vocals), Chris Gillis (lead vocals, guitar), Carl Hofstrom (bass, vocals), Brian Manifold (drums, percussion) and John Sparks (keyboards, theremin, vocals) define their music (for now at least) as “progressive orchestrated art-rock.”

A cry room was a room found in older theaters, churches and other “sound sensitive” places where a parent could go to take a crying child away from patronizing audiences. The sounds from the movie or dialogue from the pastor were piped into the room so that you didn’t miss out on anything simply because the child was in tears.

That’s the technical definition. Keyboard player Sparks had a much closer attachment to the room and its effects on the music of the band.

“I guess for me, the cry room may have been where the most realistic sound was coming from, and they tried to push that away from the other

sounds that were being made,” Sparks said. “The cry room has the connotation of the real sound and sometimes the real sound doesn’t want to be heard by the masses, but that’s still the real sound.

It seemed important to each member of The Cry Room to note that much of what creates their sound is the distinction between each of their songs – a unique quality to each, layered by a common thread.

“We all have a common direction of where we want to go (musically),” Sparks said. “When we are at our best is when we are feeding off each other. Because regardless of how hard a band tries, it doesn’t completely snap together all the time. We’re still five individual musicians.”

The guys listed off an array of musical bands and genres they have been related to and bands they lift their sound from.

They listed off names like Radiohead, U2, Sigur Ros and Duran Duran. But as far as influences go, the guys thrive off of each other more than any of these influences. There is a genuine display among them to

See **Cry Room**, 6



The Cry Room is composed of Chris Gillis, John Sparks, Brian Manifold, Aaron Esche and Carl Hofstrom.

Band plays tonight at 'Boro

Continued from **Cry Room**, page 5

know where the other one is coming from — and to know the importance and integrity of each member.

"I always tell people to picture music not sucking," Esche said.

Though this statement is bold, it is a cohesive way of molding together how one actually defines music for themselves. Each and every person has a different way that they stylistically enjoy the representation of music.

Thus, the reason, I personally think, that so many people have latched onto this band is because they appeal to audiences of all ages.

"A lot of our songs are

not similar," lead vocalist Gillis said. "There's really a wide array of styles. It's kind of hard to clump it all together in one word."

Sparks agreed.

"There's too much of a trend in today's music to clump into a genre," Sparks said.

"I think most people may want that because that's what they're used to. Record labels don't want an album that has 20 different genres. It's all chicken, but it's been marinated in different sauces." Those "different sauces" are what make The Cry Room unique in a city where a new band emerges almost daily. This city, however, is part of

what The Cry Room acknowledges and looks to for inspiration.

"Murfreesboro and Nashville are amazing towns that always are just a step away from being the next big musical scene," Sparks said.

"It's really cool to be a band in this area because other bands are so respectful to each other. That's an inspiration in itself—being able to really, honestly want to play a show with these people because you respect what they do."

The Cry Room is scheduled to perform tonight at The Boro Bar and Grill.

For more information on The Cry Room visit their Web site at thecryroom.com. ★

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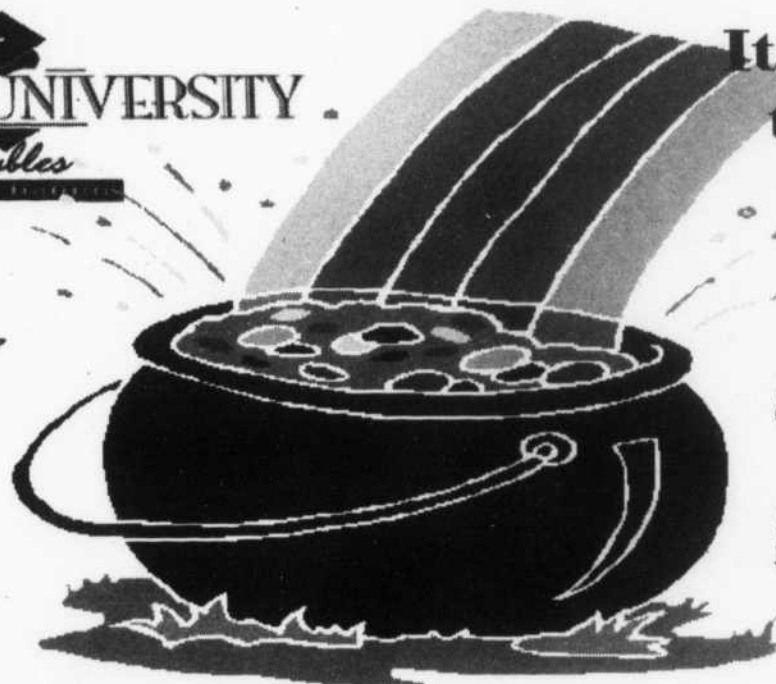
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[Club Listings]

Thursday, March 11

Blue Sky Court: Coda, My Epiphany, LX, 7 p.m., \$5.

Bluesboro: The Loft, 9:30 p.m., \$5.

★Boro Bar & Grill:

Skipping Mad, The Cry Room, Death Comesto Matteson, A Suburban Blood Drive, 9:30 p.m., \$5-7.

The End: De Novo Dahl, I am the World Trade Center, The Paper Lions, 9 p.m., \$7.

Exit/In: Reverend Horton Heat, 9 p.m., \$15.

The Five Spot: Zeta, 9 p.m., \$5.

Mercy Lounge: Mack Stars, Newton Dominey, Nielsen Hubbard, 9 p.m., \$7.

The Muse: Rock City Machine, A Problem of Alarming Dimensions, Mellow Down Easy, 7 p.m., \$5.

Red Rose: The Unicorns, The Falling, Casio

Casanova, 9 p.m.

The Sutler: The Coal Men, 9 p.m., \$5.

3rd & Lindsley: Michael Inge, Josh Bennett, Indochine, Charlie Mars, 7 p.m., \$5.

12th & Porter: Griffin House, Trent Dabbs, 9 p.m., \$5.

Wall Street: The Shipping News, Apollo Up, 9:30 p.m., \$5.

Windows on the Cumberland: Ten Mile Tide, 10 p.m.

Friday, March 12

Bluesboro: WRLT Lightning 100 presents Nick and the Bayou, 6:30 p.m., \$5

Boro Bar & Grill: Lucky Guns, On Command, 9:30 p.m., \$5-7.

The End: The Unicorns, Lone Official, Lylas, 9 p.m., \$8.

The Five Spot: Jamie

Kindleyside, Clarence Creek Band, Shawn Byrne, 9 p.m.

The Mercy Lounge: Grant Lee Phillips, 10 p.m., \$10.

The Muse: Supre X, Today's Tomorrow, Hero Pattern, Battery Horse, Cozumel, 8 p.m., \$5.

Red Rose: Slack, The Velcro Stars, Fade, 9 p.m., \$5.

The Sutler: Kaz Murphy Band, 9 p.m.

3rd & Lindsley: The Jack Pearson Band featuring Reese Wynans, 10 p.m.

12th & Porter: The Features, The Close, 10 p.m.

Wall Street: Dumdog Run, Ide, Spiral, 9:30 p.m., \$5.

★Windows on the Cumberland: Not Before Noon, Cutthroat Junction, 10 p.m., \$3.

Saturday, March 13

Bluesboro: Blue Mother Tupelo, Dean Hall, 6:30

p.m., \$5

Boro Bar & Grill: Autumn Mourning, 7 Days Divided, 9:30 p.m., \$5-7.

Blue Sky Court: Death Comesto Matteson, Meridian, The Adored, 8 p.m., \$5.

The End: Rodney Hotbox, Stereo Halo, Part Time Heroes, 9 p.m., \$5.

★Exit/In: *Sensored* Presents the Starving Artists Awards featuring Forget Cassettes, The Taste, Luna Halo, De Novo Dahl, Celebrity, 9 p.m.

The Five Spot: The Carter Administration, Ole Mossy Face, Fall City Angels, 9 p.m.

Red Rose: The Bang Up, The Cycle, The Blame Game, Dan Sartain, Frankenixon, 9 p.m., \$5.

3rd & Lindsley: Down the Line, Paul Thorn, 8 p.m.

12th & Porter: CPR: A Tribute to the Clash, The Pixies & The Replacements, 10 p.m.

Wall Street: SJ & the Props, 9:30 p.m., \$5.

Windows on the Cumberland: AKA Rudie, Del Giovanni Clique, 10 p.m., \$5.

Sunday, March 14

The End: Darediablo, Stinking Lizaveta, The Firecats, The Constantines, 9 p.m., \$6.

★The Five Spot: The Capitol Year, Killowatt Hours, The Jonny 3, 9 p.m., \$5.

Red Rose: An Albatross, Destroy Destroy Destroy, 8 p.m., \$5.

The Sutler: Nate Burns, 8 p.m., \$5.

3rd & Lindsley: Ryan Cabrera, Adrienne Young, Garrison Starr, 7 p.m.

12th & Porter: 102.9 Local Buzz Live, 9 p.m. ★

A ★ denotes the official [flash] pick of the night.

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