

# Hollywood finds new low

With the upcoming slew of big summer films featuring evil aliens, giant insects, Mike Meyers, etc., I have become increasingly curious as to how far Hollywood is willing to go in order to make profits during the big movie season. What sort of senseless exploitation can we look forward to seeing in the future? I'll admit I have a vested interest in this beyond the average moviegoer. That's because I am the illegitimate heir to director Michael Bay.

No, I'm sorry, that's not true. As far as I know, Michael Bay, of "Pearl Harbor" fame, has no illegitimate offspring. Not that I can prove anyway, although I have heard stories. But as interesting as they are, I'll keep quiet on that point. Where was I? Oh yeah, big budget films I would like to see. If you think that Hollywood has gone as far as it can, than excuse me while I make rude snorting noises and prove you wrong.

The first example is war. Hollywood loves war. War is profitable. War is fun. War means big stars with big guns firing big bullets and causing big explosions so that studios can make a big profit (if you think I'm going to make jokes about actors and their big guns in order to get a cheap laugh you can forget it, you filthy pervert).

## GUEST COLUMNIST

Ryan Nyburg

Take for example, "Pearl Harbor," which had an hour and a half of mindless violence surrounded by what felt like 300 years of terrible acting, stupid dialogue and an inhuman love story. America could have ended the war in the Pacific in three hours if they had simply inflicted that sappy love triangle on the Japanese. Such tactics would have probably ended up being banned by Geneva Convention.

But I digress. The point is that Hollywood loves war so much that it will soon run out of battles to portray. Soon we'll be seeing films like "Bombs of Honor: The Kosovo War" or "Grenada: A Soldier's Story."

Another area that Hollywood will continue to exploit for fun and profit is special effects. With the increase in digital effects, it is now possible for filmmakers to make movies with nothing except digital effects. A little known fact about the most recent "Star Wars" film is that all the actors were digital effects. The only live actor was Yoda, who was played by Keith Richards without any makeup.

Most actors today are actually

digital creations. Robert De Niro, for example, has been dead since 1986. Tom Hanks passed away in the early '80s and was filled in by an exceptionally well-versed sock puppet named Blinky until Industrial Light + Magic came along.

Hollywood is willing to go to these lengths because stars are a big draw. Any film can make money if a big star is involved — no matter how mindless or improbable it is. This is because audiences are stupid, like cattle. If they weren't stupid, films like "Gladiator" and "Scooby-Doo" wouldn't make money.

Actually, people as a whole are stupid and they will flock to Julia Roberts like lemmings to the sea, no matter how rancid the film she is in turns out to be. Eventually, it will get to the point that all a film has to do to make money is have a famous actor, preferably one who just won an award or was involved in a sex scandal recently, and have them look at the camera while stuff happens around them. Nicolas Cage has already made three or four films like this.

And sadly I'll be there in the front row, chewing my cud like the rest, silently mooing at the screen.

Ryan Nyburg is a freelance columnist. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

# Pop fans start raving about Cirrus

## CD REVIEW

By Andrew Graham

The Daily Vidette (Illinois State U.)

(U-WIRE) NORMAL, Ill. — Every year, music fans witness a few progressive critics peer into the future and come back with one prediction — this is the year techno music goes mainstream. Yet techno hasn't been on North American radio since Technotronic's "Pump Up the Jam." What gives?

Enter Cirrus, a four piece techno and electronic act who recently wrapped up their third album, "Counterfeit," which is poised to take them from a year-round touring act with a cult following to the first techno band on the airwaves in years. Yes, Cirrus is a techno band.

"We have the live band aspect of our music that other techno groups right now just don't have," said Laura Derby, Cirrus' lead vocalist. "We'll go from the first break right into a chorus."

Vocals and live instruments blend with traditional techno breakbeats in Cirrus' live stage show — shows guitarist and keyboardist Steve Barry referred to as "where we feel most at home."

Being near the top of their genre is nothing new to Cirrus, though. They caught the ears of clubgoers way back in 1997 when their debut CD "Drop the Break" climbed the Billboard dance charts, fueled by the trip-hop classic "Superstar DJ."

Their follow-up effort, "Back on a Mission," showcased the group's collaboration with famed house music producer DJ Dan on the track "Stop and Panic."

"Dan was fantastic to work with," said Barry. "He's a great producer and DJ — he just really knows what he wants in the studio and has a great ear for sound."

Barry said "Counterfeit" has been embraced by their label, Moonshine Records, and radio stations more than their previous efforts, but stopped short of dubbing the new album mainstream.

"Before, we got a great response to the albums, don't get me wrong, but it was mostly within the scene — the rave scene and the club scene. But now, we're getting good feedback from people, even entire audiences, that had been unconnected with the scene," Barry said.

Though "Counterfeit" is more eclectic than the first two albums — evident in guitar-infused tracks like "Half a Cell" and vocals that would

take Derby to the top of the pop charts if that's where she were — their overall style is one influenced by fog machines and glow sticks. Lyrics like "Watch me / I'm weightless / though I'm on the ground" remind listeners that Cirrus wants to be on the dance floor before they're on the airwaves.

Derby said her personal playlist consists of a wide range of music, which is a good thing because, in many respects, she carries Cirrus' sound.

"I just like so many different kinds of music," she said before mentioning everything from rock bands to hardcore house as discs "in her CD player right now."

As far as comparing North American electronic music to the European scene, Barry agreed with many critics when he said techno is more progressive and innovative overseas.

"The thing is, with the European scene, the genre and what's popular changes a lot more than it does here," Barry explained. "But music like dark techno and acid house all comes from Europe."

Cirrus' style, a blend of electronic and techno fueled by lots of breakbeats, is more native to North America, according to Barry.

# Adam Sandler takes 'Deeds' to town

## MOVIE REVIEW

By Dante A. Ciampaglia

The Pitt News (U. Pittsburgh)

(U-WIRE) PITTSBURGH — Can "Mr. Deeds," the new Adam Sandler movie that's also a remake of a classic Gary Cooper film, possibly be any good?

After all, Sandler is no Gary Cooper.

Sandler's last few movies haven't been anything to write home about. "Little Nicky" was, well, "Little Nicky," and "Big Daddy" tried to recapture the spirit of "The Wedding Singer." It wasn't successful in that regard.

Surprisingly, though, "Mr. Deeds" works and is better than "The Wedding Singer."

Sandler is Longfellow Deeds, small-town guy who hits it rich after inheriting \$40 billion as the supposedly only living relative of a dead media tycoon. Deeds goes to the big city to dot the I's and cross the T's but ends up falling in love with a damsel in distress, Pam Dawson (Winona Ryder). She seems to be the sweet, innocent, small-town kind of gal Deeds has been looking for except that she isn't any of those things. Rather, she's sleazy tabloid television producer Babe Bennett, out to get dirt on the naive Deeds.

This remake of the Depression-

era "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" works, not as a Frank Capra message film, but as a well-done romantic comedy. The story becomes fairly predictable, but it hits the same notes as "The Wedding Singer." Deeds, like Robbie in "Singer," is a poor schlub looking to make his way in the world, thinks he has all that's important, then meets the girl of his dreams that turns that world upside down. Sandler fits that schlub role perfectly and, as Deeds, is more adult than in any of his previous films.

"Mr. Deeds" isn't a remake that sets out to top the original. Instead, it borrows from it to create a funny and decent romantic comedy.

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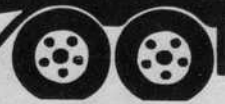
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