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From the publishers of U. The National College Newspaper



SLACKIN' OFF

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RED HOTS

15

NOVEMBER 1991

VOL. 1

Has Robin Williams lost his mind?

Or is he just acting a little crazy?

By NICK ROBERTS

The Daily Brain, U. of California, Los Angeles

Insanity is what Robin Williams is all about, or at least making people think he's insane. Yet the 40-year-old actor and comedian insists that insanity is something that shouldn't really be toyed with. It's about time, he says, for people to know the truth about where he's coming from.

"The 'fringe' is this group of people who live on the edge," Williams says. "People say that when you perform, you're on the edge. Not to bust anybody's illusions, but I'm pretty tame compared to some of the people I've seen — people who really go out there to the point where you wonder if they're ever going to come back."

Williams may be able to deny that he's crazy, but having watched him work onstage as a comedian and as an actor in films like "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen," "Good Morning Vietnam" and "Dead Poet's Society," one gets the feeling that he understands the concept quite well.

Williams' latest role, however, as Parry in Terry Gilliam's "The Fisher King," places the actor in the position of playing someone who's clearly mentally disturbed, someone who's had to fortify himself within a world of fantasy for many years to block out the events of the past. Williams admits the role has allowed him to see things more clearly as an actor, but says that acting insane and being insane are different things entirely.

"Do I think someone like Parry is better off? No, I

think he's quite horrified, and quite lonely, to the point where he's had to create voices and a different personality to survive," says Williams. "It may be interesting to watch, but someone also said that watching a person jumping off of a building is interesting to watch. To be really insane, or mad, is quite frightening."

It was his Academy Award-nominated work in last year's "Awakenings" that Williams says was the key to really opening up his eyes to the world of the mentally disturbed and prepare for his role in "The Fisher King."



Gooooood morning, New Yooorrrrrrk!

Playing a doctor at a psychiatric institute allowed him to witness what he says he never wanted to see.

"There was one day on 'Awakenings' where they took us to the Bronx State Psychiatric Hospital," he says. "We went into a ward where

there were 40 guys on thiazine watching a Fred Astaire musical, and I told myself, 'OK, that's the image from hell.' I can understand after being in a mental hospital for the amount of time I was during the filming of 'Awakenings' why people would not want to be there. People say, 'They should be in a hospital.' But no, I don't see it that way. Most of the places are so fucking

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF TRISTAR PICTURES

Mary's Danish has never heard of you, either

By RACHEL FISCHER

The Daily Trojan, U. of Southern California

On a warm Santa Barbara, Calif., evening, the band heralded by many as the "Next Big Thing" to come out of L.A. prepares to go on stage and once again face their future. They're young, attractive and go by the unlikely name Mary's Danish. And to see and hear them is to believe the hype — they really are a band on the brink of the bigtime.

With a musical style so diverse it defies categorization and themes that range from the personal to the sociopolitical, Mary's Danish refuses to compromise their

standards or allow themselves to be labeled.

"Our common goal is to explore and express different types of music," said Julie Ritter, vocalist for the group. "We don't want to be pegged... We're constantly pushing ourselves to be better."

Drawing heavily from literature often reserved for English class, Mary's Danish is the thinking college student's band. Poet Anne Sexton is cited as an influence on the cover of "Circa," the band's recently released follow-up album to 1989's popular "There Goes the Wondertruck." And the energetic Beatles-esque "Yellow Creeparound" is

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KRIS CHUN THE DAILY TROJAN, U. OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The best band you never heard? Mary's Danish is one part funk, one part fusion, one part country, one part isolation, one part feminist literature and heaps of promise. After cooking for four years on the L.A. scene, this punk pastry is hot and fresh. Guitarist Louis Gutierrez and vocalist Julie Ritter, doin' Santa Barbara.

