

Tegan & Sara mesh pleasant voices, soulful lyrics

By Aaron Shakra
Freelance Reporter

Tegan & Sara are wonderful, beautiful, 23-year-old identical twin sisters and musicians. Their third and latest album, "If It Was You," has recently been re-released as an enhanced CD with a bonus track and video footage from music videos and touring.

CD review

The two sisters — who share the last name Quin — recently played in Eugene, both at John Henry's and CD World. The John Henry's show, which was incorrectly advertised for all ages, had to turn away minors, who proceeded to dance, sing along and clap from the sidewalk. Inside, the two told hilarious stories throughout the concert.

It will be difficult to discern between the twins — who's singing, writing and playing what — by merely listening to the album. Both are guitarists and write their lyrics separately, but everything is credited together. At times, "If It Was You" is

bathed in a typical electric guitar rock sensibility, but its best moments are when it's able to step outside this format. Luckily there are plenty of these, and even the straight rock tracks have interesting touches, such as the organ on "Monday Monday Monday."

"Not Tonight" is a nice three-chord number based around acoustic guitars — short but insightful — beginning with the lyrics: "Love, pull your sore ribs in, I will pull your tangles out." Later, the singers ask: "What will bring me home? What will make me stay, stay?"

Relationships are a prevalent theme among the album's 13 tracks. However, the stories — if they can even be called that — contain an awareness of the complicated, fragile and often self-centered nature of love. What's difficult about quoting lyric pieces is that it doesn't get across the emotion of the Quin twin's voices. How something is said is nearly as important as what's being said, and Tegan & Sara have a knack for getting intense but playful accentuations with their singing voices.

The production team of John

Collins and David Carswell give "If It Was You" a full, refined sound. A highlight of this is the track "Living Room," a folksy number tricked out with steel guitar licks and banjo accompaniment, with lyrics such as: "My windows look into your living room / I spend the afternoon on top of you."

The sisters record on Neil Young's Canada-based Vapor Records. "If It Was You" is the most readily available Tegan & Sara release, but those who can't get enough might want to check out 2000's "This Business of Art" and 1999's "Under Feet Like Ours," their ever-elusive debut album. The latter is only available for exorbitant sums of money. All are highly recommended, and will flesh out the diversity of the twin's music for listeners.

The two seem to be touring machines, so a return trip to Eugene seems highly probable. Tour dates, additional tracks and videos are available on the sister's Web site, www.teganandsara.com.

Aaron Shakra is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.



Courtesy

Relationships and the complications of love are themes in Tegan & Sara's new album.

Films

continued from page 9

Regardless of the implications the scene has, it could be taken as merely an expression of that sentiment.

Many of the sequences in the film exist solely for their absurdity, and trying to "understand" the film in any way would be a long and futile task. Much like in Buñuel's first film, "Un Chien Andalou" ("Land Without Bread"), rationality has no place in "Phantom," and trying to attach some grand interpretation to the film is pointless.

This is not to say the film has no meaning. But it is an attack, not a statement, and

it helps to keep that in mind when watching it. It takes certain ideas — free will, morality and family values — and trashes them with an anarchistic glee. It portrays people who see themselves as free-choosing individuals and then shows them, over and over again, why they are wrong.

All of this makes the film sound more serious than it really is, however. Above all else the film is a comedy, the sort that makes you wince through the laughter. But nobody ever said comedy couldn't have a bite to it.

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

Nyburg

continued from page 9

And there is an often overlooked aesthetic to horror movies. You may not think there is an art to films about zombies, but then you probably haven't taken the time to do a shot-by-shot study of "Night of the Living Dead." If you did, you'd probably notice that many of the shots have odd camera angles, the close ups are almost claustrophobic and there is a dependence on low-angle shots that make the characters seem to loom over you. Truly one of the great American films.

In case you haven't gotten the point yet, I am serious about horror movies. I like to attack my obsessions with zeal, which is why the past few

years have been so difficult for me. The horror genre has been fairly lackluster lately, with fewer and fewer quality films being made. Of course, quality is a relative term. One extremely bad movie, "Plan 9 from Outer Space," is also a highly entertaining one. That gives it a certain degree of quality.

I have a T-shirt for it.

So, while many people haven't noticed the poor quality of recent horror films, I've been taking it pretty badly. I see it as nothing less than the death of an art form. Or something like that.

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