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Documentaries blend reporting, partisan agenda

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PULSE EDITOR

There is a well-worn and often-used quote by director Jean-Luc Godard, who when discussing film-making claimed, "Every cut is a lie." It is for this reason that no documentary (or newspaper article, for that matter) can ever be perfectly objective. There is always something left out, something off the screen which would change the entire context of what is shown. When documentaries cut from one shot to another, they are expressing an opinion by choosing to juxtapose those two shots. So if perfect objectivity is impossible, then every documentary is in essence an editorial.

While this does not free documentaries from the prerogative of truth, it does mean that holding them to high standards of fairness and balance is a fool's errand. Most documentaries are attempting in some way to further some viewpoint or agenda rather than express some higher truth. This is any filmmaker's right.

MOVIE REVIEW

With that in mind, please allow me to indulge in a little juxtaposition of my own. Two recent documentaries are causing stirs across the country. Each uses the effects of broad humor and pointed irony to advance a specific viewpoint about American culture, and each prominently features the charismatic personalities of its filmmakers.



Michael Moore
Filmmaker

The first is Morgan Spurlock's "Super Size Me," a film that deals with America's obesity problem in oddly creative way. Spurlock sets out to prove that an exclusive diet of McDonald's food is very unhealthy, something that would seem obvious to most people, but which the film turns into an obsessive, self-destructive indictment. Spurlock ingests nothing, not even water, which is not sold at McDonald's. Every time he is asked if he wants to super size his meal, he does, but only when asked. During the course of 30 days, he eats everything on the menu, and it comes as no surprise that he is vomiting by day two.

The film attacks the notion that a lack of personal responsibility is the only problem overeaters have, an idea which has fueled recent legislation which would keep the obese from suing fast food outlets. Instead, Spurlock reveals a crafty marketing giant in McDonald's, which works in much the same way as a drug dealer, hooking its customers at a young age and trying to keep them addicted for life. One of the most interesting revelations that comes from Spurlock's McDiet is that he begins to show the same signs of addiction usually associated with nicotine or heroin use.

The film is an effective assault on the fast food industry, coming off as a cinematic adaptation of the book "Fast Food Nation." At its worst, it can be light and unfocused, but for the most part, the film is a sharp-edged and convincing testament.

The second film, and the more controversial of the two, is Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11." As a piece of film-making, the movie is a well rendered and superbly done rant against the current presidential administration. Moore balances the tragic with the biting comic, at once mocking and condemning those whom he claims have committed a multitude of injustices.

As a filmmaker, Moore has advanced by leaps and bounds since

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INDUSTRIAL SOUNDS



Erik R. Bishoff Photo Editor

Members of Dismantled (from left to right) Gary Zon, Jimie Kurczodyna and "Loud" Chris DeMarcus perform live at the WOW Hall on June 23. Dismantled represents the industrial music scene.

Taking sound apart

Industrial music faces commercial lows, but the band Dismantled still rocks

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Everyone in the audience looked a little frightened as the doors of the WOW Hall opened June 23 to the sound of Dismantled's synthetic drones and distorted vocals. The bass and drums in rhythm, yet somehow still chaotically sporadic, pounded the club walls like explosive weaponry. Overcoming the instinct to run and cower, a swarm of darkly clad young concertgoers crept their way to the front end of the stage. Industrial music is like a horror film — if you're not crapping your pants in fearful enjoyment then there is something wrong.

Dismantled's albums are melodious and intricate with lots of scary-sounding lyrics and the group's live performances are both solid and thrilling, but beyond the band itself there lies a deeper problem: Many believe that industrial music is commercially dead in the United States. So even though Dismantled is signed to Metropolitan and Dependent, two nearly all-encompassing record labels for electronic and industrial music, finding ways to promote the band is an uphill battle.

"I don't think industrial is really taking off anywhere; if it would, it had its chance back in the 80's," bassist Jimie Kurczodyna said. "The latest trend right now seems to be emo and hardcore."

Despite this, Dismantled has decided to book a nationwide tour of more than 20 shows. Starting last month and continuing through most of July, the band will visit big metro areas like San Francisco and Chicago as well as smaller towns like Corpus Christi, Texas. According to Gary Zon, Dismantled's singer and songwriter, this will give the band an opportunity to find out where the musical counterculture is hiding in America. He also hopes that by touring he can help resuscitate the industrial movement.

"I'm just out on this tour trying to create more awareness," Zon said. "It does piss me off to a certain degree. All these synth-pop bands are out getting all the good spots, 'cause it's the really big thing right now. I guess I'm just doing something I feel is cool, but is not cool these days."

For the June 23 WOW Hall show, Dismantled got stuck with an opening slot to be followed by a string of punk rock

bands. Knowing that most of their music would not fit with that night's lineup, they decided to play faster songs and incorporate "Exit," a dance-friendly hit from their most recent album "PostNuclear."

Levi Cole, a Eugene resident, was impressed at how well Dismantled pulled things off considering the circumstances.

"It was really good and it fit in," he said. "It caught me off-guard; they made the crowd enjoy it."

Dismantled's ability to adapt is most likely a result of their influences, which are strikingly non-industrial. They have, for instance, remixed Madonna and performed a Paula Abdul cover live. When asked what they were listening to currently, the band gave praise to everything from Britney Spears to As I Lay Dying.

"It's cheesy, and it's so predictable, but when you get a good hardcore breakdown you can't help but nod your head," Kurczodyna said.

Dismantled not only enjoys listening to pop music, but respects many of its icons as well.

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Bach Festival celebrates composer's creativity

Contemporary music
'great' George Crumb
inspires composers

JACKSON HOLTZ
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While the Oregon Bach Festival is celebrating its 35th season, the Composers Symposium, a festival within the festival, is preparing for its 10th anniversary. The Symposium intends to pay homage to Bach's legacy as composer by inspiring and giving voice to the newest generation of composers. The Symposium, which begins today at the University of Oregon's School of

Music, is quickly on its way to becoming one of the leading forums for new classical music in the country, according to those involved.

This year's Symposium theme, "Celebrating Creativity with Creativity," pays tribute to George Crumb, one of the greats of contemporary American music, who will celebrate his 75th birthday Saturday.

Several of his pieces will headline the concerts, but perhaps a greater celebration will be the world premier of 13 newly commissioned pieces by Symposium participants, all written in his honor.

Although Crumb may not be a

household name, he has been highly regarded within the classical music community for more than 40 years. His work has been recognized with numerous international awards, notably a Pulitzer Prize and a Grammy. Crumb is perhaps best known for his revolutionary composition for string quartet, "Black Angels," which will be performed on Friday afternoon in the Beall Concert Hall.

"Black Angels" utilizes a variety of contemporary techniques that exemplify Crumb's work. The acoustic instruments are amplified, the inside of the piano is strummed and plucked, performers speak and shout

numbers in various languages and water-filled glasses are used to play a variety of pitches.

"There are enormous challenges in playing his music, not the least of which is just figuring it out technically," Ron Blessinger said. Blessinger is the artistic director and violinist for Third Angle, the professional new music ensemble that will perform in the Symposium.

But Blessinger points out that Crumb's music is more than a mix of advanced techniques.

"There's a very obvious spirituality that makes the music very compelling," Blessinger said.

It is the spirituality in Crumb's music that gave inspiration to Paul Lombardi, a symposium participant, whose work "Holocene" will receive its premier Saturday morning.

"I've personally learned a lot through his music," Lombardi said.

According to those involved, the diversity of the 13 new compositions reflects the eclectic nature of the art, and the varied personalities of the composers.

"One piece is amplified and we read poetry, like in 'Black Angels,'" Blessinger, who's been rehearsing the new pieces all week, said. "Other

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