Fuel ignites, Bubba just throws Sparxxx

By Hillary Lipko
Staff Writer

When the Student Center Programs Council conducted a survey last semester asking which bands students would like to see at a proposed spring concert event, I must admit I was a bit skeptical that the concert would be worth attending. I figured that of all the bands worth seeing, the odds of one being chosen and then actually being booked were about the same as it snowing in Atlanta—not entirely improbable, but still rather unlikely.

The fact that it did snow this winter should have wasted all of the good odds for any other unlikely, including that of a good line up for the planned Spring Break concert. Fate must have made a compromise with fortune though, because in exchange for getting the short end of the stick when it came to getting a snow day, Tech managed to score its own decent concert bill for String Break.

While I wouldn’t necessarily call it the fairest of exchanges, or assert with any kind of seriousness that our lack of a snow day back in February really had anything to do with Fuel being booked for String Break, it is at least an amusing notion to entertain. I also can’t pretend that this supposed exchange of fate left us on an entirely even keel, as after all, we do still have to get shacked somewhere.

Last Thursday’s billing featured Tech Battle of the Bands winner Schming and hip-hop artist Bubba Sparxxx. As much as I dislike being harshly critical of anyone, sometimes there is just no way around it. Sparxxx proved once again that Eminem is the exception rather than the rule, and that white guys are generally not cut out to be rappers. Following Schming’s awkward yet still-energizing set, Bubba Sparxxx failed to impress.

The performance seemed to be heading in a better direction as DJ Scientist was given the spotlight, but soon took a crash landing as the heavy-knit Sparxxx proclaimed his sexiness to the audience and removed his shirt. As he crossed the stage, his low-slung shorts also revealed to the audience a reminder to just say no to crack. While a few audience members seemed to genuinely enjoy Bubba Sparxxx’s performance, it was a wretched night for Tech fans.

It is, of course, possible that the performance was negatively affected by the earlier events of the evening, but the fact remains that the Tech community was not impressed by the show. While the bands were enjoyable enough, the performance lacked the energy and enthusiasm that the audience had come to expect from Tech’s Spring Break concert.


Tarantino slices Kill Bill Vol. 2 from new angle

By C. Jason Mahery
Senior Staff Writer

Kill Bill: Vol. II is, first and foremost, a Quentin Tarantino film. That in itself speaks volumes. Most who viewed the first installment were probably awaiting the second with some anticipation. Rest assured, the waiting pays off. For those who have yet to partake of the first installment, make it a priority, even if Tarantino has not been palatable prior. Both films deserve viewing, as those expecting more of the same in Volume II will find themselves pleasantly caught off-guard.

Volume I and Volume II may well be completely different movies, but at times, they mesh with an incredible clarity that Tarantino executes much in the same manner that The Bride executes O-ren Ishii—with deadly precision and beauty to boot. If there is fault to be found with the first film, it would be that it is full of action and little sustenance, though by no means does it disappoint. Volume II takes quite the opposite approach, focusing mainly on story line and dialogue. Intense relationships are described and nurtured within the second film, supporting actions and moves from Volume I, and characters are more fleshed-out, a certain necessity for the conclusion of the film. This is not to say that Volume II is by any means lacking in excitement and action. It is quite the contrary. However, Tarantino has devised a method by which his story is told less by gore and the blade than by calculated moments and precise interactions.


Cotton Club hosts Dexter Freebush

Dexter Freebush and the Pat Mcgee Band will perform at the Cotton Club this Saturday, April 17. The show will cost $15 and it begins at 9 p.m. Josh Groban will appear at the Fox Theatre this Tuesday, April 20. The show is at 8 p.m., and tickets range from $39.50 - $59.50.

Earthlink offers dual shows this weekend

The Crystal Method will be at Earthlink Live, also at 9 p.m. on Saturday, so fans will have to choose between shows. Tickets are $22 in advance and $25 the day of the show. Sugar Ray has left California for the time being and will also entertain at Earthlink Live, also at 8 p.m. on the 20. Tickets for the event are $18.50.

Get down: robotics at Georgia Dome

There will be a robotics competition held at the Georgia Dome this Friday and Saturday. The event, which attracts over 500 high schools from around the world, will take place from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. both days. Students will be competing in championships aimed at testing robotic design, strategy, and fabrication. The event is free and open to the public. Head to www.usfirst.org.

Catch culture of Africa this evening

The African Student Association is celebrating the cultures of Africa this Friday with Afriquest. The event will feature live music from the Soukous Stars, free food and drinks. Look for them out in front of the Fere Center around 7 p.m.

Tons of performers to choose among

Comedian Lewis Black will return to Atlanta June 11, at the Tabernacle. The show is at 8 p.m., and seating is reserved. Tickets will cost $32.50 and will go on sale today. Buy early, as his performances tend to sell out. John Mayer tickets go on sale tomorrow. The show will be August 29 at the HiFi Buys Amphitheatre. Maroon 5 opens the show, which begins at 7 p.m. Lawn seats are $35.50 and reserved seats are $10 more.

Tech professors liven Plaza Gallery

Five Georgia Tech professors are holding a gallery showing of their work entitled Five: Five Media, Five Art. The exhibit can be viewed now through June 17 in the Suntrust Plaza Gallery lower level lobby. The gallery is open Monday – Friday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., and Saturdays 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Q.E.D. Original Comic Strip

by Brian Lewis [gtg043f@mail.gatech.edu]
The highlight of Fuel’s performance was when Brett Scallions and Carl Bell began a guitar duel of the intro to Led Zeppelin’s “Stairway to Heaven,” much to the delight of the audience, but Scallions killed the moment ahe half-heartedy sang the first line and then stopped. “Sorry, we can’t play that for you,” he said to a rather disappoint sphere from the usual pushing and shoving crowds that one usually has to battle in order to see a good rock show.

Carl Bell began a guitar duel of the intro to Led Zeppelin’s “Stairway to Heaven,” much to the delight of the audience, but Scallions killed the moment a half-heartedly sang the first line and then stopped. “Sorry, we can’t play that for you,” he said to a rather disappointed audience. Scallions led into the conclusion of the band’s set by proclaiming that he wanted Fuel to become the house band for Tech. A performance of the band’s most well-known song and finally a three-song encore rounded out the show. As enthralled as the crowd that had gathered seemed to be during Fuel’s performance, it cleared out pretty quickly. Unfortunately, this served as a reminder that it was in fact a Thursday night and that I still had classes the next day. On the upside, the show provided a nice diversion as well as completely different atmosphere from the usual pushing and shoving crowds that one usually has to battle in order to see a good rock show.
For fans of the Quentin Tarantino library, Kill Bill: Vol. II will offer surprises in terms of directorial tricks, much as his audience is used to, but some are even fairly decent by his standards.

Expect plenty of nonlinear storytelling, strange characters and occurrences and the typical perplexing moments, but appreciate the variety in the direction of each of the remaining five chapters.

One of the beautiful elements of these Tarantino films is the wide variety of film genres he manages to combine in a more-or-less plausible manner. If the first film was Asian-saturated, Volume II is almost pure spaghetti western, with some exciting martial arts training sequences thrown in for good measure and story progression. Be prepared for a heated cat fight, as well as more Hattori Hanzo swordplay action.

Certainly the most developed and admired actor emerging from this volume would be Uma Thurman. She illustrates her ability to tell of her plight through dialogue and interaction even better than through her ass-kicking talents developed in the first film.

Viewers will appreciate the air that Thurman has brought to the Bride and the relationship with Bill could not be better executed.

Needless to say, Kill Bill: Vol. II is an incredible film. Due to the copious but not overbearing amount of story it includes, not to mention the conclusion of the conflict, Volume II stands alone as a complete movie better than the first. The masses will more than likely be split as to which is the favored film, with no clear winner shining, but Volume II, even if less on the visuals, is likely to be the ultimate champion.

Quentin Tarantino has outdone himself yet again, and this is hopefully a trend that will continue. Rumors speak of a third installment, but not for some years in the future, so be on the watch.

Don’t enter the theater expecting Volume I, or else disappointment will be hard found. As with all his films, Tarantino loves to make an appearance. This one is no exception. Kudos to anyone who locates the director within the film; he is easy to miss, but his hand in the crafting is not.

Kill Bill Volume II opens in theaters today. Definitely make sure to rent the first Kill Bill if this film piques your interest.
Phantom Planet talks about drummer replacement, O.C.

By Eric Rodenour
Coppboy.com

(U-WIRE) San Diego—After a decade of playing together with three albums under their belt, the members of Phantom Planet are finally beginning to feel like they are actually getting some respect.

At first, Phantom Planet began gaining a reputation as “that band with the guy from ‘Rushmore’ in it.” Just as people began to respect them as a band they evolved into “those guys with that song on The O.C.”

The experiences of the band for the past two years have been for the benefit of all, between almost non-stop touring and the replacement of their actor drummer, Phantom Planet is finally going somewhere with it’s talent as a band, instead of it’s reputation from other forms of pop culture.

“It’s definitely an improvement,” says Guitarist Darrin Robinson. “Since Jason left, we are all getting along better now, like our heart is in the right direction...”

Along with the killer album and touring sales, Phantom Planet sees no slowing down in the near future. “Since Jason left, we are all getting along better now, like our heart is in the right direction,” observes Robinson.

“It’s like the band has taken on a new dynamic.”

The band will be finishing up it’s headlining tour at the end of April, followed by a spot on the first day of the Coachella Festival in Indio, Calif., followed by a two-week break.

“It’s gonna be amazing! We are playing the same day as Radiohead and the Pixies,” said Robinson, obviously excited about the gig. “It will be a very surreal adventure.”

After Coachella, they will go on a four-show supporting tour leg for No Doubt and blink-182. “After that, we plan on touring more, but nothing is set in stone yet,” said Robinson.

With stories of busses breaking down, being away from family and friends for almost a solid two years, one would think a break for the band would be in order. “I wouldn’t mind a couple days off, but whenever I get it, after a couple days I can’t wait to get back on the road.” Phantom Planet has no intention of relaxing in the near future — and why would they? They have a strong new album, sold-out shows, and are beginning to shed the stigma that comes with being labeled as “The O.C. guys.”

Even with the tour bus breaking down rarely, “The generators being gone out, two flat tires, some cabinets falling off, our tour support has been cut back a little,” said Robinson.

Time for a Heineken sponsorship!

“Hell ya,” Robinson lightens up, “I love Heineken, too.”

Regardless of a few curbs being made, Phantom Planet is riding this album into the fast lane. With their sophomore album “The Guest” now re-released due to new-found teen soap opera fame, the band has a growing audience to cater to.

“We’ve been given several plastic skulls, but one time we got a real skull...”

Darrin Robinson
Guitarist

“We initially said no, ‘I love Heineken, too.’” Robinson commented the guitarist on allowing the hit song to act as a soundtrack to The O.C. “We’ve been given several plastic skulls, but one time we got a real skull.”

Regardless of a few cutbacks between the “Big Brat” video (the band’s creation) and the “Big Brat” song (the band’s creation), Robinson gave little details as if trying to avoid prosecution. “We’ve been given several plastic skulls, but one time we got a real skull,” said Robinson.

Suggestions of a new hood ornament went laughed at, almost in a wondering way. When thinking about a new ‘O.C.’ CD, the guitarist added, “We are working on a new single from ‘Phantom Planet’ which features decaying zombies.”

“Alex enjoys it the most, I’d all agreed worked,” commented the guitarist on allowing the hit song to act as a soundtrack to The O.C. “We initially said no, but they showed us the pilot, it had sex, drugs, violence and how could we say no?”

Their newest self-titled album is ab different from their past projects. It wasn’t recorded in a trendy Los Angeles studio. Their current release was done entirely in Fredonia, N.Y. — an Amish town — after coming off a grueling 18 months on the road. With this album, you can hear the band has developed into a tight-knit group.

“The new sound isn’t intentional. All the touring just made us more aggressive,” said Robinson.

Touring like that can either make or break a band as we discuss further. A lot of bands on the fringe learn a lot at this point why every penny is earned, and the millions given to rock stars is well deserved. A lot don’t think it all is worth it.

“The Guest” was a good representation of where the band was, more pop-ish, said Robinson. “This is where we are now.”

Phantom Planet knows how to do it.

I remember they used to have on their rider (a list of items required by the band for the dressing room), a baby tiger, just to see if the new guy was paying attention. “We never got the live baby tiger,” Robinson admits.

“Actually we gave up on that. We went to a human skull. People gave us all kinds of stuff, but we did get the skull.”

Robinson gives little details as if trying to avoid prosecution. “We’ve been given several plastic skulls, but one time we got a real skull, I bet Alex (Greenwald, vocalist) kept it.”

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I think the American people need a new status symbol. I remember back in the 1980s, when a cell phone really was a status symbol. Spend nearly two large to buy the phone, and then four dollars per minute to use it.

In fact, the only person I knew in the 1980s who had a cell phone was my kindergarten teacher whose husband had made a lot of money in oil—at least, that’s what she said to keep suspicion down about the school’s teacher prostitution ring. However, it’s crazy that people still rely on cell phones as a status symbol when you can live in a housing project and own a camera phone.

If you don’t believe me when I say that people still consider cell phones to be status symbols, consider Annoying Cell Phone Girl. I don’t know her name, and I wouldn’t print it even if I did, but if you’ve ever had a class with Annoying Cell Phone Girl, you know who I’m talking about.

She’s that girl whose phone rings in every single class. Since she and I are the same major, I’ve had semesters where I would take three classes with her, so I could hear that annoying noise three times a day. I’m trying to understand the psychology of Annoying Cell Phone Girl here. Obviously she is popular, but if she needs that many calls a day, she could just go for silent mode. Of course, that wouldn’t draw attention to her, so her status symbol would be powerless.

What makes a cell phone such a weird status symbol is that people have grown dependent on them. I can understand becoming dependent on something useful, like food, for example, but how did we build our society around cell phones? It shames me to say, but I too have fallen victim to this trap. In fact, I’ve had more cell phones than anyone I know, going through them at a rate of 2.92 per year, a rate I suspect to be even higher than Annoying Cell Phone Girl. So, I propose that we move to a status symbol that will not only give us status, but will also please others. I propose that the toaster become the new status symbol for 2005.

People could bring toasters to class, and instead of interrupting the professor with a monophonic rendition of a Shaggy song, they could provide snacks to keep people awake throughout the rest of lecture, and as you all know, it’s pretty hard to stay awake in a Tech lecture. Annoying Cell Phone Girl would become Friendly Wheat Bread Girl, and we would be just that much closer to world peace.

Not only would society at large be a lot less annoyed if the toaster became the new status symbol, but it would really piss off the Atkins freaks, and let’s be honest here: If there’s any one group of Americans who deserve mockery, it’s those who count carbs. If Annoying Cell Phone Girl became Friendly Wheat Bread Girl, I’d give her a hug for doing her part to oppress the latest diet fad psychos.

I look forward to a day when you can see a pimped out Excursion with six toasters in it and spinning hubcaps. I mean, just in case you plan on driving with five friends and want to all be making toast at the same time as you roll through Buckhead on a Saturday night. A glorious day it will be when the Georgia Tech bookstore sells Buzz faceplates for your toaster, and when that day comes, people will finally have something to take their minds off their cell phones.

Of course, I realize that there are some naysayers among you. "Isn’t it a fire hazard?" you might wonder, but the way I see it, all shifts in societal norms take a little getting used to. If it takes a couple calls to the fire department to end the use of the cell phone as a status symbol, then ya gotta do what ya gotta do.

At any rate, I’ll be happy when people focus a little less on their $39.99 a month yuppiness. Until then, this is the Two Bits Man reminding you that as long as you have that phone on, The Man knows where you are.