

ENTERTAINMENT

Technique • Friday, March 2, 2001

Indigo Girl Amy Ray goes solo with 'Stag'

You may not know Amy Ray's name, but you know her voice and her music—she's half of Atlanta's own Indigo Girls. Ray's solo album, appropriately titled *Stag*, will be released on Tuesday. Page 19

Pitt, Roberts missing chemistry, good luck in 'Mexican'

By Carter Green
64 days till graduation

MPAA Rating: R

Starring: Brad Pitt, Julia

Roberts, James Gandolfini

Director: Gore Verbinski

Studio: DreamWorks

Running Time: 123 minutes

Rating: ★★★

It is clear from the previews that this is an action-packed thriller. Well, more likely, this movie is a clever, witty romance, right? On the other hand, perhaps the drama and romance are overshadowed by ridiculous comedy. The problem with *The Mexican* is it doesn't excel at any particular genre.

The action is limited. Brad Pitt plays Jerry Welbach, a bumbling fellow mixed up with the wrong crowd. All he has to do is complete one successful job, and he will be able to walk away. His success rate is not high, however, and his "last job" quickly turns into yet another job. He must go to Mexico, find a fabled pistol known as "The Mexican,"

and return with it. The action quickly turns into slapstick from there. Murphy's Law presides as Pitt "Forrest Gumps" his way through this final job.

For audience members hoping this will be a great romance, think again. The relationship

The bickering of Pitt and Roberts is quite funny at times, as are Pitt's classic idiosyncrasies, but this is not enough to carry the movie.

between Jerry and Samantha (Julia Roberts) is built on bickering and counseling group-isms. At no time is their relationship convincing in any romantic way. It would be more believable if they were sister and brother. Despite making an effort with a few trite Jerry Maguire type love

pledges, Pitt and Roberts demonstrate zero chemistry on screen. Their time together in the story is limited, and the only thing keeping them together seems to be their rotten luck.

The only true romance comes from a softhearted kidnapper. James Gandolfini plays Leroy, a supposedly menacing hit man working to ensure Jerry comes through. To ensure there are no problems, Leroy holds Samantha hostage. He offers the only romantic sentiments in the movie, though his character is used as a comic punching bag.

As a comedy, *The Mexican* is mediocre at best. Jerry's futile attempts at being a bad guy are funny at times, but slightly annoying otherwise. The unusual relationship between Samantha and captor Leroy begins comically, but quickly becomes stale.

The bickering of Pitt and Roberts is actually quite funny at times, as are Pitt's classic idiosyncrasies, but this is not enough to carry the movie.

See *Mexican*, page 18



By Merrick Morton / DREAMWORKS

The pairing of superstars Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts may bring audiences in droves to screenings of *The Mexican*; the plot unfortunately leaves something to be desired.

DMB's 'Everyday' maps out a new, very different course



Courtesy of Andy Adelewitz / LITTLE BIG MAN

With the release of *Everyday*, Dave Matthews (center) and company have come a long way from their early days of jamming on every song.

By Alan Back
Is my car still there?

Artist: Dave Matthews Band

Title: *Everyday*

Label: RCA

Genre: Rock/Pop

Tracks: 12

Rating: ★★★★★

The Dave Matthews Band's last studio offering, 1998's *Before These Crowded Streets*, had 11 tracks and ran nearly 70 minutes—numbers that raised the hackles of some critics even before they gave the disc a spin.

Now we have *Everyday*, whose 12 cuts weigh in a considerably slimmer 51 minutes. The question naturally raises itself: could this possibly be the same DMB that made the jam group fashionable all over again in the mid-'90s?

Answer: no, not by a longshot. The group has gone through some serious changes, both in the way they play and in terms of who covers what. Absent is longtime guest guitarist Tim Reynolds; Matthews takes over part of the job, switching between electric and acoustic for the first time. Producer Glen Ballard contributes keyboards on several

tracks, and Boyd Tinsley (violin) and LeRoi Moore (woodwinds) break out a few new tricks of their own and even sing backup vocals on occasion.

If you need proof that they've shifted gears, start at the top of the order with the first single, "I Did It." This cut cranks along, tight and focused, as Matthews asks ironically, "Do you think I've gone too far?" He could very well be com-

Everyday goes light on jams and solos in favor of a tighter, structured approach.

menting on that earlier loose vibe, which gets dialed back even more so than it was on *Streets*.

A rough, unfinished edge runs throughout most of *Everyday*, possibly because the DMB changed producers partway through the recording process and decided to start from scratch. It works to their advantage at times, especially on the funky "So Right." Moore's baritone sax and the electric guitar thump

and jangle together to create their own little block party.

At the other end are cuts like "When the World Ends," for which Matthews revives his habit of leaving lines incomplete and making listeners scratch their heads: just what *did* he mean by that? "Dreams of Our Fathers" gets a bit lost in itself and has a hard time finding its way out again as well—old habits die hard, apparently.

But whatever faults the disc has, "Mother Father" redeems them admirably. Even without looking at the liner notes, you can guess who's turning in a guest performance—Carlos Santana. He's got some good help in the form of drummer Carter Beauford and bassist Stefan Lessard, who nail the grooves squarely into place under him. If this cut had come out two years ago, Matthews and Santana probably would have ended up facing off against each other at the Grammy Awards.

Everyday is not your father's DMB, or even your older brother's. They're still overhauling themselves and finding a new road to travel, and they've managed to correct most of the problems that came up with *Streets*. Get ready for a carefully crafted surprise.

Improv comedy, anyone?

Tech's very own Let's Try This! Players improvisational comedy troupe presents two nights of hilarity in one place with LTT! Presents: Incidental Madness.

If you need a break from last-minute pre-break studying, or are just looking for a way to get in a good laugh, head over to the DramaTech Theatre tonight or tomorrow at 8:00 p.m. Admission is a mere \$2.00.

Let's Try This! holds many workshops for students interested in improv comedy. For more information, check the group's website, located at <http://cyberbuzz.gatech.edu/improv>.



By Jon Farmer / COLUMBIA PICTURES

Arriving in theaters over break

Whether you're heading out of town or sticking to Atlanta, there's always a new movie or two to see.

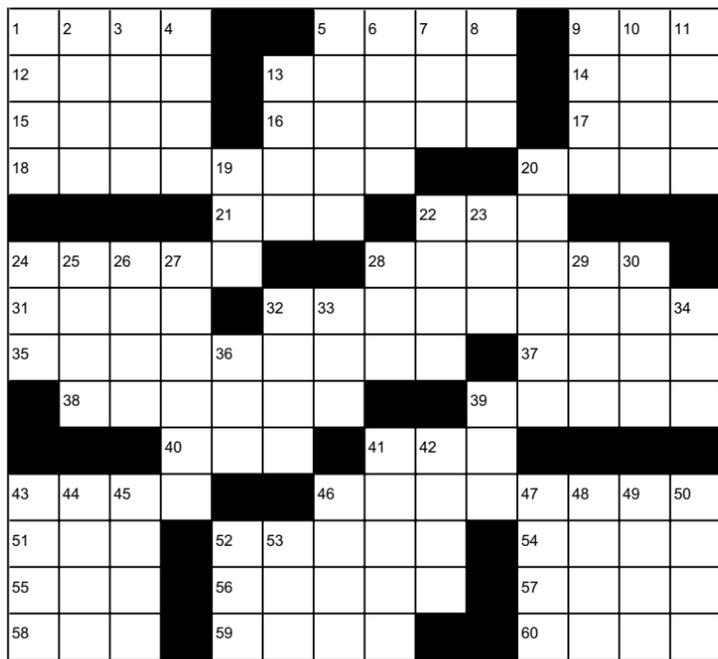
- *See Spot Run*, starring David Arquette, directed by John Whitesell. A mailman takes care of a dog that's actually an FBI drug-sniffing superdog and the target of a planned assassination. (Opens today)
- *Fifteen Minutes*, starring Robert De Niro and Edward Burns, direct-

ed by John Herzfeld. A famous homicide detective and a fire marshal team up to solve a case. (March 9)

- *Joe Dirt*, starring comedian David Spade (pictured at left), directed by Dennie Gordon. Joe is an oil well idiot searching for the parents who abandoned him when he was a baby at the Grand Canyon. (March 9)

Onward and Crossword

Close Clues



By Kit FitzSimons
Grid Grad

ACROSS

- 1. Sentence part
- 5. Jets
- 9. Famous Whitney
- 12. Black and white cookie
- 13. Storage space, perhaps
- 14. Mouse cousin
- 15. Block brand
- 16. Singer Jacques, et al.
- 17. "I Like _____"
- 18. Nonsensical scam (2 wds)
- 20. Judge (to be)
- 21. Senator alternative
- 22. "The _____ of Pooh"
- 24. A site to remember?

- 28. Time unit
- 31. Italian city, in Italy
- 32. Trinket collection (hyph)
- 35. "Jump" group (2 wds)
- 37. Italian money
- 38. Keep from leaving
- 39. Small flower
- 40. Comic Phillips
- 41. Italian god
- 43. Get aurally
- 46. Game with a net on a table
- 51. Hen's goal
- 52. Lewis' or Lois' partner
- 54. Not good
- 55. Norma _____
- 56. Toe, to toddlers
- 57. Nevada city
- 58. Put together

- 59. Not in the wind
- 60. Understood

DOWN

- 1. Peter's foe
- 2. Famous Herscheiser
- 3. Kingly prefix
- 4. Ultimate downfall
- 5. Belt, perhaps
- 6. Flower part
- 7. "_____ the cows come..."
- 8. South Carolina and Student Center, for two
- 9. Part of HOMES
- 10. Any of the parts of HOMES
- 11. Thing
- 13. "_____ was I, ere I..."
- 19. To partner
- 20. Twice
- 22. Twitches
- 23. Santa _____
- 24. Noah's goal
- 25. Noble
- 26. Nice friend?
- 27. Servant's owner
- 28. "Wrong" prefix
- 29. Incomplete quartet
- 30. Bring home the bacon
- 32. Toy train brand
- 33. Reagan, for short
- 34. Small island
- 36. Video-maker, for short
- 39. Collectable disc
- 41. Sad song
- 42. Black, like a squid's trail
- 43. Greek goddess
- 44. "Oh my!"
- 45. Like fine wine
- 46. Book part
- 47. Get cheerier
- 48. Baking need
- 49. Cat's lives
- 50. Give off light
- 52. Tax helper (abbr)
- 53. _____ Abner

To find out all the crossword answers, turn to page 31.

Mexican

from page 17

This movie seems a poor choice for Julia Roberts. Excepting the chance to play opposite Brad Pitt, there is little role here for her. Roberts is the heroine of a subplot that is never understood, developed, or useful in the overall plot, and she was wasted in this role. She does fine with what is there, but that just isn't much.

On the positive side, the cinematography is interesting throughout the film. Perhaps the most consistent thing in *The Mexican* is the use of colors to illustrate the scene. In Mexico, browns, oranges, and reds are used almost exclusively. Las Vegas is bright with color (think neon green VW bug).

Scenes depicting the boss's office carry a funny green haze over-emphasizing the office lighting. This color play is reflected in the charac-

ter's wardrobes. Roberts spends most of her time in California and Nevada wearing brightly colored outfits, but upon arriving in Mexico, blends in with the brown tones Pitt has been sporting during his entire trip.

Such attention to detail should have been applied to the overall direction. It is important to tie up all loose ends, even in a campy comedy. Problems are raised that are never solved. Characters relationships are supposedly heartfelt, though they are created and erased whenever convenient. This movie lacks the essential "ah, that makes sense now" quality that it desperately needs.

Have a date this weekend? You can comfortably go to see *The Mexican* and get a few laughs and kill a couple of hours. Don't expect too much, though, or you're sure to be disappointed.



By Merrick Morton / DREAMWORKS

When Leroy (James Gandolfini) kidnaps Sam (Julia Roberts) to keep tabs on Jerry (Brad Pitt), the relationship soon takes on an oddly friendly tone.

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TECH TALK

Thursdays at 6:00
FM 91.1

Indigo Girl repaints the landscape

By Alan Back
Breathing solvent fumes again

Artist: Amy Ray
Title: *Stag*
Label: Daemon Records
Genres: Various and sundry
Tracks: 10
Rating: ★★★★★

Let's get one thing straight here. The fact that Amy Ray is one half of the Indigo Girls doesn't mean that *Stag*, her solo debut, automatically bears resemblance to everything else the duo has recorded. Ray founded Daemon Records in 1990 to give herself and other artists a chance to work outside the boundaries of the corporate music business, and she takes full advantage of that breathing room on this disc.

The first thing to go out the window is any concern about offending the bigwigs' sensibilities. "Lucystoners" sets *Rolling Stone* boss Jann Wenner squarely in the crosshairs as a focal point for Ray's frustration with the short-shrift women have received in the mainstream press. With the Durham, N.C.-based Butchies backing her, she reaches toward the harder-rocking end of the Indigo spectrum and enjoys chewing up some of the scenery.

There's a touch of desperation in "Laramie," herskewering of people who favor window dressing over genuine diversity, and "Measure of Me." "Is it the boy you need in me/ Or the girl that you could be?" she sings on this latter track, musing on issues of sexual identity and confusion. The longest cut of the bunch (nearly six minutes), it throws out everything irrelevant and sets Ray down in a sea of gently lapping guitars to hit the right tone of melancholy.

"Black Heart Today," which features Atlanta's Rock*A*Teens, and

"Mtns of Glory" bring to mind the Ramones: two-minute song lengths, crunching guitars, and lots of aggression. The difference is that unlike Joey, Johnny, and the rest of that lot, Ray can sing on key and use more than three chords. She also knows how to hold her own when she tosses everybody else out of the studio, as she does for the Appalachian-flavored opening cut, "Johnny Rottentail."

Not everything works perfectly; a few tracks, especially "Laramie," get stuck in a rut now and again,

though Ray's dark alto helps to kick them loose. Politics can sometimes overshadow the music, but then again, it's better to be overly vocal about your perspective than to have your label refuse to let you put it on a record. *Stag* gives the woman in charge a chance to speak her mind—and she has a lot to say in its 35 minutes, whether people agree with it or not.

Stag will be released on March 6. To order it, visit the Daemon home page at <http://www.daemonrecords.com>.



By J. Baumgardner / DAEMON RECORDS

Amy Ray steps back from her role in the Indigo Girls with her new solo album, *Stag*. She will begin a tour to support it at the end of this month.

Sun, surf, and ruined hearing

CJ'S LANDING (270 Buckhead Ave.)

(404) 237-7657

<http://www.cjslanding.com>

3/2—The Wood, Jeniphoria
3/3—Dan Random, K/Kim Band, Blind Spot
3/4—Caroline Aiken, Breeze Kings, Francisco Vidal Band, STB
3/7—The Craze, Eden, Radio Daze

COTTON CLUB (152 Luckie St.)

(404) 688-1193

<http://www.atlantaconcerts.com/cottonclub.asp>

3/2—Tilden's Faith, Soundtrack Mind, Odyssey
3/4—The Dunhams, Larry & Ulu
3/8—Blue Rodeo, John Wesley Harding
3/9—Angie Aparo, Francisco Vidal

DARK HORSE TAVERN (816 N. Highland Ave.)

(404) 873-3607

3/2—Elephant, Eden, Big Radio Lovers

3/3—Tommy Thompson Band, Jason Marcum Band
3/7—The Blast, Atomsplit, After Six
3/8—Blind Spot, Totally Savage, Henry Sam Ocean
3/9—Dropsonic, S.M.O., Cloud 10

ECHO LOUNGE (551 Flat Shoals Ave.)

(404) 681-3600

<http://www.echostatic.com/echolounge>

3/2—Underwater, Tourmalin, Automobil?
3/3—X-Impossibles, Deadbolt
3/8—Guided by Voices, Elf Power
3/9 and 3/10—Man or Astro-man?

EDDIE'S ATTIC (515-B N. McDonough St.)

(404) 377-4976

<http://www.eddiesattic.com>

3/2—Matthew Kahler, Jennifer Daniels
3/3—Kristen Hall
3/4—Kristen Hall, Wakeman & Willner, Kodac Harrison, The Bush Brothers
3/6—Karen Russ, Philis A. Oliver, Jake Mason & Brad Lacey
3/7—John Zedd, Troy Bronsink, Joe Oliver Strings
3/8—Michael Levine, Danzig & Woolley
3/9—Malcolm Holcombe Group, Valorie Miller, Denice Franke

MASQUERADE (695 North Ave.)

(404) 577-2007

<http://www.masq.com>

3/2—Kenny Howes & the Yeah!, Jackpot City, The Features

3/3—The Donnas, Bratmobile, The Selby Tigers

3/4—A.P.A., A Global Threat, The Neglected
3/7—Voodoo Glowskulls, Link 80, Union 13, Backside
3/8—Sins of Lust, Sunday Munch, Spectralux, Translucent
3/9—Dash Rip Rock, Redneck Greece Deluxe, Southern Bitch

SMITH'S OLDE BAR (1574 Piedmont Ave.)

(404) 875-1522

<http://smithsoldebar.citysearch.com>

3/2—James Hall & the Pleasure Club, Young Antiques, Something 5
3/3—Cosmic Charlie
3/5—Stepdaughter, Caritas, Kill the Messenger
3/6—Apartment Projects
3/7—Marathon, Persona
3/8—Jamband Jam
3/9—The Goodies, The Mayflies USA

STAR BAR (437 Moreland Ave.)

(404) 681-9018

<http://www.doun.com/starbar.html>

3/2—Five-Eight, Big Fish Ensemble
3/3—The Penetrators, The Stimulants
3/7—Skylarks, Orange Hat, The Dot Commies

TABERNACLE (152 Luckie St.)

(404) 659-9022

<http://www.tabernaclemusic.com>

3/3—Speech, Michelle Malone, Doubledrive, Eddie Bush, Cool for August, Gurufish
3/8—Van Zant, The Katys

VARIETY PLAYHOUSE (1099 Euclid Ave.)

(404) 521-1786

<http://www.variety-playhouse.com>

3/2—Beausoleil, Darol Anger, Sonny Landreth, Cindy Cashdollar, Carl Landry
3/3—Luna, Ultrababyfat
3/7—Mike Clark's Prescription Renewal, Charlie Hunter, DJ Logic, Robert Walter, Skerik
3/8—Henry Rollins
3/9—DMCB

Check out the *Tourdates* Web site (www.tourdates.com) to see where your favorite bands will be appearing next. Yes, bands do play during spring break!

You've read
the paper.
Now find out
what it's all
about.

Meetings. Tuesdays.
7 p.m. Room 137
Student Service Building.

Live performance doesn't meet full Circle of great album

By Jonathan Purvis
Thank god it's spring break

What happens when you take members of arguably two of the best bands of last decade, throw in a guitarist who has worked with Trent Reznor, a studio drummer who has worked with more bands than imaginable, and a good bassist? The result is A Perfect Circle.

The band came together several years ago when Billy Howderdel—then a guitar tech for Tool—began writing songs with friend Paz Lenchantin. Maynard Keenan, also of Tool fame, heard the music and asked if he could sing. After a few lineups, Josh Freese and Troy van Leeuwen of Failure joined the group for the release of *Mer de Noms*.

It sounds like a superband; it was not quite a supershow. The band really pulled together for the album, and yielded arguably one of the best mainstream rock albums last year. Sadly, the show was little more than rock staple—uninspired performance (minus Maynard at times) with little enthusiasm towards the crowd. It seemed like it was just another show in just another town on just another day on just another tour.

Maybe that's what it really was, but everyone knows the shows that you remember are the ones with the band members who are heavily into it. They are jumping around, reacting with the crowd, and generally making the crowd seem like a part of their music. A Perfect Circle did not live up to this.

The band played nearly every song off of their debut album, along with a few rarities and new tracks. The highlight of the show was a song called "Vacant." It was a song

A Perfect Circle sounds like a superband; it was not quite a supershow.

originally created by a Trent Reznor side-project named Tapeworm. The band also covered "Ashes to Ashes" by David Bowie, another excellent selection. The other highlight of the evening was a ten-minute intro

to "Three Libras." The extra music made the song even better, and helped hold the concert together.

The band performed the music well, and my main gripes about the concert involved the lack of enthusiasm and the sixty-five minute set. Even though performing music is their job, it should be the kind of thing that they enjoy doing. There were not but a few moments of the entire show where I sensed they were enjoying playing.

Even though they only have one album, it seems that every person in the band has been in another band or associated with another in some way. They could have easily pooled together some more songs to play.

My other gripe dealt with the venue itself. The International Ball

Room is one of the worst venues here in Atlanta in my opinion. The stage is only about 6 feet high, and people towards the back could hardly see the band. The acoustics are beyond horrible; the place appears to be a converted warehouse with a simple architecture not meant to enhance sound-travel the least bit.

My suggestion would be to wait for Tool to come through this summer. A Perfect Circle's music is excellent at times, but the emotion seems to be missing in their live performance. I guess it is expected after touring for so long, playing the same songs every night to a similar crowd, it would be hard to actually enjoy what you are doing up on stage. Yet this does not excuse the dismal enthusiasm and performance.

All films and albums in this lovely Entertainment section are rated on a scale of ★★★★★

technique

tuesdays.
7 p.m.
student services
room 137

Argh. I hope that someday, aeroelasticity dies a very slow, very painful death.