

FEATURES

Stepping to a different beat



Jonathan House Emerald

Members of the University chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority compete Saturday night at the Black Greek Step Show competition. In 'step' dancing teams, each member uses their hands, legs, chests and feet to create a unified rhythm.

Filmmakers try to make new 'Scooby-Doo' realistic

By Mike Szymanski
Zap2it.com

HOLLYWOOD (KRT) — Warner Bros. has unleashed the first look at the official movie poster of the live-action version of "Scooby-Doo" in theaters and on trailers.

The studio and filmmakers know that bringing the popular talking dog to life is a huge challenge because it's based on a TV cartoon that has been a multigenerational favorite since the 1970s. The hippie-like Mystery Machine van and ghost-chasing youths being brought to life have fallen under early Internet criticism even before anyone has seen any of the film footage, mainly because fans worry that the computerized dog in the film won't remain faithful to the show.

"We know it's a tough challenge," said producer Chuck Roven, when Zap2it visited the set. "We're going to use some animatronics with his head and paws, but we want you to think he's a living, breathing, real dog."

Roven said that 95 percent of the film will have the Great Dane as

computer-generated, but he hopes viewers won't be able to tell the difference. They're working behind the scenes on the film footage to make that transition seem seamless.

"The most difficult part has been trying to get the four-legged walk to look realistic because this dog also gets up on two hind legs, too," Roven explained. "But we have to keep him 100 percent dog."

"Scooby-Doo" comes to life with "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" star Sarah Michelle Gellar as Daphne, the redhead; Freddie Prinze Jr. in dyed blond hair as Freddie; "Scream" star Matthew Lillard as the beloved Shaggy; and "Freaks and Geeks" star Linda Cardellini as Velma.

The story takes place in the present after the Mystery Machine team has broken up and gone their separate ways. Freddie has become arrogant and obnoxious, Velma is even more sexually ambiguous, and they're all living on their past ghost-chasing glory. Then, Rowan Atkinson ("Mr. Bean") brings them all to Spooky Island,

an abandoned amusement park, for an unscheduled reunion.

Fan reprisals against unrealistic-computer generated images are becoming commonplace lately. Peter Jackson, who's directing "The Lord of the Rings" movies, says that he's concerned about Golem, a fully computerized character who's appearing in the next installment of the movie, scheduled for next Christmas.

So producer Roven and director Raja Gosnell ("Big Momma's House") are particularly sensitive to the concerns of the avid "Scooby" fans.

"I grew up with Shaggy and Scooby, and to bring him to life is a dream come true," said Gosnell, dressed in a sweat jacket and black jeans. "And I knew there would be concern by the 'Scooby-Doo' fans, so I want to remain faithful to the idea, but give the characters some more dimensions to the characters that we all grew up with."

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I've been dying to make / Since I can remember / A golden arrow straight to the marrow / Enfolded in flame." These tunes are amusing and dark, and the choruses have a tendency to replay themselves in one's mind throughout the day. Actually, they repeat in my mind to the point where I simply must play the CD again.

There are two small problems with this album: It's too short, and the songs are the tiniest bit repetitive. So for those readers who would rather try before they buy, songs are available at www.fireh2o.com, and even better, the band is coming to the WOW Hall on Wednesday, April 17.

I heartily recommend that everyone take a hefty dose of Firewater

right away. It's a prescription for fun, a suggestion that life not be taken too seriously, and a summons to putz around the house with a little more ennui. This album is the perfect antidote for a weekend of partying — it lays easily on a hangover and calmly lets one mope through the "Terrible Tuesdays."

I'm starting to get the feeling that I need to play this CD again right now. I may be becoming dependent on "Psychopharmacology." It's almost as though it relieves my pain and depression (although it's too sarcastic to do anything for my cynicism) and helps me deal with the real world. Uh-oh.

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Firewater

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If I could just hold down a job / And baby, I could be a social butterfly / If I wasn't such a slob") are delivered with as much seriousness as comedy.

It's generally hard to tell what is and isn't a joke with this band. Like the title track, all of Firewater's songs here are sarcastic and moody. The album plays tongue-in-cheek with suicide, car insurance scams, suburban shooting sprees and (in the wake of Sept. 11, gasp!) plane crashes. Even the heartwarming love song, "She's The Mistake," takes a downward twist with the perfect woman: "She's the mistake

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