

Gravity's Pull on the rise Alice in Chains



by Russ Campbell
Opinion Editor

The east coast seems to be gaining a reputation as a powerful force in the music industry. Bands like Rusted Root, Live, and God Street Wine are commercial successes that, like many other bands before them, gained recognition through independent releases, small clubs and college campuses.

Another band rising out of the east is Chapel Hill, North Carolina based, Gravity's Pull.

Originally from Wilmington, Delaware, the band relocated to "seek a more central touring base and conducive music environment."

Gravity's Pull has been defined as having a "fresh, Southern edged sound emphasizing interwoven male/female harmonies, aggressive-melodic guitars and songs that are cynically introspective and personal."

"Motorama," the band's third full length project from Screaming Goddess Records gives

a wide range of Gravity's Pull sound, which, at best, can be compared with the likes of the Pixies, Toad the Wet Sprocket, electric Neil Young, and Dada.

The CD is excellent, from the upbeat first track, "30 Seconds," to the slowed down and mellow, "After the Ordeal/ You've Got Me" to the bluesy "Fat American Pie."

After five years and three independent albums, Gravity's Pull has signed and is currently recording an album for the New York independent, Shanachie Records.

by Joe Ryan
Collegian Staff

Alice in Chains has returned with a sequel to the widely successful 1993 album Jar of Flies. Amid rumors of a suspected breakup just prior to Woodstock '94 and lead singer Layne Staley's stint in rehab, the self-titled album featuring a discernable three-legged dog on its cover named Tripod is a return from the days when AIC was a struggling punk-grunge band from Seattle. The CD itself is very conspicuous with its neon yellow and blue coloration.

Layne Staley is out of rehab and back into drugs. AIC is one of the few groups (including Pink Floyd and Nirvana) for which drugs improve the music itself. The album is loud, hard rocking, and angst ridden, three qualities that can describe the group itself. Songs such as the lead single "Grind" speak out the praises of drugs, cocaine in particular. With lyrics such as "Let me sleep so my teeth don't grind/Hear a sound from a voice inside" describe Layne's constant struggle with cocaine and his attempts to vanquish his body of the addictive evil.

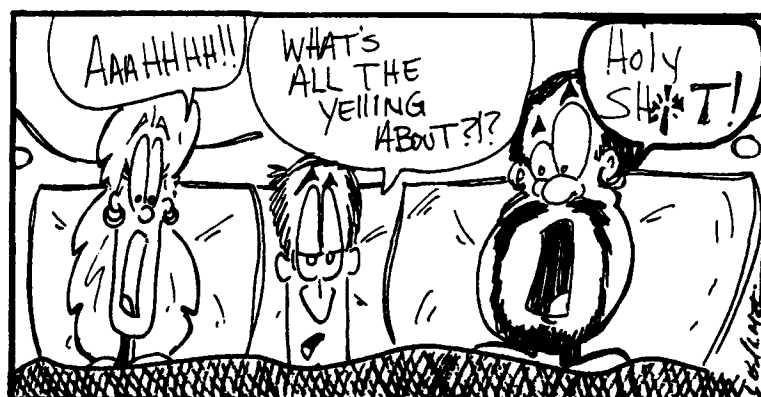
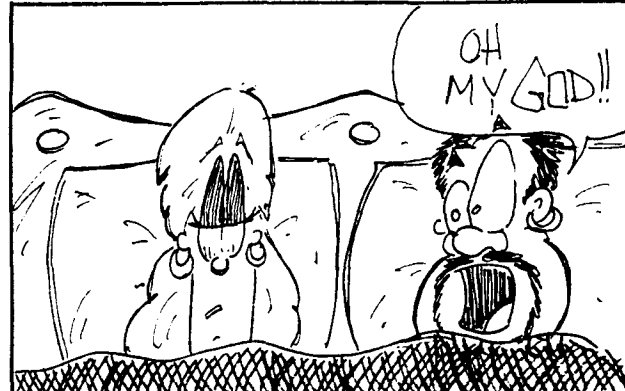
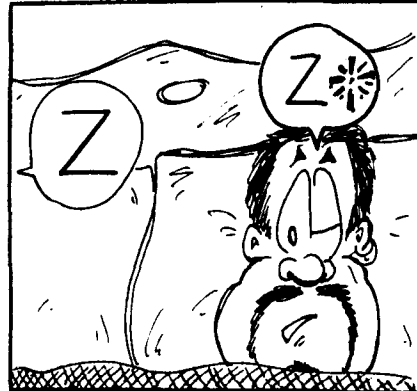
The underlying feeling of the album is a somber feeling of hopelessness in society and life itself. The song "Heaven beside

you" tells of the sad reality that there are no altruistic behaviors; either people have some ulterior motive or they won't help at all. Lines like "Heaven beside you...hell within", and "So there's problems in your life/that's f*&^@d up/but you're not blind" provide insight into this belief. People are never willing to accept the problems of others until fate befalls the beholder.

Staley's subconscious fear, a dog similar to the one on the cover terrorized him as a child. I feel that it simply represents the group and its vision. What other group would feature a three-legged dog on the cover?

In conclusion, Alice in Chains' latest album is a hard-rocking follow-up to the slower, more top-40 album Jar of Flies. The featured music on this album is more congenial with their earlier albums such as Dirt. The guitar work is loud and biting. The singing is pure Alice in Chains. The lyrics are drug-influenced and give both sides of the argument over using drugs. On one hand, they are very much against the use of cocaine and its drastic and deadly side-effects. On the other, they tell of the wonders and altered realities drugs can provide. I recommend this album to AIC fans but warn non-AIC fans to preview it before purchasing.

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