

INDIE

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technology, filmmakers now have the tools to tell the kinds of stories they are interested in. Using celluloid film stock — the most common way to shoot a Hollywood movie — most major productions can cost many thousands of dollars to develop and edit. Digital equipment, on the other hand, is cheap and easy to use.

"I originally wanted to shoot in 16mm film, but a one or two hour movie done that way would cost about \$6,000 just to edit," Weintraub said. "With digital I can just get a program on my computer for

about \$100 and do it all at home."

Many smaller filmmakers are coming to similar conclusions. Still, despite the fact that it is now simpler and cheaper to create movies, there are still problems associated with independent filmmaking.

"Digital production is incredibly helpful when it comes to making a movie, but it doesn't do anything for distribution," Assistant Professor Michael Aronson said. "That's where the bottleneck is."

Aronson, who currently teaches the Department of English's History of the Motion Picture class, said there would be a better chance for digital filmmakers to have their

films distributed widely if theaters began to move toward digital and satellite technology. Then it would no longer become necessary for the theater to possess a physical copy of the film to show it. Aronson said this is a big maybe.

"There is no guarantee that distribution will become any better," he said. "As the technology advances, people might be able to make their films easily accessible on the Internet. But that doesn't change the fact that if people don't know about it, it might as well not exist."

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TAARKA

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reminiscent of a cat sneaking across a floor before the entire group's sound explodes. This is perhaps the album's most narrative tune, evoking imagery of violence and political strife before returning to lithe motif.

Now that the group has compiled a large breadth of material, "Even Odd Bird," freely appropriates work from the musicians' past. Pelta's "March Waltz," from last year's duet collaboration with Tiller, is re-recorded and benefits from the extra punch that bass and

percussion provide. Tiller's "Obleo's Travels" — from the same recording — gets the similar treatment. Kaplan's "Kudzu" was first recorded by his previous group, Trillian Green.

Other tunes represent the band's composition becoming more unified and less centered around Tiller and Pelta. "Semii Aztlan" — credited to bassist Flores, owes its roots to the modes of East while Kaplan's "Augra's Machine," a reference to the 1982 film Dark Crystal — is particularly energetic, with the band going from a slow melody that evokes images of verdant country fields before eventually quickening its pace. Finally, the instruments reach an all-out psychedelic climax.

Taarka's first release, 2002's "Live in the Studio" was a straightforward no-frills album, recorded before the band had even gained a mastery of the material. This differs markedly from the overall sound of "Even Odd Bird," which has a warm production quality that is ironically closer to a Taarka live performance.

Still, the band makes use of studio techniques effectively. Pelta's violin harmonizes with itself on "Impeachment" while other instrumentalists, such as an accordion and keyboard on "Fat Chance," are occasionally added to vamp out a tune.

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