

Versus

Entertainment & Culture at Vanderbilt

SEPTEMBER 10—SEPTEMBER 16, 2008 № 15

DIAR

The rock band is bringing its college-inspired tunes to Nashville. Maybe the guys will make some 'Love and Memories' while they're here ...

Quake's artists are shaking things up, and we've got some music you should be listening to on pages 4 and 5.

Are bikes on campus pissing you off, too? Your champion is on page 7.

Do you like haiku? So do we; they're on page 3. Get your fill, homies.

PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO SEE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

Galway's Magic Flute — Nashville Symphony
James Galway is showcasing two French masterpieces (Jacques Ibert's "Concerto" and Georges Bizet's "Carmen Fantasy") for your listening or dancing pleasure — no judgments. If you can afford the admission, you should check out this fantastic flute. (\$35, 7 p.m.)

Eric Wilson and The Empty Hearts — 3rd and Lindsley
As part of the Next BIG Nashville 2008 festival, 3rd and Lindsley is hosting Eric Wilson and the Empty Hearts, Wess Floyd and the Daisycutters. If you want to catch the up-and-coming artists of the Nashville area, you can't miss this. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at door, 8 p.m.)

Beegie Adair — F. Scott's Restaurant and Jazz Bar
F. Scott's has always been THE place to catch jazz in Nashville, but it hasn't seen an act like Beegie Adair in a while. She's a virtuosic musician who's bringing her own brand of jazz. (Free, 7 p.m.)

Charlie Cushman and Friends — Station Inn
Who doesn't like banjo music? Charlie Cushman is one of the best in the business (he's played with Vince Gill, Merle Haggard, Bill Monroe, etc.) and he and his friends are putting on a little shindig to play some music. You need to go to this. (\$10, 9 p.m.)

November — The Mercy Lounge
A continuation of the Next BIG Nashville festival, The Mercy Lounge is hosting acts like Gone City, Parachute Musical, Mother Father and November. Hear today what will be on the radio tomorrow. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at the door, 8 p.m.)

Lylas and Quote — Douglas Corner Cafe
Next BIG Nashville is kind of a big deal, if you haven't figured that out so far. Douglas Corner Cafe will be hosting Levi Weaver, Aron Wright, Emily DeLoach, Lylas and Quote. (\$35 advance, \$45 at the door, 8 p.m.)

Good Souls — Sambuca
This band has made quite a name for themselves in just one year of gigging around Nashville. They're about to release their debut album and are hitting it big on the stations in town. Come check out the new kids on the Americana block. (Free, 7 p.m., 601 12th Ave. South)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

AutoVaughn and Superdrag — The Cannery Ballroom
SXSW performers AutoVaughn are known for their lively, crowd-pleasing shows. They are joined by refreshingly retro '90s favorites Superdrag, who recently reunited to tour after a four-year hiatus. Show openers include Paper Route, Magic Wands and Cortney Tidwell. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at the door, 8 p.m.)

Space Capone and Jeremy Lister — Mercy Lounge
Former Rites of Spring performer Jeremy Lister, recently featured on MTV's "The Hills," opens for soulful R&B crooner Space Capone as a part of BMI's Next BIG Nashville music festival weekend. Other performers include Ricky Young, The Bridges and The Lonely Hearts. (\$35 advance, \$45 at the door, 8 p.m.)

The Mother Truckers — Douglas Corner Cafe
Americana rockers The Mother Truckers hit the Douglas Corner Cafe for a night of raucous rock 'n' roll. The Austin, Texas, band bring together the best of classic rock, country and blues to form an unforgettable sound and show. (Cover TBA, 9 p.m.)

Stephaniesid, Biscuits N' Gravy, H-Beam and The Running — Limelight Nashville
A host of indie and rock artists (including former Rites of Spring performer H-Beam) come together at Limelight Nashville for another part of the Next BIG Nashville. Headliner Stephaniesid, who performed at this year's Bonnaroo music festival, cites diverse influences, including Radiohead and Bjork. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at the door, 8:45 p.m.)

Dixie Whiskey, Roman Candle, and Neva Geoffrey — The Basement
Local country/rock band Dixie Whiskey are joined by the ethereal indie artist Neva Geoffrey and Pitchfork Media-acclaimed Roman Candle at The Basement. Another segment of this weekend's Next BIG Nashville. The Basement also features up-and-comers The Champion and His Burning Flame and Sara Siskind. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at the door, times TBA)

Umbrella Tree, Heypenny, Tallest Trees and more — The Rutledge
Next BIG Nashville takes over The Rutledge to bring in up-and-coming artists Umbrella Tree, Heypenny and Tallest Trees. Progressive indie headliners Umbrella Tree will also be performing at Cincinnati's famous Midpoint music festival. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at the door, 8 p.m.)

Stephen Kellogg & The Sixers with the Gabe Dixon Band — The Belcourt Theatre
Stephen Kellogg & The Sixers are joined by special guests The Gabe Dixon Band for an Outback Concerts-presented performance at Nashville's historic Belcourt Theatre. The authentic and honest American rock sound offered by both artists is sure to please any rock fan. (\$16.50, doors open at 8 p.m.)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

JBuzzfest — Downtown Nashville
The Buzz 102.9 is at it again with their annual Buzzfest. This year this concert includes Seether, Shinedown, Saving Abel, 10 years, Lovers + Liars, After Elvis, American Bang and Black Stone Cherry. (\$29, 1 p.m.)

Doorpost Film Festival — The Belcourt Theatre
The inaugural festival ends its run tonight after a well-funded online project offered 15 aspiring filmmakers worldwide \$10,000 to create a short film with the theme of hope — no gimmicks. The winner (selected by online voters) gets \$100,000. (7:30 p.m., price TBA, 2102 Belcourt Ave.)

Hip-Hop Night with E.T. — Cafe Coco
This weekly showcase of touring rappers will be a good time complete with break dancing and fresh new beats. (Free, 11 p.m.)

Coral Castles — Exit/In
Next BIG Nashville Showcase is still going strong, and Exit/In is hosting a variety of artists including Coral Castles, The Privates, The Howlies, Ghostfinger, Evil Bebos and How I Became The Bomb. There are bands for every taste at this show, so come out and enjoy. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at the door, 7 p.m.)

MONA — Mercy Lounge
Where can you find a concert that showcases a honky-tonker, indie rockers, pop sensation and a rock hybrid? Next BIG Nashville, of course. Mercy Lounge is featuring Cary Ann Hearst, Courtney Jaye, Modoc, Erin McCarley and MONA as part of the city-wide music festival. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at the door, 8 p.m.)

Harley Allen Band — Station Inn
Come on out to see the country sensation who has influenced everyone from Garth Brooks to Don Williams. Allen will play the hits that have made him famous at this legendary concert. (\$10, 9 p.m.)

Pico vs. Island Trees — 12th and Porter
What festival is bringing five up-and-comers to display their music to Nashville and has been mentioned multiple times so far? That's right, the Next BIG Nashville, and this time Alva Leight, Tommy and The Whale, Meghan Kabir, OBLO and Pico vs. Island Trees are putting a fresh new spin on the festival. (\$35 in advance, \$45 at the door, 8 p.m.)

The Regulars

THE RUTLEDGE
410 Fourth Ave. S. 37201
782-6858

MERCY LOUNGE/CANNERY BALLROOM
1 Cannery Row 37203
251-3020

BLUEBIRD CAFE
4104 Hillsboro Road 37215
383-1461

EXIT/IN
2208 Elliston Place 37203
321-3340

STATION INN
402 12th Ave. S. 37203
255-3307

THE BASEMENT
1604 Eighth Ave. S. 37203
254-1604

F. SCOTT'S RESTAURANT AND JAZZ BAR
2210 Crestmoor Road 37215
269-5861

SCHERMERHORN SYMPHONY CENTER
1 Symphony Place 37201
687-6500

3RD AND LINDSLEY
818 Third Ave. S. 37210
259-9891

CAFE COCO
210 Louise Ave. 37203
321-2626

Want to gain VALUABLE WORK EXPERIENCE in advertising and get paid?



Join our STUDENT MEDIA ADVERTISING STAFF!

Contact Angela Booker at advertising@vanderbilthustler.com

Versus

SEPTEMBER 10—SEPTEMBER 16, 2008 N° 15

Versus Magazine

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor in Chief
Darcy Newell

Managing Editor
Sara Gast

Features Editor
Chris Gearing

Culture Editors
Brandon Heriford
Courtney Rogers

Fiction Editor
Kris Stensland

Music Editors
Lakendra Scott
Avery Spofford

Art Director
Matt Radford

Designers
Madeleine Evans
Morgan Webb

Marketing Director
George Fischer

Advertising Manager
Angela Booker

VSC Director
Chris Carroll

Assistant VSC
Director
Jeff Breaux

Journalist in
Residence
Tim Ghianni

FROM THE EDITOR



So they say that good things come in threes. I find myself to be an avid believer in things that “they” say (though not so much those things “that she said,” as I don’t have a great interest in sexual innuendos) and thus, I find myself anxiously anticipating our next sign of good luck.

The bouts of good fortune that we, the Vandy community, have thus far received are clearly the announcement of Lil’ Wayne as the Quake headliner and the football upset of the century against South Carolina. And while Lil’ Wayne may or may not be your ingenious-yet-vulgar cup of tea, I think we can all appreciate that The Music Group has delivered (yet again) in bringing a huge presence on the music scene to campus. And I don’t feel that I need to say anything about our victory at Dudley. Vandy, Vandy, oh hell yeah.

So what’s next for us? Fro yo on meal plan? Justice at the bookstore? A definitive answer to how many licks it takes to get to the center of a Tootsie Pop? The world may never know. We’ll wait with bated breath. In the meantime, this issue of Versus is pretty bomb. We talked to Benj from O.A.R., one of the most revered bands of our generation. Man, he coo. Musically speaking, we also spotlight Lupe Fiasco and Weezy, review some great movies (and some abysmal ones) and the new and inspiring Music on the Commons project.

And if you haven’t caught a glimpse of our back page, you may be pleased to know that the Versus staff has also been outside studying the stars for our extremely scientific and accurate horoscopes. Sorry, Scorpio. It’s just not lookin’ good.

Darcy Newell

THIS ISSUE

Fiction

- ‘Commute’ 2
- Only in Dreams, 2
- Words to live by in 17 syllables, 2
- Versus Madlibs, 2

Entertainment

- This ‘Bunny’ never gets hoppin’, 3
- French thrillers were never so good, 3

Music

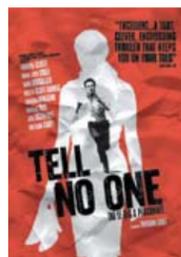
- This is the new alternative-rock, 4
- Step into Lil’ Wayne’s world, 4
- Don’t miss the Go-Go-Gadget Flow, 5

Art

- How clothes will save polar bears, 6
- Who is Marilyn Murphy? 7
- What Vandy’s finest are wearing, 7

Features

- Q+A with O.A.R., 8
- Letter from an Angry WASP, 8



3



3



4

PIC OF THE WEEK



“FOR THE LOVE OF COASTERS” AMELIA SPINNEY

FICTION

“TO DO A GREAT RIGHT, DO A LITTLE WRONG.” — SHAKESPEARE



Commute

DARCY NEWELL
Editor in Chief

As I cross 10th Avenue and head back toward our apartment the thought that I am thinking is that I want to see the world with you. I don’t mean I want to go to Europe with you and carry our belongings on our backs, take photos in front of the Coliseum and get robbed on a sleeper train heading to the south of France. What I mean to say is I want you here with me, all the time. I want to solve confusing billboards with you and look at Prix Fix menus with you and point to the man next to me who is, right now, twirling his rat tail and pulling it over one of his ears with one hand while he holds a woman’s hand in the other. I want you here because you’d have something to say about it, and so would I. But I’ll tell you about it tonight, while I make our chicken.

I laugh about your weatherman joke as I wait for a bus to turn onto 49th Street. I’m laughing as I’m walking and people look at me like I’m laughing at them, but I’m not, I’m laughing at that thing you said and how perfectly you said it. And it’s been a whole week since you’ve been gone on business. I’ve missed you.

I fumble with the oblong brass key that opens the door downstairs, and I’m smoothing my hair and my skirt, even though you’ve seen me like this, Corporate Exhausted, you call it, three hundred times. But I care, so I smooth, and I smile again.

I open the door and I know. It’s nothing I expected or even suspected, but it’s a feeling, or a sense, or a lack of your smell, and it comes at me like the thickest fog. I keep going, and it’s true, because your drawers are empty and there is a note on the coffee table. And I turn to leave again, and the thought I am thinking is that I wanted to see the world with you.

HAIKUS

Words to live by in seventeen syllables

“Not so cocky now”
The greatest headline ever?
I’m impressed, Hustler.

Is it ironic
That a campaign based on change
Never does new things?

Only in Dreams

Tormented by confusing dreams?
Wondering what it all means? Send
your most puzzling dreams in to our
extremely qualified, expert dream
technicians at VersusVU@gmail.com

In my dream: I was in my dorm room, only things were a little different. It had a fireplace and my man friend and I were sitting on the hearth. My friend was trying to get us to hook up, and for some reason she tried to do it with a Clue murder mystery game. Think Agatha Christie’s “And Then There Were None,” with couples getting killed off until it was supposed to be just me and the boy. I woke up when somehow the room flooded and there were four of us left. I’m so confused.

Why you’re crazy:

All right, a surprisingly straightforward dream. I’m thinking you’ve recently developed a crush and that you’re pumped for this relationship because you think you two would make a super couple. The fireplace is there, but you’re missing the hot fiery passion of romance. You two are surviving while others are falling by the wayside — get it? You’re surviving the mass slaughter of romantic couples due to how good a match you two are. The water — I have no idea. Maybe you needed to use the bathroom. Best, Dream Doctor

Versus Madlibs

My first Thursday tailgate was _____. I got all dressed up in my _____, had some _____ with friends and made my way over to Dudley Field. The game was _____ because we _____ so many times. Afterwards we just had to _____, which was _____. Class on Friday was _____, but it was definitely worth it!



“OUT OF THE FRYING PAN” AMELIA SPINNEY

ENTERTAINMENT

MOVIES

The sweet recipe of 'Bottle Shock'

CHRIS GEARING
Features Editor

A movie about wine? In California? Really? I thought we covered this topic with "Sideways" a few years ago. Paul Giamatti and Thomas Hayden Church already did all they could for that idea, or so I thought. Then I went and caught "Bottle Shock," an independent gem, on the big screen.

Our tale is based on the story of the epic "Judgment of Paris" in 1976. Everybody back then knew that quality wine came from France. It had always been that way, and it always would be that way, right? "Bottle Shock" begins when a lonely American in Paris informs his connoisseur friend that California wines are starting to attract some real attention. Skeptically, this snooty wine critic (played by the legendary Alan Rickman) takes a trip to California in order to gather some competition for a blind taste-test with France's greatest wine experts. He ends up meeting the offbeat California wine makers and samples America's finest wines.

But this offbeat comedy does not focus solely on 1970s wine industry; it also references the age's counterculture and, oddly, the American Dream. A lot of American wine makers had a simple dream to make damn good wine right here in the States. Jim Barrett (Bill Pullman) quit his job as a big-time corporate lawyer to pursue his dream of making the world's best chardonnay. Jim and his son Bo Barrett (played by the electric Chris Pine) are two of these aforementioned dreamers who produce some of California's finest. I'll leave the plot at that since its intricate twists and turns are just too fun to spoil.

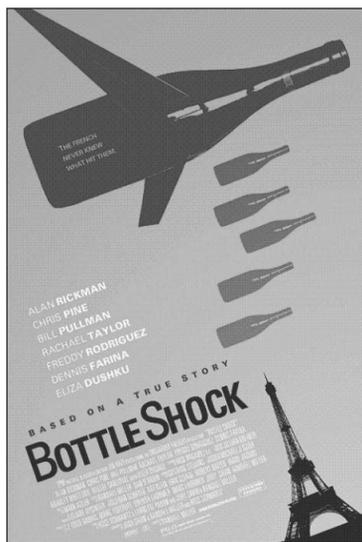
Part of an independent film's fun derives from off-beat casting and unorthodox story-telling methods. Let me first say that the cast is fantastic. Anybody worth their salt knows that Freddy Rodriguez (who plays an assistant at the Barrett winery) is a rising star in Hollywood, but let's not forget Eliza Dushku, Rachael Taylor and a brief cameo by Bradley Whitford (one of my favorite actors). All play their roles

with gravitas and a real sense of who these people were back in the late '70s.

Every character is very flawed but in the same respect very real. Pullman does a great job playing the down-and-out Jim Barrett and brings weight to feeling like a failure (maybe with a twinge of his own fizzled Hollywood career). Rickman is the embodiment of snooty, and unsurprisingly, he does not disappoint in "Bottle Shock." However, the real star of this flick is Pine, who's acted in "Just My Luck" with Lindsay Lohan and played a bit part in the sensational "Smokin' Aces." Pine is a great actor who finally landed a role he could really own. His depiction of the dazed and confused Bo is a real delight, and Pine depicts one of the most touching "quarter-life crises" on film.

"Bottle Shock" is a real independent film and a dark horse candidate for my favorite movie of the summer. The great story and superb casting really make it shine and bring this story of the American dream to life. My advice: decanter it, let it breathe and then drink down the perfect recipe of "Bottle Shock." ☼

"Bottle Shock" is playing at Green Hills.



VERSUS MOVIE RATING: ★★ ★

MOVIES

Tell everyone about 'Tell No One'

BEN GRIMWOOD
Staff Writer

Full of artistic merit and one of the most exciting French films in quite a while, "Tell No One" is a great thrill ride, varying between being as adrenaline-charged as "Run Lola Run" in the chase sequences to being as hide-and-seek suspenseful as "North by Northwest" in others.

In the film, Alexandre Beck (Francois Cluzet) is a pediatrician who has been devastated following the murder of his wife Margot (Marie-Josée Croze) eight years prior. The mysterious circumstances surrounding his survival baffled policemen for years, so when two bodies are discovered near the former location of his wife's corpse, the policemen renew their former suspicions concerning Alex as the prime suspect.

Alex is thrown into a conspiracy involving a series of e-mails hinting at his wife's survival and an enigmatic group of assassins intent on locating her. As the suspicions of the police seem more and more founded on evidence pointing toward Alex, he must go into hiding with the help of others, including his former client, gangster Bruno (Gilles Lellouche), his lawyer, Elisabeth Feldman (Nathalie Baye), his sister, horse trainer Anne (Marina Hands), and her partner, Helene (Kristin Scott Thomas), in order to clear his name by unraveling the mystery surrounding his wife's death.

Cluzet is splendid in the role of the unwitting doctor, inviting viewers with the reality of his acting. (I am still uncertain if his onscreen appeal has anything to do with his uncanny resemblance to Dustin Hoffman.) Nevertheless, in a role such as his, he is perfectly capable in his ability to captivate audiences amidst the suspense that pervades and comprises the film.

Meanwhile, the real surprise of the film is Thomas, an English actress better known for roles in "The English Patient" and "The Horse Whisperer." Being pleasantly surprised that she speaks the French language so well, I realized the broad range of emotions she portrays seems to take little effort as well. If prior roles of hers have not captured the attention of critics already, her effortless talent in this film is arresting.

Because of its frequent, exceptional use of mobile framing, cinematography is certainly worth mentioning. The variations of close-ups and extreme long shots certainly have a modernist appeal. The

editing is also fantastic; one of the best sequences is the montage of the guests in attendance of the "wedding" and "funeral" of Margot, superimposed over each other. This montage has a strong emotional component that stands out in the way it makes happiness and sorrow indistinguishable from one another and helps to streamline the thoughts of Alex as he reflects on his pain.

The story itself is well written, presenting a familiar plot, but this film is new and fresh, touting great direction from Guillaume Canet. Tirelessly suspenseful, the story could have gone on even longer, and I still would have been as riveted as I had been through the first hour and a half or so. On the other hand, after drawing out the suspense so long, the sudden, quick debriefing that organizes the true circumstances of the film ends up being a bit of a convoluted mess in which it is easy to get lost. I recognize that the film is trying hard to remove the facts for most of the film so viewers are lured inward to decipher the film's events themselves, but that final bombardment of all of the film's answers is almost too much and would have done better in paced revelations.

Nevertheless, "Tell No One" is built on an intelligent, calculated puzzle that invites viewers to continue assembling the pieces long after they leave the theater. ☼

"Tell No One" is playing at The Belcourt Theatre.



VERSUS MOVIE RATING: ★★ ★★ ★

MOVIES

'The House Bunny' is no more than a veritable flop

DARCY NEWELL
Editor in Chief

To preface this review, it's necessary to say that I don't usually have abysmal taste in movies. In fact, I'd like to think that I gravitate toward the good ones, appreciate the "gems" in the decent ones and stay away from the truly terrible ones.

Why, then, you might ask, did I go see Anna Faris' latest, "The House Bunny," especially when there are so many good movies, infinitely better movies, in theaters right now? Hmm. I can't quite be sure. All I know is the line "you — need — a job!" in the trailer somewhat sold me and inspired curiosity and hope that "The House Bunny" could surprise everyone and actually be funny.

"The House Bunny" tells the story of Shelley, a 27-year-old Playboy bunny forced to abruptly leave the mansion and find a real job. She ends up serving as the house mother for Zeta Alpha Zeta, a sorority plagued by low membership, incessant taunting from other Greek houses and the threat of losing their charter. Using her marketable skills

in seduction and style, Shelley is able to make over both the girls and their reputation on campus, while learning a thing or two from these intelligent, albeit misguided, Zetas, who include but are not limited to a mute (who, when she does speak, turns out to have a really terrible British accent), a pregnant girl and a girl in a full-body metal brace.

The movie appeared to have some real, if goofy, comedic promise, due, most likely, to some clever trailer editing and a cast of fresh faces, including Kat Denning, Rumor Willis and Emma Stone from "Superbad." Colin Hanks of "Orange County" fame and Christopher McDonald (the infamous villain Shooter McGavin in "Happy Gilmore") even come out of the woodwork for this one, and the cast of the reality show "Girls Next Door" and Hugh Hefner make several, semi-awkward appearances.

Yet, the host of young stars does little to ameliorate the movie's one central problem; the script just isn't funny. While the movie's trailer showed some excellently timed one-liners, in the actual movie these fleeting funny moments are shrouded in

poor comedic timing and an overload of unrealistic dialogue. It is unrealistic, for example, that at a car wash, a college female would respond to a joke about a wet T-shirt contest by offering "a wet pants contest" and subsequently pour water all over her crotch.

Stone, who might be the wittiest actor in the "The House Bunny," ruins some of her would-be big laughs with excessive babbling that not only makes you embarrassed for her, but also for yourself for being there. Faris gives her role as the dim but lovable Shelley the "old college try," and while some of her lines were surprising, most of them, sadly, followed the tired, slapstick, so-stupid-it-might-be-funny mantra.

By the end of the movie I was mentally exhausted, cursing my poor choice and dying to get out of the theater. And as our movie got out next to the similarly timed "Pineapple Express" showing, whose audience members were basking in the glow of seeing a truly successful comedy, I couldn't help but hang my head in shame. Next time, hopefully, I will know better. ☼



Reno's
for HAIR

- Specialists in Hair Straightening
- Geometric Hair Cutting
- Ask about **FREE** tanning
- Ask about **FREE** ceramic iron straightening

110 21st Ave South
Ste. 104 in the Baker Building
Just across from Campus
615.327.2655

VERSUS MOVIE RATING: ★

MUSIC

"The best music is essentially there to provide you something to face the world with."

—Bruce Springsteen



SETLIST

TODAY

Jim Lauderdale is bringing his signature sound to Station Inn and is sure to play songs that have made him famous. If you like country and bluegrass, this is the place to be. The show starts at 9 p.m. and tickets are \$10.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

James Galway plays a mean flute, and he's showcasing two French masterpieces (Jacques Ibert's "Concerto" and Georges Bizet's "Carmen Fantasy") for your listening or dancing pleasure — no judgments. If you can afford the admission (tickets start at \$35), you should check out this fantastic flute, which starts at 7 p.m. at the Nashville Symphony.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Next BIG Nashville is coming to Mercy Lounge, bringing six bands along for the ride. **Natalie Warner, The Lonely Hearts, The Bridges, Ricky Young, Jeremy Lister** and **Space Capone** are all sure to put on energy-filled shows. Tickets are \$35 in advance and \$45 at the door. The show starts at 8 p.m.

Commodore QUAKE

Lil' Wayne came down to Vandy; he was lookin' for a show to steal

CHARLIE KESSLERING
Staff Writer

On October 23, the anything-but-Lil' Wayne will headline Vanderbilt's big-time Commodore Quake, bringing with him a remarkable repertoire of sound, six solo albums and countless mixtapes in the making.

But despite his cataclysmic success, few visitors to Vandyland know him past this metaphor comparing delicious candy treats with a certain sex act. The following is for those casual listeners wondering: just who is the man they call Weezy?

Dwayne Michael Carter Jr., the 25-year-old emcee behind the sweet summer hit "Lollipop," exists as something of an enigma. A tested hip-hop veteran of 13 years, his name has only recently been added to the proverbial mainstream playlist. Before this summer, unless they had a subscription to *The Source*, most pop fans thought of Lil' Wayne as the guy who "made it rain" with Fat Joe, if they thought of him at all. However, even before copies of "Tha Carter III" made their quick stops on shelves, Lil' Wayne stood as a rapper with three platinum albums on his back and a slew of top-10 hits under his belt.

Carter spent the times and dimes of his childhood in New Orleans' 17th Ward. His home neighborhood of Hollygrove, an area he gives love to "on each and every song" (according to "Fly In" from "Tha Carter II"), provided him with the life experiences and connections crucial to his success in the hip-hop industry. According to *cashmoney-records.com*, in the mid '90s, "Wayne met Cash Money CEOs Ronald 'Suga Slim' and Bryan 'Baby' Williams (The Birdman), who

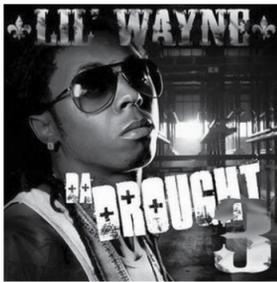
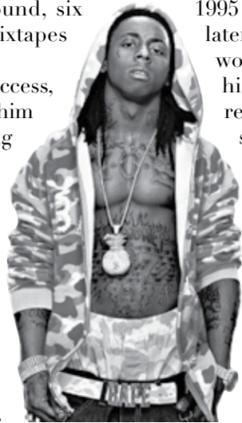
would take him under their wings."

Following this critical union, 12-year-old Lil' Wayne appeared on B.G.'s 1995 debut "True Story." Two years later, he released the first of what would be a string of albums with his group the Hot Boys, but found real success at the helm of his first solo release, 1999's "Tha Block is Hot." Riding on the wave of popularity created by its first single (also entitled "Tha Block is Hot"), the album obtained double platinum status. Although Weezy's next two discs failed to pass the million units mark, "Lights Out" (2001) and "500 Degreez" (2002) "raised his profile considerably," according to *Rolling Stone*.

After a two year hiatus from the rap arena, Lil' Wayne came out swinging with "Tha Carter" and the prolific "Tha Carter II," both of which went platinum.

Following the advent of these two classics, Carter did something interesting. Apparently aware of the wholly undeserved lack of buzz surrounding the prodigious Lil' Wayne, he took to cyberspace, releasing mixtape after mixtape of phenomenal, and entirely free, feats of lyricism. When units of "Tha Carter III" finally flooded stores last spring, the mixtape king had built himself an empire of fans, a fact that became immediately clear as 1 million copies walked off shelves in a single week.

Needless to say, the folks in Vanderbilt's Music Group made a prime choice in the man, the myth, the Lil' Wayne. Maybe they failed to realize just how prime.



'Superstar' Lupe will be anything but a fiasco

CHRIS MCDONALD
Staff Writer

Last Friday morning our campus was greeted with the news that not only would Lil' Wayne be headlining this year's Commodore Quake but Chicago native Lupe Fiasco would be the opening act. For those who have not yet heard of this artist, Lupe (real name Wasalu Muhammad Jaco, no joke) has been heralded as one of the brightest up-and-coming hip-hop artists. Praised by the likes of Kanye West and Pharrell Williams as a savior of the genre, Fiasco is a welcome and exciting addition to the 2008 Homecoming festivities.

Lupe rose to prominence in 2006 with his first release, "Lupe Fiasco's Food & Liquor," debuting at No. 8 on the Billboard 200. The album, almost universally acclaimed by such media sources as *The New York Times*, *Rolling Stone*, *Pitchfork Media* and more, produced three singles, one of which ("Kick, Push") reached No. 79 on the Billboard Hot 100. Most notably, however, "Food & Liquor" earned four Grammy Nominations: best rap solo performance and best rap song for "Kick, Push," best rap album, and best urban/alternative performance for "Daydreamin'," the only win of the four nominations. If that doesn't jog your memory, remember that Kanye track "Touch the Sky?" Lupe's lines almost stole the show from the ever-inspired Kanye.

Fiasco's follow-up album, "Lupe Fiasco's The Cool," was released in December 2007, garnering similar positive reviews to "Food & Liquor." While "The Cool" was as commercially successful as Lupe's previous album, it did not fare as well on the charts, peaking at No. 14 on the Billboard 200 (though reaching No. 4 and No. 1 on the top

R&B/hip-hop albums and top rap albums, respectively).

In keeping with Lupe's ever-quickenening rise to stardom, however, the album did produce the rapper's most successful (and best-known) single to date (reaching No. 10 on the Billboard Hot 100), the aptly titled "Superstar," featuring guest vocals from Matthew Santos, a singer-songwriter recently signed to Lupe's own record label.

But we shouldn't forget a few of the other tracks on the album like "Go Go Gadget Flow" and "Hi-Definition" featuring Snoop Dogg. "Go Go" has an infectious beat that keeps your heart rate up as his rhymes are blowing your mind. What else is there to say about "Hi-Definition" other than it is just undeniably cool? Don't believe us: ask Snoop Dogg.

Another note worth mentioning: Lupe hasn't stopped working. In fact, he's garnering the attention of some of rap's heavy hitters as seen on the recently released "Superstar" remix featuring Jeezy and T.I. You can find it on his Myspace. Go ahead, you'll thank me later.

While he was chosen to open the show for Lil' Wayne, Lupe Fiasco is, in his own right, a musical powerhouse and true force to be reckoned with. With masterfully crafted lyrics, Lupe is less of a rapper and more of a storyteller, weaving his messages and narratives beneath smooth beats and hooks. Today's hip-hop and rap scene is inundated with commercial, radio-ready songs devoid of much (if any) meaning. In the face of this trend, however, Lupe really is the brightest young artist with a chance to save the genre.



Weezy's Best Tracks

From "Tha Carter II":
"Fly In"
"The Best Rapper Alive"

From "Da Drought 3":
"Sky's the Limit"
"We Takin' Over (Remix)"

From "Tha Carter III":
"Mr. Carter"
"Tie My Hands"
"Let the Beat Build"
"Mrs. Officer"



Lupe's Finest Flows

From "Food & Liquor":
"The Cool"
"The Instrumental"
"Daydreamin'"
"Kick, Push"

From "The Cool":
"Superstar"
"Paris, Tokyo"
"Hip-Hop Saved My Life"
"My Sneakers"
"Go-Go Gadget Flow"



Artist you should know: The Bravery

CHRIS GEARING
Features Editor

There were murmurs a few years ago about their debut self-titled album.

It was a refreshing reinvention of the alternative rock genre. They had taken the recent craze of slam-bang guitars and a garage band singer and blended it with some of the most seductive and catchy keyboard and synthesizer melodies on the radio. These virtual virtuosos are known as The Bravery, and they might be one of the best bands around.

The Bravery formed up at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., when frontman Sam Endicott and keyboardist John Conway met in class. They began by playing small bars on the college scene in a ska band amusingly named Skabba the Hut. In 2000, Endicott got serious and started writing his own music that would later form the musical crux of The Bravery.

Their debut self-titled album had hits like "An Honest Mistake" and "Fearless." Both tunes contain incendiary grooves that don't ask you to bop your head — it's more

of a command. The snappy riff and oddly perfect organ arrangement really make "Fearless" hop off the record. You'll most likely be tapping your toes (or melting faces with air guitar) by the first chorus. In terms of the whole album, it was a less than stellar effort with very experimental keyboard riffs and odd instrumentation. Any songs other than the aforementioned duo will most likely have you scratching your head in confusion. It's a very odd mix of things that did not really pan out.

However, the real genius of The Bravery is their second album, "The Sun and the Moon Complete." They grew up out of their feel-good post-punk origins and really embraced their rock 'n' roll side on this two-disc epic.

Let's start with the first disc entitled "The Sun." The signature bass line and rocking percussion of "Believe" may be one of the best songs of last year, while the whistle-laced "Bad Sun" reminds listeners that The Bravery produce some of the best "dance rock" out there. However, my favorite song on the album has to be "Angelina." It's got a charming sloppiness from the ever-present piano to the chorus of

"doo-doo-doo," not to mention the banging guitar that makes the chorus soar to heights we haven't seen from a rock band in a while.

But if you don't like how they initially imagined the music for the album, then pop in the second disc, "The Moon," for a completely re-imagined and redesigned experience (same lyrics, totally different sound and feel).

Trust me, you'll be hearing a lot about this band in the next few years. They've already made some impressive strides in the rock arena, and they're only getting better with time. Go pick up "The Sun and the Moon Complete" today for some of the most experimental and interesting rock of our time.



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

If you've been craving some hard rock lately, Buzzfest will satisfy your desires. The concert in downtown Nashville includes performances from **Seether**, **Shinedown**, **Saving Abel**, **10 years**, **Lovers+Liars**, **After Elvis**, **American Bang** and **Black Stone Cherry**. Tickets are \$29 or \$129 (if you want to be treated as a very important person). The show starts at 10 a.m.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Come on by Exit/In and experience **Ari Hest's** new sound as he performs some of his recently crafted songs. Tickets are \$12, and the show starts at 9 p.m.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

O.A.R. is coming to Nashville and sharing their smooth style of rock to the masses — and you can be one of those lucky concertgoers. The show, which is opened by acoustic rocker **Matt Wertz**, begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$31.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Exit/In is giving you a perfect opportunity to Rock the Block at their annual concert devoted to local rock music. **Blackwater James**, **My Beautiful Disaster**, **The Lasting** and **Circleslide** are all performing. The show starts at 8 p.m., and tickets are free (so there is no excuse).

SOUNDTRACK TO THE ISSUE



We at Versus have excellent taste in music. Below, the editors share what tracks we've been spinning as we create the glory you're holding in your hands.

1. **"SHAME"**
The Avett Brothers
2. **"TIE MY HANDS"**
Lil' Wayne featuring Robin Thicke
3. **"WON'T STOP"**
OneRepublic
4. **"I'M READY"**
The Format
5. **"THE RESCUE"**
Search the City
6. **"ONCE AGAIN"**
Girl Talk
7. **"ANGELINA"**
The Bravery
8. **"HIP HOP SAVED MY LIFE"**
Lupe Fiasco featuring Nikki Jean
9. **"ROSANNA"**
Toto
10. **"CAN'T BELIEVE IT"**
T-Pain featuring Lil' Wayne

Making music on The Commons

OWEN CANAVAN
Staff Writer

Few things are more satisfying than acting on a vision and being successful in its execution. For our university, The Commons was that vision.

In order for The Commons to reach its full potential, there was an inherent expectation that students would get involved. To that end, the university looked to how students might be able to help round out The Commons' entertainment offerings. When Blair professor and renowned ethnomusicology authority Greg Barz asked how might music be involved with the project, an entirely new idea called "Music in The Commons" was born.

In order for The Commons to provide popular music to the Peabody campus and its students, the faculty blueprinted a project that would involve student-run sub committees running a concert series in a variety of different contexts. While the "Living Room" in the building, which houses the grand piano and assortment of couches, acts as a perfect venue for acoustic trios

and singer/songwriters, it is the bustling nature of the freshman community directly outside its doors that will help these events be successful.

With four subcommittees (Nashville in Our Living Room, WRVU, New Faces, Jazz in The Commons) and what is to be



a climactic, semester-end event called The Global Stretch, Music in The Commons is set to be an opportunity for freshmen to get involved in both the school and the music industry.

With a student leader and a team of five students, each of the subcommittees has an unexpected level of autonomy — a luxury that the faculty heads insisted on being an integral part of this project. By allowing the student-run teams to book the talent for their shows and do the necessary promotion work and artist hospitality, Music in The Commons targets Vanderbilt students by using Vanderbilt students to organize the entertainment that they would like to take part in themselves.

The first event will be taking place on Thursday, Sept. 18, as a product of the Nashville in Our Living Room subcommittee. A bill of southern rock/country singer-songwriter Chris Hennessee and folk rocker Ricky Young will throw down their accessible music in two 45-minute sets.

Optimism for the project from students involved is high, and they're hopeful it will succeed in its mission: presenting popular music to the Peabody campus — an initiative that hopefully will increase the level to which the arts are represented in The Commons.

MUSIC NEWS

Sep. 2: Ludacris plans a new album and two films for fall.

Sep. 3: Usher announces plans for a "ladies only" tour. Widespread Panic announces tour dates for fall and 2009.

Sep. 5: Kanye West announces plans to release new material and fourth album by the end of the year.

Sep. 6: Phish is reunited for the first time in four years to play at former manager Brad Sands' wedding, fueling rumors of a reunion.

Sep. 7: Oasis guitarist Noel Gallagher was attacked by a fan at Toronto's Virgin Festival. Britney Spears wins three VMA awards, including female video, pop video and video of the year.

_KINGS_OF_LEON_
_IN_CONCERT_

_SPECIAL_GUESTS: We are Scientists THE WHIGGS

NOVEMBER 19
TICKETS ON SALE FRIDAY AT 10 AM!

MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM
DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE

Tickets available at the Municipal Auditorium box office, all **ticketmaster** locations or by phone at (615) 255-9600.

TMG AEG LIVE BUY TICKETS at AEGLIVE.COM

NEW ALBUM "ONLY BY THE NIGHT" AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 23 **KINGSOFLION.COM**

RYMAN AUDITORIUM
THANKS FOR VOTING US NASHVILLE'S BEST PLACE TO HEAR LIVE MUSIC AGAIN THIS YEAR!

NISSAN CONCERT SERIES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15
O.A.R. WITH SPECIAL GUEST **MATT WERTZ**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
Conor Oberst and the Mystic Valley Band with **Jenny Lewis**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
DAVID BYRNE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24
THE SWELL SEASON
OSCAR® WINNERS FOR BEST ORIGINAL SONG FROM "ONCE" with **BILL CALLAHAN**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8
THE BLACK KEYS
with special guest **ROYAL BANGS**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9 & FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10
OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW
with **Carolina Chocolate Drops**

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2
SARA BAREILLES with **MARC BROUSSARD** and **RAINING JANE**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20
ROBERT EARL KEEN
with **Todd Snider**
TICKETS ON SALE FRIDAY AT 10 AM

Tickets available at all **ticketmaster** outlets, Kroger, the Ryman Box Office, **ryman.com**, or (615) 255-9600.
Ryman Auditorium is a National Historic Landmark, open daily as a museum.
HISTORICALLY COOL • 116 FIFTH AVENUE NORTH • DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE • RYMAN.COM

ART

A behind the seams look at VH1

A day with stylist Alana Kelen.

COURTNEY ROGERS
Culture Editor

Even the most fashionable among us have trouble deciding what to wear for their big days.

Whether it's that special date or a big interview, getting dressed and finding the right ensemble for the occasion isn't always easy. Though the general public must struggle on their own quests for a chic look, the stars of VH1 shows such as "Top 20 Countdown" have their own fashion fairy godmother to take the hassle out of what to wear on camera: Alana Kelen.

Upon meeting Kelen in her New York office, it wasn't hard to see that fashion was her career. Wearing a brown, printed day dress, heels and the ultimate accessory — a Fendi spy bag — Kelen led the way through the maze of the VH1 office. She explained that VH1 was in the process of moving to a new office with bigger studios down in SoHo. At the Broadway location, the wardrobe office and Kelen's office melded into one, with clothes occupying shelves and racks that could easily fill a Branscomb double.

The road to a career in style isn't always a glamorous or easy road. A Fairfield, Conn., native, Kelen started college at Arizona State for a business degree. When she found the school to be too big and realized business wasn't what she really wanted, she transferred to the Fashion



Lights, camera, fashion. Clockwise from top left: The InStyle clothing closet with the run-through outfits hanging on the trellis; Helping organize the day's accessories; Shoes galore in the VH1 wardrobe department; Shirts and accessories for shows like "Top 20 Countdown"; A glimpse of the hallowed halls of the VH1 offices and studios.

Institute of Technology to pursue fashion. While earning her bachelor's degree, she saw an internship in styling with MTV Networks. She's been at VH1 for the past eight years and has also worked as a freelance stylist for NBC and InStyle.

When styling for "Top 20 Countdown," Kelen says the most important thing to keep in mind is the demographic of the show. She tends to use clothes and silhouettes that are accessible to "middle America" rather than more avant-garde or trendy looks. It's important the host doesn't look too styled, and he or she can't wear a big logo, since that could conflict with advertising

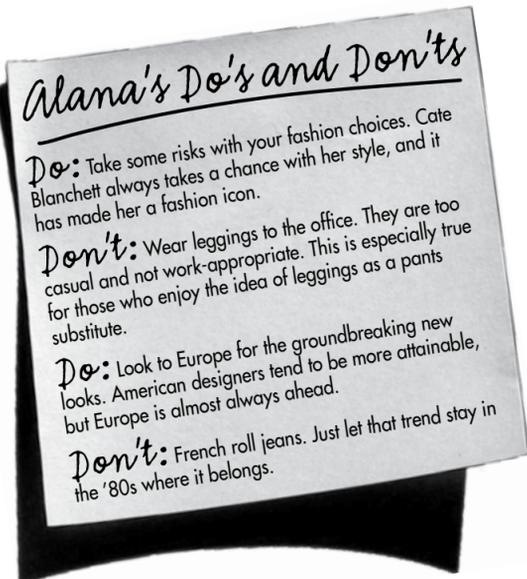
during the program.

For "Top 20" regulars like Alison Becker, Kelen uses a lot of clothing from Urban Outfitters and H&M. She is also in charge of styling celebrities who come to VH1 for shows. One of her more memorable and fun encounters was dressing John Mayer in a captain's costume for a series of commercials last year. Kelen knew him from growing up in Fairfield, and in addition to penning heart-breaking lyrics, she said he is quite the comedian.

When asked about how to break into the fashion industry, Kelen stressed the importance of networking and making contacts



HADLEY GREEN/Neriad



Do: Take some risks with your fashion choices. Cate Blanchett always takes a chance with her style, and it has made her a fashion icon.

Don't: Wear leggings to the office. They are too casual and not work-appropriate. This is especially true for those who enjoy the idea of leggings as a pants substitute.

Do: Look to Europe for the groundbreaking new looks. American designers tend to be more attainable, but Europe is almost always ahead.

Don't: French roll jeans. Just let that trend stay in the '80s where it belongs.

wherever you can. After the VH1 tour, Kelen's schedule took us to a preview for Dolce&Gabbana jewelry. Kelen tries to make as many of these events as she can in order to maintain her relationships with designers and continue networking.

Though working at VH1 takes a lot of time, Kelen has had time to do some work as a freelancer. Her most recent project was working with InStyle to create outfits for the Bravo show, "Tim Gunn's Guide to Style." For Kelen, working allows her to focus more on high fashion, and it has opened her up to other designers. Located a stone's throw from Rockefeller

Center, the InStyle offices were the site of Kelen's biggest appointment of the day: a run-through.

For those who are neither fashion junkies nor aficionados of the film "The Devil Wears Prada," a run-through is when a stylist gathers together racks of clothes, shoes and accessories and an editor makes the final picks for a look. While helping set up for the run-through, a fashion emergency struck. Suddenly, it was up to Hadley, a fellow fashionista from Connecticut, and myself to locate a black turtleneck to complete the look. Though sorting the expanses of precious jewelry

and Moschino handbags was dreamy, there's nothing like solving a crisis to make you feel like a real stylist. And, in case you were wondering, if you ever need to find a black turtleneck in August in Manhattan, the 10th floor of Saks is the place to go.

So what is on the fashion forecast for fall? According to Kelen, pieces to look for include dark florals and romantic lace details. Bell-bottoms and long hair are also a part of the fall look, and for accessories; tights are still a hit in funky colors as well as chunky shoes. To learn more style tips from Kelen, check out the list of Alana's Do's and Don'ts. ☼

ART

Artist Profile: Marilyn Murphy

MURIELLE WYMAN
Staff Writer

Background: Bachelor's of fine arts from Oklahoma State University, master's of fine arts from the University of Oklahoma

What is your favorite medium to use?

Graphite on paper and of course oil paint on canvas, as well. I also just recently got back into using colored pencils, so that's exciting — I'm going to be teaching a whole course on it next fall! I also do prints occasionally.

What is the primary subject matter of your work? What are some inspirations?

In a really broad sense it's the human condition — but I also like the sense of mystery that comes along with images of power such as fire and wind. I think it stems from a fascination with the mechanics of machinery and the world in general. In my earlier works I would put people in relation to machines, but that kind of moved into depicting them with the natural motif of power. It moved from mechanical power to natural power.

Who are your favorite artists? Do they in any way influence your art?

Ron Porter! We've got some amazing artists here in the department who create really beautiful, thoughtful works. I would also say Marcel Duchamp because of his interesting approach to art and his use of ideas. I love writers too — Gaston Bachelard is one. He wrote "Air and Songs" and "The Poetics of Space." He died before I started painting, but after reading "The Poetics of Space" in particular, I thought it could have been written about my paintings. In it he talks about how we perceive space and some of the things he wrote about put my images to words almost exactly.

What else has helped to influence your art?

Machines, travel, conversations with my friends, interesting books — it's usually everyday life and the adventures that come with it. I also used to live in Oklahoma, which is what I call the buckle of the tornado belt, and I used to witness some incredible storms — which has had an enormous influence on my art.

Carl Hammer, with whom you did an exhibit last year, says of your works, "Murphy's intriguing visual scenarios are magical in their improbability yet scorchingly insightful, challenging the viewer to rethink the reality of any given situation." Was this your intention for your works?

Yes. Art should do that, though.

After observing several of your pieces, I realized that of the figures depicted, none of their faces are ever shown. Was this intentional?

Oh yes. When you put a face into a piece, it becomes about that person — what I'm most interested in is what it is that that person is doing. I want that action to be more important than that identity.

Do you have any upcoming exhibits that we should be on the lookout for?

Yes — there's one coming up in October. It begins on Oct. 18 at the Cumberland Gallery here in Nashville. In it you'll see some of my new works — including some new colored pencil drawings. They are really large desserts in curious situations (one of which is shown here).

If you're interested in finding out more about Marilyn Murphy, you can check out some of her works at the Cumberland Gallery or you can take one of her art classes at Vanderbilt. ☼

FASHION

Fashion tries on a new color by going green

KATY FINNERAN
Staff Writer

When I think of environmentalists, I think Al Gore — not Anna Wintour.

But environmental issues are paramount in all realms of society — including fashion. Eco-friendly fashion is a large social, political and cultural trend, one that transcends every level of fashion from design and production to corporate social responsibility to retail and consumer education.

What changes are designers making to cater toward an environmentally savvy consumer? Designers are increasingly including materials such as organic cotton, bamboo, hemp and recycled fabric in their clothing. For many of us, words such as "hemp" and "bamboo" conjure an image of granola, hiking boots and wilderness — perhaps the anti-thesis of fashion.

However, designers, determined to balance environmentalism with aesthetic, prove these fabrics do offer an element of glamour. Brands such as C&C, Theory, Primp, Joe's Jeans, Seven for All Mankind and Timberland are incorporating the eco-friendly options of organic cotton and bamboo in their lines while maintaining their style and popularity.

An inherently negative consequence of eco-friendly fashion is higher prices. Just as organic fruit is more expensive at Whole Foods than non-organic at Kroger, so too is organic cotton pricier than conventional cotton. Although eco-friendly designers face the immediate set back of a higher price tag, an educated consumer can look beyond the short-term expense and recognize the substantial long-term benefits.

According to recent studies, cotton requires the most chemicals per unit of any crop and is responsible for 16 percent of the world's pesticides. On a personal level, the chemicals in conventional cotton are more likely to cause rashes, irritation and discomfort for the consumer. On a grand scale, the chemicals in conventional cotton cause air and cotton pollution.

A pioneer brand in the eco-friendly wave is Patagonia. In 1993, Patagonia began using recycled plastic bottles to produce fleece. Now, 15 years later, Patagonia has initiated

"common threads recycling," the world's first garment recycling program where customers can bring their old capilene (think, long underwear) and fleece back to Patagonia. From here, Patagonia recycles the old (and otherwise discarded) garments to produce recycled polyester fiber for future Patagonia garments.

By using recycled materials, Patagonia combats and reduces a plethora of environmental issues including dependency on oil, water and air pollution, the overcrowding of landfills, and hazardous pollution from incinerators. Patagonia's eco commitment transcends to other environmental organizations. Since 1985 Patagonia has donated over \$25 million to over 1,000 environmental organizations, and in early 2008 Patagonia won "Eco Brand of the Year" at the Volvo EcoDesign forum.

How can an educated consumer find these products? Luckily, eco-friendly options are more visible than ever for the consumer. The popular fashion Web site Shopbop features an "Eco-Friendly" section, offering online shoppers a wide variety of chic environmental options from their favorite brands.

Although companies can take initiatives to produce environmental clothing, ultimately the weight is on consumers — they have to respond. ☼



O.A.R.

Benj Gershman has been groovin' with O.A.R. since most of us were in middle school, and he and his band are bringing O.A.R.'s unique brand of college rock to Nashville on Sept. 15. Before he rolled into town, Gershman talked to Music Editor Avery Spofford about living the college life, being on the road and commandeering the occasional golf cart.



VERSUS MAGAZINE: *The band has been together since 1996. What made you all come together to form O.A.R.?*

BENJ GERSHMAN: In 1996 I was lifeguarding with Chris Culos, our drummer, and all summer we talked about music. At the end of the summer we realized that his band was looking for a bass player and that I was a bass player looking for a band, and at the very beginning of that school year we had our first practice. It was just an instant fit, it felt right, and we enjoyed playing together. We ended up rehearsing and writing music every Tuesday and Thursday that year.

VM: How do you think that developing your music while the band members were enrolled in college influenced the band's sound?

BG: I'm a year younger than the other guys, but everyone else went to Ohio State in 1997. It was a decision we made together in order to do everything we could to keep the band going. Going to the biggest school in the country just seemed to make sense if we were going to do that. I think that being in school provides a lot of different cultural influences and people who you can be exposed to music from or through, so I think we became more diverse as far as what influenced us individually and as a band. It really helped bolster our love for music and playing music together.

VM: Your latest studio release, "All Sides," is in stores now and is your best-charted album yet. What do you think it is about this album that has made it so popular?

BG: I think there's a lot about the album that's appealing. I think that our first single, "Shattered," is the first song we have that really seems to make sense on the radio as far as the way it is recorded and produced, which I think is going to help the album be successful on the mainstream level. I also think that the album as a whole has a lot of great music and will stand the test of time — it represents all sides of O.A.R. and all sides of our music and influences, both individually and as a band. I just think there's a lot there, and hopefully the album will speak for itself and I won't have to say too much.

VM: How has the band's sound changed with this latest release?

BG: I think that we're really maturing as a band in a lot of ways. We're realizing what needs to happen for the overall sound to come out unified and direct and like O.A.R., the O.A.R. that we want to be. I think that we're at a point where we understand that, and that's what's making us grow.

VM: Do you think that your emphasis on live performances and albums is better for the band, for the fans or both?

BG: The live part of O.A.R. is essential to O.A.R. That's who we are. The studio stuff is a representation of that and a part of that. It's a moment in time displaying that. But I think that the live thing is so essential, the most essential.

VM: You just wrapped up the first leg of your tour, and you guys are already heading back out. What's it like being on the road for such long stretches of time?

BG: Tiring. Being on the road is not easy. We're lucky enough to have a bus and travel comfortably in that regard, but it's still a lot of work and not the easiest thing to do for months at a time. We realize that's the nature of the business we're in, so we make the most of it and try to stay healthy. Exercising, eating right and doing other things that seem commonplace can really add to life on the road.

VM: Do you have any funny stories from touring life that our college readers might enjoy?

BG: Our first summer, we played a festival at a venue in Boston. We were all kids just out of college having fun, really not taking what we were doing too seriously, and we managed to commandeer a golf cart. I was taking it for a little ride, and I ended up flipping the cart after the show. . . . Fortunately, no one was hurt, but it was a fun memory.

VM: You guys just played Bonnaroo, and now you are coming back to our area on Sept. 15 to play at the Ryman. How do you feel about performing in a more conventional venue such as the Ryman versus at a huge outdoor festival like Bonnaroo?

BG: We welcome it; we look forward to it. It's a great thing to do. Bands have to perform in different types of venues all the time, and for us it's a really good thing to switch it up like that; it keeps us on our toes. The Ryman is a historic venue, and there are only so many places you can play that have genuine history, so it's exciting to be coming back to one that has so much.

VM: The band has come up with a new way to offer music to fans: through a USB bracelet. What exactly do you have planned with this new innovation?

BG: The USB bracelets are a new way of purchasing O.A.R.'s music. Basically, it's a rubber bracelet that has a USB drive with our new album, "All Sides," on it. This summer we had our live shows available as well, so fans who purchased the bracelet got both the album and the show they attended. We're adding some extras to it, and it's basically just another way that people can purchase our music and have an experience with it. It's also a marketing tool — if people wear the bracelet, someone might see it and ask about it. There are a few different sides to it.

VM: This time last year, the band did a U.S.O. tour of Kuwait and Iraq. How was the trip, and how did it affect the band?

BG: The trip itself was life changing. It was very meaningful to be there. I've never felt like our music was more appreciated — the people we met over there were so genuinely happy to receive our music and have us there. Whether they knew our band or not, they were just happy to be entertained for an hour or two, which was really a cool feeling for us and reminded us why we're so lucky to be entertainers for a living. Marc (Roberge) and Richard (On) wrote a song for the album called "War Song," which is about what soldiers go through and how we think they should be treated when they get home from serving our country, and I think that they were affected personally by it. There's a lot to it.

VM: What is something that the band struggles with in the industry today?

BG: Staying current. From the biggest band to the smallest band, everybody wants to stay current in the music industry today and stay on top of things. Everyone wants to have people be aware of their music while maintaining their art in the way that they want to be represented. I think that's just something we push for and that we try to make happen — staying current with our music and with who we are as a band.

VM: Which bands, new or old, do you most enjoy seeing live?

BG: I just saw Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers for the first time at the Mile High Music Festival in Denver, Colo., and they were ridiculous. It was such a great show. I caught the Foo Fighters at (Madison Square) Garden a little while ago, which was also unbelievable. There's a band we toured with called Ozomatli, and they have one of the coolest and most energetic live shows on planet Earth. It's really great music with sounds from all over the world. If you can't enjoy their show and their music, there's just something wrong with you.

VM: Which bands are you listening to right now?

BG: The new Coldplay is pretty cool, and I've been listening to the Fleet Foxes a little bit. I also like to throw on some old school Beastie Boys, some older stuff like that.

VM: If O.A.R.'s music could serve as a soundtrack for any movie, which would it be?

BG: "Old School," maybe? I don't know. . . . That's a good question. A documentary about O.A.R.?

VM: What does the band have planned from here?

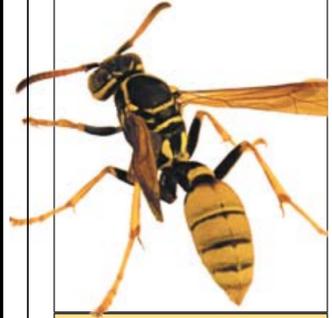
BG: We're just going to keep touring, playing music and writing music, trying to just be a band. We're just going to be a band for as long as humanly possible. ☿



photos by BENJ GERSHMAN / OfARevolution.com

LETTER FROM AN ANGRY WASP

Each week, our resident Angry WASP sounds off on things that make him buzz. (see what we did there?)



Dear bike riders,

Seriously now. I should NOT have to move out of the way just because you want to stay on the pavement. Every time I hear that little clanking from the spokes of your death machine, my life not only flashes before my eyes but actually projects out a little bit too.

Look, there's seriously NO reason you should have a bike here. Does it take more than 15 minutes to walk anywhere on campus? No, it doesn't. You can be in Kissam and it takes no longer than 15 minutes to walk to Blair (if you were so inclined). So why would you EVER need a bike?

See, it's just simple math: If it takes you two and a half minutes to unlock your bike and the same to relock it, and it takes you five minutes to walk to class from wherever you park your bike to where your class is, and five minutes to go down the elevator and get to your bike to begin with, then guess what? Fifteen minutes. What's that? Oh yeah, those are equal amounts of time.

And if it takes you more than 15 minutes to walk that distance, you probably actually need the walking time. Or, you know, you could just leave the extra five minutes early. And what's wrong with spending the time walking to class with friends and being, you know, social? It's time to just slow down a little bit.

So really, until you all decide to turn in your two-wheeled terrors, the rest of us will walk scared. Can you bike scared? I didn't think so. WORTHLESS.

**Sincerely,
An Angry WASP**

FLIP SIDE

OVERHEARD

Some people on this campus just don't think before they speak. Sometimes we are lucky enough to overhear what they say.

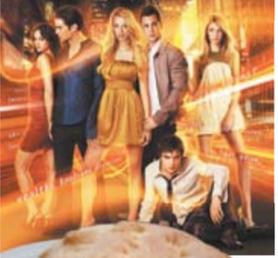


Compiled from the Facebook group "Overheard at Vanderbilt"



After receiving a handout on bat echolocation:
Girl: "I thought this said 'electrocution bats.' I was gonna be like, 'Hell YEAH!'"

Guy: "You know what really pisses me off? SOUTHERN SECESSIONISTS!"



Walking back from the football game:
Fratstar No. 1 (speaking to Fratstar No. 2): "Yo! Did you see the first episode of 'Gossip Girls'?"



At the freshman tailgate before the Vanderbilt vs. South Carolina game:
Student No. 1: "Yo, man, Sarah Palin is pretty good looking."
Student No. 2: "Yeah, man, she's a V.P.I.L.F."



In a residence hall stairwell:
Guy: "This roll tastes a lot like a biscuit."
Girl: (pause) "It IS a biscuit."

Girl No. 1: "Ew! He smelled like smoke!"
Girl No. 2: "It's Tennessee — that's what blue collar workers smell like."

Professor: "If you can't mate ... then what's the point?"



Overheard at a milkshake discussion:
"I don't like spooning. I just like to suck."



"Kissam is like the elephant graveyard in 'Lion King.'"

"I feel like there's no difference between Vanderbilt boys' dorms and medieval streets. I mean, people would throw buckets of urine if they could."

PHOTOS: www.sk.hu

HOROSCOPES



VIRGO 8/23-9/22

Just because your windows are up doesn't mean we can't see you belting out "One Step at a Time" in your ride. A word of advice? Maybe ... don't.



LIBRA 9/23-10/22:

"Wayne's World" said it best: "I say hurl. If you blow chunks and she comes back, she's yours. But if you spew and she bolts, then it was never meant to be."



SCORPIO 10/23-11/21:

That last Long Island Iced Tea will be your demise tonight. Unless you're into that kind of thing, the stars suggest a Bud Light.



SAGITTARIUS 11/22-12/21:

Use caution when throwing away your soda can in the trash bins near Rand. Those things are a haven for feisty woodland creatures.



CAPRICORN 12/22-1/19:

You can count on me waiting for you in the parking lot. Be there.



AQUARIUS 1/20-2/18:

Recently popular bumper stickers on Facebook, page three, bottom row, middle sticker. That's you in a nutshell.



PISCES 2/19-3/20:

Your roommate is a trifling ho.



ARIES 3/21-4/19:

The suspect, lumpy chicken from Quiznos won't kill you. But we advise against it anyway.



TAURUS 4/20-5/20:

You're totally right. Lying on the couch for hours, unwashed, watching "The Price is Right" will find you a great job. Just keep doing that.



GEMINI 5/21-6/21:

If you're avoiding someone, don't go to Bread & Co.



CANCER 6/22-7/22:

Not picking up her phone to answer your call is as sure a sign as we have ever seen that she likes you.



LEO 7/23-8/22:

Sitting in the front row of your Human Sexuality lecture today would ultimately be a bad decision, as you WILL be the teacher's volunteer, leading to both humiliation and shame.

FREE PARTY IN THE STREET!



Thursday, September 18th - 6pm
 DEMONBREUN STREET (near Tin Roof and Dan McGuinness)

featuring:
TRACE ADKINS
 DARIUS RUCKER, LUKE BRYAN, EMILY WEST

Special thanks to our sponsors:

