Start boiling the macaroni; Barenaked Ladies are back

By Jamie Schulz

Switching back to PSB quotes

Artist: Barenaked Ladies
Album: Maroon
Label: Reprise Records
Genre: Rock/Pop
Tracks: 12 (plus a bonus track)
Rating: ★★★★★

It’s a rather jumbled cacophony of selections, Maroon. Not that that’s a bad thing, mind you. It’s just that the style flip-flops from a somewhat skewed performance of “The Old Apartment” found in “Too Little Too Late” to an XTC/OMD-inspired “Convintions” into a country-rock “Go Home.” But the question remains: “Will I like it?” This reviewer did. The songs are all catchy, but not in the horrible manner of so many Backstreet Boys songs. You’ll probably find yourself tapping your foot or bobbing your head to many of the tracks on the album. The only problem that exists is the social commentary that the band performs. It revolves from tongue-in-cheek to throwing the whole lot on the table, as they do in “Helicopters,” (a kind of “Don Juan” for the latter part of the twentieth century). In this, Steeven Page (lead vocalist) reminesics on the day that the Allies came to bomb the village, and the mayhem that followed. But not to worry, that’s probably only melancholy track out of the lot.

There’s enough lightheartedness in the lyrics to make even the dourest of subjects enjoyable.

How do you heat up a crowd with every spice in the rack?

By Alan Bach

Does his lab work with dynamite

Musical fads have a very short shelf life these days. Think about disco, second-wave ska, grunge, swing (or what passed for it), or any of a dozen other trends that have come and gone over the past 20 years. It can be hard for a new band to settle on a style that will still be popular next week.

For Atlanta’s Mandorico, the answer is simple: draw on styles that have endured for years in other parts of the world. This self-described “eight-man mobile dance party” has put in a lot of nights fine-tuning a combination of sound and fury that keeps dancing people out of their seats and onto the floor.

Both of their albums to date, the 1998 EP Familiar Places and this year’s Afro-Cuban Hip-Caribbean Brew, feature a lively mix of Latin and Caribbean musical elements. Salsa, mariachi, flamenco, ska, reggae, rock-steady—it all comes from south of the border or anywhere in the Gulf of Mexico; it probably shows up on these discs. Add a healthy dash of rock and punk and the result sounds like something the Mighty Mighty Bosstones could have done if they had cut their teeth in Mexico rather than Beantown.

The blend of styles is no accident. In 1996, lead singer/percussionist Jesse Lauricella spent six months in Guadalajara studying Spanish literature following his graduation from Georgia State University. When he returned to Atlanta, he decided to draw on his time down south and his experience with the Go-Steads, one of the main ska bands in this area at the time.

With the help of guitarist Mark Solano, he set about assembling a group that could handle whatever ended up in the melting pot. The original lineup also featured bassist Carlos Culver, drummer Erich Nerherton and Luis Gonzalez, and the horn section of Kevin McKinney and Travis Tingle. The full band has been active since early 1997.

[M]usic is like country music...it’s part of a culture, part of a lifestyle.

Jesse Lauricella

Mandorico

‘Almost Famous’

Cameron Crowe directs a movie that closely parallels his own life story. Opening today in theaters. Page 21

Love goes the way of Babylon

By Steve Hu

Wonders what to have for lunch

Artist: The Sixths
Album: Hyacinths and Thistles
Label: Merge Records
Genre: Rock/Pop
Tracks: 14
Rating: ★★★★★

After three or four years of dormancy, Stephen Merritt has burst back into the limelight—releasing six full length albums, taming the anticipation of an eager audience, and threatening to occupy a few inches of space on every record shelf and in every bin. Most notable of these contributions to the pop world is 69 Love Songs, Released under the umbrella of The Magnetic Fields and composed and performed almost entirely by Merritt, it made the top ten list of every critic worthy of his/her word for the year of 1998. The Sixths, featuring new members and the ever alluring voice of Stephin Merritt has used the souped up Gary Numan fever pitch. It comes close during the opening up Gary Numan track, but even that is a bit sated. Instead, the songs are constructed for the diverse, accentuated voices of his collaborators and the musical landscapes are clean and lush with all kinds of synthesizers, bongos, flamencos, zithers and toy pianos.

Included on the long list of contributors are Sally Timms from the timeless, thrashing Mekons, Bob Mobuld of punk rock icon, Aliho Hunter of Cibo Matto, early synth-pop shining star Gary Numan, Katherine Whalen of the Squared Nut Zipper, and the ever alluring voice of Saint Etienne’s frontwoman, Sarah Cracknell. Merritt now makes his home in Mexico rather than Beantown.
Throughout the ages, there have been many things that have split humanity. People will forever argue about such riveting issues as politics and religion, they will continue to debate the grave issue of whether you should squeeze the toothpaste tube from the end or from the middle, and they will toil over the paper or plastic bag issue. While these issues do carry monumental social importance, I speak to you today about the most powerfully moving issue I know, one more socially polarizing than a conversation between Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan. That’s right folks—I am talking about the Pepsi Girl.

It seems as though everyone has some opinion about the curly-haired tyke. For some strange reason, this little girl has caused an uproar of freakish proportions. For about a quarter of the population, she’s this adorable icon for a fizzy beverage. For the other three quarters, she’s the Antichrist. The Two Bits man is a little confused about the latter. I have friends who want to see her as the target for lawn-darts and killer bees, and I have others who believe that she is the spawn of Satan, cause for another crusade.

The reason that the Pepsi Girl comes up today is that the Two Bits man saw a movie over the weekend at the Purple Theater. I feel confident that you know which one I mean, because if you’ve never been to the Purple Theater, you probably haven’t left your apartment long enough to reach the Student Center. Anyhow, during the introduction where the girl tells you not to talk, drink, or use your cell phone, a friend of mine started quivering and muttering “Die you Antichrist, die!” Personally, I just don’t see why people fear and loathe the Pepsi Girl. The routine where she walks into the saloon and unleashes her wrath with a water pistol is much better than the old pre-movie ads to make you shut up and buy soda. As an avid movie buff, I used to dread the requisite promotion for the theater. Obviously, you shouldn’t talk while you’re at the movies, but they beat you over the head with this fact while shamelessly plugging their own cinema. While she may be annoying at times, the Pepsi Girl was a refreshing change. It was good to see such a well-acted clip inviting moviegoers to buy Twizzlers.

For about a quarter of the population, the Pepsi Girl is an adorable icon. For the other three quarters, she’s the Antichrist. The other reason the Pepsi Girl is such a great advance in modern cinema is that I consider her to be one of the finest post-Shakespearian actresses of all time. Despite her diminutive size, her vocal range is spectacular. The Two Bits Man is understandably impressed by one woman who can so adroitly shift from a tiny soprano to the aggressive bass of a Western outlaw. After all, even Jim Carrey has to limit himself to voices within his tenor range; clearly, he pales in comparison to the Pepsi Girl.

Of course, I’m probably giving the Pepsi Girl way too much credit. She still ends up being as annoying as a 24-hour Barney marathon. Nonetheless, the Pepsi Girl is far less bothersome than any other pre-show cut. She is far better than the stupid roller-coaster thing, and certainly beats the falling music notes. For that, I give her the honorable Two Bits Salute.

In the grand scheme of things, I don’t really guess it matters that much whether or not you like the Pepsi Girl. She may be the Antichrist, but she does offer a welcome change from what used to be my least favorite part of a movie. Besides, I think the real problem plaguing America’s fine theaters is the glaring lack of Junior Mints. Why doesn’t anyone sell them any more? Of course, I can save fretting about candy for another time. Until next week, I am the Two Bits Man, and these are my thoughts.
**Crossword**

**What a State-mean!**

By Kit FitzSimons

Monster of the grid...iron

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Answers on page 21. Crosswords are quickly becoming a regular feature! Email all comments or complaints to entertainment@technique.gatech.edu.

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**This week on the GT Cable Network**

By Rebekah Bardwell

GTCN Correspondent

Flava 101 takes you inside the mind of Universal Recording Artist Miracle. Get a taste of Miracle’s new album and find out about Miracle’s soul food restaurant and hip-hop clothing line.

Phat Video takes you on a visit of WREK 91.1, the Institute’s own 40,000-Watt radio station. Kara gets a tour around the station and a peek inside one of Atlanta’s largest collections of vintage albums. Kara also takes to Atlanta’s airwaves as she transitions from V.J. to D.J.

Flava 101 comes on Mondays at 3:00 and 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m., and Phat Video comes on Mondays at 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. on GTCN’s Channel 21.

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**Get out. Hear music. Have fun.**

**COTTON CLUB [152 Luckey St.]**

Phone: (404) 574-1953

9/15—Cee Knowledge, Cosmic Funk Orchestra, Gateway People
9/16—Lounge Fly, Slim, Film, Band
9/19—Nally Fortes
9/20—Queens of the Stone Age, Vast Like Hell
9/22—Brand New Interns, Arctic Ridge

Web site: www.cottonclub.com

**RICKY’S BOWLED OddBall Rd**

Phone: (404) 235-7979

9/16—Sourdough Sector 9

**SAMY’S OLE BAR [1583 Piedmont Ave.]**

Phone: (404) 675-1322

9/15—Medallion, Modern Hero, Chris & Abbey
9/16—Soultone, Buffalo Nickel
9/17—Morgan Evans, Doug Howlett, Lauren Blackley, Shinee Hines
9/18—Craft, Iceman, Desert
9/19—J Trombone Roberts, Francisco/Wild Brand
9/20—Dave Freiberg, Something S
9/21—T
9/22—Terri Thompson Brand, Five Pound Bass, John McKay

Web site: www.toursforafactor.com

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**EDDIE’S ATTIC [515-B N. McDonough St.]**

Phone: (404) 577-4976

9/15—Danahow, Howe, Michael Winger
9/16—John Mayer, Michelle Ferris, Christian Anthony
9/17—Doppelt Grays, Mandarock Quartet, Tom Feldman
9/19—Hugh Peacock, Onex, Anna Gracida
9/20—Paul Valdmen, Lee Willy, Tommy Fowler
9/21—Ataxic, Angela Motter, Mimi Thompson
9/22—Ellis Paul, Christopher Williams, Jeniphoria

Web site: www.eddiesattic.com

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**SOUND TRIBE SECTOR 9 [515-B N. McDonough St.]**

Phone: (404) 577-4976

9/15—Danahow, Howe, Michael Winger
9/16—John Mayer, Michelle Ferris, Christian Anthony
9/17—Doppelt Grays, Mandarock Quartet, Tom Feldman
9/19—Hugh Peacock, Onex, Anna Gracida
9/20—Paul Valdmen, Lee Willy, Tommy Fowler
9/21—Ataxic, Angela Motter, Mimi Thompson
9/22—Ellis Paul, Christopher Williams, Jeniphoria

Web site: www.eddiesattic.com

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**SMITH’S OLDE BAR [1582 Piedmont Ave.]**

Phone: (404) 521-1786

9/15—Blacklight Postboys, Chain Funk, 13 States
9/16—Mandolino, Staryard, Moodblumes
9/16—Shantay, Shorts, Showcase+Showcase+
9/19—Nelly Furtado
9/20—Brand New Immortals, Audiobridge

Web site: www.s抚养.com/roxy.htm

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**TABERNACLE [152 Luckey St.]**

Phone: (404) 659-9022

9/15—Blacklight Postboys, Chain Funk, 13 States
9/16—Mandolino, Staryard, Moodblumes
9/16—Shantay, Shorts, Showcase+Showcase+
9/19—Nelly Furtado
9/20—Brand New Immortals, Audiobridge

Web site: www.tabernaclemusic.com

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**STAR BAR [437 Highland Ave.]**

Phone: (404) 521-9018

9/15—The Venettos, Catfight
9/16—Dave & Trincher, Backstage
9/16—Buck, Redneck Greece, Chillbillies, Star Games Experience
9/19—Seventh Machine, Stag, John Iron
9/20—Elise Fannin, The Yeah, Michelle Madison, Stag, Microphone
9/22—Langue de Devance

Web site: www.starcem.com/istar.html

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**TARANTULA [152 Luckey St.]**

Phone: (404) 659-9022

9/15—Frey Chapman

Web site: www.tabernaclemusic.com

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**VARIEY PLAYHOUSE [1099 Edelst Ave.]**

Phone: (404) 531-1786

9/15—Ten Tribes, Deep Brownie Blankout
9/19—Lynette Lounge Tour
9/22—Jerry Redbone

Web site: www.varietyplayhouse.com

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Check out the Tourdates Web site: www.tourdates.com

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(816 N. Highland Ave.)

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“What are you guys doing?” “Making out.”
Cameron Crowe film ‘Almost Famous’ is almost perfect

By Amanda Fazzone
U-WIRE

(U-WIRE)—There are only a few people in the world who can honestly say their life is a rock and roll fantasy. But Cameron Crowe—the screenwriter/director who brought you such classics as the Oscar-winning *Jerry Maguire*—is one of those people.

A California native, Crowe got his big break at age 15 writing music reviews and articles for *Creem, Playboy* and *Penthouse*. As if those gigs weren’t enough to fulfill any adolescent boy’s fantasies, at 16 he became a Contributing Editor for *Rolling Stone* and later, Associate Editor. His dream job went on to include interviewing and/or touring with the hottest acts of the day, including Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Led Zeppelin, Eric Clapton and the Allman Brothers. When it came time to write his own pseudo-biopic, the *Almost Famous* of ‘90s humor and updated lines of effervescent screen stars to take this film to the *Jerry Maguire* level of national acclaim.

Even still, there are one too many spots in the script and cast, including Frances McDormand and Zooey Deschanel, that a studmuffinette like Penny Lane would hang out with a dorky kid, even if he does write for *Rolling Stone*. And while Fugit does have some great lines and reaches a star-like level of intelligence worthy of being Cameron Crowe’s, the movie isn’t more mainstream than Cameron Crowe. But despite any weak spots in the script and cast, *Almost Famous* blurs other recent “rock” movies like *High Fidelity* clean out of the water—starting with the laugh-inducing opening credits. So next time Cameron Crowe asks you to show him the money, you probably should.

70s band on the road, there are a few too many unrealistic elements of ’70s humor and updated lines from the Zappa biography *The Hammer of the Gods*—not to mention outmoded powerful man/subservient woman images—to take this film to the *Jerry Maguire* level of national acclaim.

Even still, there are one too many fine performances to watch *Almost Famous* at the mainstream price. Frances McDormand and Zooey Deschanel shine as William’s overprotective mother and fly-by-night sister. The as-yet underrated Billy Crudup is irresistibly magnetic as Stillwater’s tormented lead singer, Russell Hammond. But Crowe may have left too much exposition on the cutting-room floor. For example, there is no explanation as to why Russell’s Stillwater bandmates resent him, other than their own jealousy. This flaw could have been easily overlooked if this subplot hadn’t been the focus of so many scenes.

The talented and beautiful Kate Hudson, the 21-year-old daughter of Goldie Hawn (and new fiancée of the Black Crowes’ Chris Robin-son), makes a splash as non-groupie groupie Penny Lane. As the love interest of both writer William and singer Russell, Hudson is physically and emotionally compelling. However, Fugit doesn’t give the audience enough reason to believe that a studmuffinette like Penny Lane would hang out with a dorky kid, even if he does write for *Rolling Stone*. And while Fugit does have some great lines and reaches a startling clarity during conversations with Philip Seymour Hoffman, he doesn’t dredge up the emotion and intelligence worthy of being Cameron Crowe.

The film’s soundtrack is more than a throwaway marketing gig—it has some of the all-time best '70s rock songs, boob shots and a mélange of effervescent screen stars.

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Nearly everybody involved has had to learn a little Spanish in order to keep up with Lauricella, who writes a good deal of his lyrics in that tongue. "It’s just a matter of overcoming that fear of sounding like an idiot when you don’t speak the language," he said. "But they do a good job at it, and I think it’s such a beautiful language. Honestly, if I didn’t live in the United States and the band wasn’t based out of Atlanta, I probably wouldn’t write a word in English."

He continued. "Unfortunately, people get upset if they don’t understand what you’re saying, so we try to keep a nice balance between the languages. The audiences—and the band members—go equally crazy whether or not everybody in the room knows what all the words mean.

Keeping a stable core of musicians together long enough for them to get fired up has been a bit of a challenge. Mandorico has endured a high rate of personnel turnover since coming together. Only five of the eight players credited on Afro-Cuban jazz, and when the band advertised for new players, he turned up at one of their shows. "He kind of hopped right in, and he knew a lot of the reggae and the salsa...He’s an incredible musician; this stuff is cake for him," Lauricella noted.

The roster of groups that have shared stages with Mandorico is enough to make fans of any form of Caribbean-based music drool. Toots and the Maytals, the Skatalites, and the late Tito Puente are some of the most prominent names that Lauricella and his crew have supported.

Opening for a big name is a memorable experience, he said, but the band’s best moments come when everybody in the room is there just to hear them. "The first time you go back to a city and sell out a club all by yourself—that’s awesome, man. I don’t care if it’s only a 300-capacity club. That’s huge, much bigger than playing in front of 90,000 people with UB40 or whatever.

Tonight’s show at Smith’s Olde Bar tonight. Call (404) 875-1522 for more information.

Mandorico will be performing with Modern Hero and Ode to Abbey at Smith’s Olde Bar tonight. Call (404) 875-1522 for more information.