

FEATURES

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Battle of the Bands

High school students will get the most playing time on the field this weekend

By Aaron Shakra
for the Emerald

The Oregon Marching Band has long provided the soundtrack and entertainment for Ducks football games, but each year the band gets its chance to shine in the spotlight.

On Saturday, the University will host the 23rd annual Festival of Bands, a high school marching band competition, with the Oregon Marching Band punctuating the performances. The Oregon band will perform Louis Armstrong's "Sing, Sing, Sing" and Aaron Copland's "Appalachian Spring" after the preliminary and final qualifying events.

The festival, at Autzen Stadium is run by band members and volunteers from the Oregon Wind Ensemble and Fighting Duck Alumni Band Association. It operates under the umbrella of the Northwest Marching Band Circuit and is the largest competition of the circuit, dwarfing the high-stakes championship event at Oregon State University. As many as 4,000 people are expected.

Carolyn Stock, festival coordinator and graduate teaching fellow at the School of Music, said she views the festival and band as a showcase for the musicians involved.

"They're the ambassadors of this University," she said.

The 32 marching bands in competition represent high schools from Oregon, Washington and Idaho. They will compete in four classes: A, AA, AAA and open. The eight judges are specialists in specific marching band aspects and hail from around the country. The judges will choose the top 15 bands for the finals.

Music vendors on hand will include Yamaha and locally owned Lights for Music, which will provide on-site instrument repair and maintenance. While there is a clear emphasis on the competition,



Courtesy photo

Northwest high school marching band students come to Eugene this weekend to take part in the Festival of the Bands at Autzen Stadium. Up to 4,000 people are expected to attend.

Stock said the event should have more educational implications than competitive.

"I don't want to put all the weight on who's No. 1," she said. "It's a competition — but it's about the kids."

Considering the volume of both high school juniors and seniors, the festival also serves as a recruiting tool for both new band members and University students in the music school. Katie Moss, band council member in the OMB, said many high school students at the event will be placing themselves in a university environment for the first time.

"There's a high level of excitement and energy for them," she said.

Lee Wood, a fourth year veteran of the OMB, mentioned that because it's the only fund-raising event of the year, it's the single largest source of

revenue for the band.

"I think of it mostly as a fundraiser, and secondly as a recruitment tool," she said.

Organizers expect \$30,000 to be raised. The only other source of revenue for the band are yellow duck "lips," sold at football games and other locations.

Gates open for the event at 7:30 a.m., with preliminary rounds beginning at 8:30 a.m. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$8 for students (admission is free for children under 5) and will be available at the south gate of Autzen Stadium.

For residents of Salem, the competition will be televised on the public access station, CCTV. Stock is trying to get TV coverage for Eugene.

Aaron Shakra is a freelancer for the Oregon Daily Emerald. He can be reached at aaron@startled.com.

Chilling thriller looks backward

By Andy Guess
Cornell Daily Sun (Cornell U.)

(U-WIRE) ITHACA, N.Y. — The opening of "From Hell" finds Johnny Depp doing what he does best: lying semi-catatonic while smoking opium through a pipe. The initial reaction might alarm that this is a colonial version of "Blow," or perhaps a rehash of "Sleepy Hollow," both recent Depp films that bear similarities to the Hughes Brothers' take on Jack the Ripper.

But viewers can breathe easy. Although Depp's character is a drug addict, as in "Blow," and although he plays an ostracized 19th century London investigator, as in "Sleepy Hollow," "From Hell" is neither a hackneyed rise-and-fall saga nor a

cartoonish treatment of a living legend. It is, however, an intelligent and stylish look at the gothic underworld of sin in turn-of-the-century London.

The story involves the baffling and grisly murders of several prostitutes, which Inspector Frederick Abberline (Depp) is called upon to investigate. Instead of using scientific methods as in "Sleepy Hollow," Depp relies on drug-induced visions to draw conclusions about the case. Eventually his findings lead him to prostitute Mary Kelly (Heather Graham), whom he believes will be the next victim.

Based on the comic book series by Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell, the film is not an exploration

of good and evil. The so-called protagonists and antagonists are all sinners to differing degrees, whether the transgressions involve infidelity, murder, addiction or obsession. Depp needs his drugs to stay afloat in the investigation, Graham needs to sell herself to survive, and maybe, in some sick way, Jack the Ripper needs to kill to fulfill himself. And like any moral tale, characters must suffer the consequences of their deeds.

Most striking in "From Hell" are its unforgiving depictions of explicit gore and sex. They're striking because they just don't seem right in a movie taking place in 19th century England. This is, of course, the exact reaction the Hughes brothers Turn to **Thriller**, page 8A

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