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Pulse *Excite*

On Tuesday
Can Pulse survive
MTV's Real World?

Thursday, May 15, 2003

'Matrix' sequel deserves its own national holiday

Unless you are devoid of your God-given senses and mental faculties, you will have noticed a film called "The Matrix Reloaded" opened today. Oh ... my ... GOD! Do you even understand? It's just so ... I mean ... (pant, pant, drool). Yippidy ding dang doodle! It's National Matrix Day!

Yes, I've officially declared today National Matrix Day. Because I haven't really cleared this with the authorities, I don't have any sort of novelty key to give the Wachowski brothers like Tony Hawk got from Springfield, but I think popular sentiment has my back.

On March 31, 1999, my friends and I went to find out just what "The Matrix" was. Thanks to brilliant marketing, we didn't know, but we felt in our bones that it would be something magical — perhaps even religious.

And lo, we did sit there, my beloved flock, with jaws a'hangin' slack and eyes a'gapin' — shoutin' hiiiiigh praise for this a'gift from the lawd. Aeey-matrix!



Mason West
Selling out

We hastily agreed we would go to school the following day, clad in black with sunglasses and trench coats in homage to the film. No, this had nothing to do with a desire to shoot people — stupid Columbine. It was just our way of celebrating and getting the word out that this was the best ... movie ... ever. Thanks to our efforts, we returned that Friday with untold herds to be baptized.

Unlike other movies that inspire playing dress-up, such as "Lord of the Rings," Matrix outfits are sexier than Victoria's Secret models. So you should have no problem with suiting up today to show your pride. If you didn't have the presence of mind to see it coming, you have my permission to skip class and change. Sure, god willing, it's a nice day and wearing black vinyl outfits and/or trench coats will not be comfortable, but suck it up! It's National Matrix Day, dammit!

And what else does one do on National Matrix Day? Aside from seeing the sequel, you can review the original in all its glory. Every man, woman, child and most seeing-eye dogs with a DVD player should own a copy. I hear they even bothered to release it on VHS so the Cro-Magnons can watch it. It's out there. You know where to find it. What are you waiting for?

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Of course, you *should* have watched it before today in preparation. You also should have watched all four Animatrix shorts available at www.intothematrix.com. As there are constraints of bandwidth and ignorance, you can get around to them later. But, seriously, they are brilliant insights into the world of "The Matrix" completely outside the plots of the films. I am enamored by the fact they can give me almost half of these shorts absolutely free and still be utterly confident that I will buy the DVD when it comes out in June. Do you see? Do you see how good they are to us?!? We must all repay their kindness with loyalty on National Matrix Day!

There's one kind of loyalty I don't want to see and that's to Powerade. I hate, hate, hate that cursed sports drink for clinging to the coattails of my wonderful franchise. But the film cannot be blamed for this insult. Sure, they made Matrix action figures, but in the scheme of things, "The Matrix" has not bastardized itself with an abundance of unnecessary consumer goods or endorsements. You'd better believe Powerade paid out the nose to tap the Matrix magic and that money only went to make "Reloaded" more kick-ass. To anyone who says otherwise, I say this:

I know kung fu.

Contact the Pulse columnist at masonwest@dailyemerald.com. His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



Local group Avery Bell has been playing gigs at various locals including peace rallies for the past two years, and will perform at WOW Hall on Saturday. Courtesy

Ringling in musical bliss

Members of local band Avery Bell work together as a 'cohesive whole,' combining violin, drums and an array of meaningful vocals

Jacquelyn Lewis
Pulse Editor

The first track of Avery Bell's self-titled debut album begins with a lone violin. Drums, two guitars and vocals slowly join in, building to a dark, intense piece of music, which is undeniably greater than the sum of its parts.

This is a fitting beginning to the local band's musical career, given the group's success — both as a band and in friendship — is built on its ability to gel as a cohesive whole. The band members, who describe their music as "indie rock," have

been playing as Avery Bell for two years. The band has performed in three states and several recent peace rallies and will appear at WOW Hall on Saturday.

Avery Bell consists of 23-year-old Portland resident and University alumna Melody Wilbrecht and University senior and music technology major Jake Houck and brother Lucas Houck, along with senior fine arts major Reese Lawhon. The Houck brothers said they have been friends and played music with Lawhon for years, and the three have also been roommates. They were all in different bands but decided together often and eventually decided to create Avery Bell. Later, they added violinist and vocalist Wilbrecht after seeing a flyer she posted in a University computer lab.

The band's six-track CD is filled with angst. Drummer and former University student Lucas Houck said the songs' mood reflects the topics they write about.

"I think paranoia is the defining theme of my lyrics," he said with a laugh. "They're twisted and wicked; they're about crime, paranoia and a deep, deep fear of sex."

Guitarist and vocalist Jake Houck said all his songs have deep personal meaning.

"I really feel strongly that the lyrics mean something," he said. "I wouldn't sing lyrics that were written casually or didn't mean anything — I'm not singing just for the hell of it."

Wilbrecht, who has been playing violin for 13 years, added that Avery Bell's music also mirrors her personality.

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Irish pub meets theater in 'Lime Tree'



Mark McCambridge Emerald

'This Lime Tree Bower' creates an intimate environment with an Irish pub setting, complete with pretzels, brew and dart boards.

The Irish drama set in a pub involves actors moving about the theater and talking with audience members over pints of root beer and bowls of pretzels

Mark Baylis
Pulse Reporter

I don't typically go the theater to play a round of darts, nor do I often get offered a pint of the local brew with my playbill. However, those who can't decide whether to go to the local pub or the local theater can now have their cake and eat it too.

The University Theatre is bringing the pub to its audience with the current production of "This Lime Tree Bower," the final offering from the 2002-03 Second Season. The offbeat comedy of Irish playwright Conor McPherson, which opened yesterday, shares the tale of two colorful brothers, Joe and Frank, and their sister's boyfriend Ray — a womanizing philosophy professor who sleeps with his students.

The play is scripted as a series of individual vignettes by the trio, who reside in a small, seaside town near Dublin. Each monologue dives head-first into classic Irish storytelling. The content is full of bar room bravado and braggadocio, revealing a defining moment for each character. The audience listens as Joe recounts his coming of age, as he separated himself from the shady deeds of the local school yard rebel. Frank depicts his own excursions into the crime world; Ray spews stories of booze and sex with students, along with his attempts to humiliate a visiting philosophy professor. The separate monologues eventually merge into one, offering a complete picture of a night two years earlier.

The play runs tonight through May 17 and May 22 to May 24.

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