

Smashing Pumpkins return

by Joe Ryan
Collegian Staff

The Smashing Pumpkins have built a reputation on being hard-rocking and unusual. Their chief lyricist, Billy Corgan, is an angst-filled timebomb waiting to explode, which occurs in part on his band's latest album "Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness."

The music and corresponding lyrics are a mix of two extremes - pure, unabashed rage, and a slower, more thoughtful form of self-pity. The music itself tells the sad tale of a fairy-tale gone horribly awry. It starts with a

sweet little instrumental number composed by Dave Kresl and Billy Corgan entitled appropriately with the album's title. The song leads itself into the next song "Tonight, Tonight," which combines the same fantastical orchestral music with biting guitar and a drum solo by Jimmy Chamberlin that would make the late John Bonham proud.

The rest of the album centers on suicidal tendencies and the rage that results and causes them. The first single, "Bullet with Butterfly Wings," is an angry release of the pent up anger

associated with such morbid thoughts and feelings. More examples of these come from songs such as "F--- you, an ode to no one," where the complaints and gripings are interrupted by solid, fast guitar.

The second CD in this set is more of a retrospective of where life went wrong. The music itself is more melancholy and slower, detailing missed experiences and unachieved dreams. "1979" paints a portrait of Corgan's childhood and early adolescence. The song is ironic in that it appears nostalgic, when in reality it tells of a young

outcast ostracized by his friends. What makes "Mellon Collie" such a good album is that the Smashing Pumpkins have grown as artists and touched on new subjects without drastically changing their style. Corgan's singing is such that it can only come from experience. He has

taken his pent up angst and released it on two CD's. Perhaps the greatest part of the band is Chamberlin, the drummer. It is said that good drumming is never noticeable, but great drumming will stand out above the music. That's exactly what Chamberlin's solos have accomplished.

"Power of One" worth renting

by Adria Kovaly
Collegian Staff

Hard to believe, but it's Saturday night and you have nothing to do. There's nothing on television and you'd like to see a movie, but nothing appeals to you. If this is a problem for you, I may have a solution.

On Sunday, the movie "The Power of One" was shown in the Reed Lecture Hall. While you may have missed it then, it is available on home video, and I highly recommend you check it out. The movie stars Stephen Dorff, John Gielgud, and Morgan Freeman and is directed by John Avildsen. The story itself is excellent, along with the music and images in the movie.

Set in South Africa in 1930, before the Afrikaaner government came into power, the story follows the life of an English boy, P.K. At a young age, he is sent to an Afrikaan boarding school where he is tormented for being English. Some time after the outbreak of World War II, he is sent to live with his grandfather. His grandfather introduces him to Doc, a German concert pianist and cactus farmer. From Doc, P.K. learns the value of thought and how to find answers in nature.

Shortly after this, Doc is sent to a prison for failing to register as an alien. Here, P.K. is taught to box by one of the prisoners and becomes friends with him. Several incidents occur in the prison that have an impact on P.K.'s life, and it is these he carries with him when the story

moves forward to a college-bound P.K. and an Afrikaan controlled government.

Still boxing, P.K. meets Maria, the daughter of an Afrikaan official and it's love at first sight. Trouble begins to arise when parts of P.K.'s past show up, but the movie shows how the "power of one" can accomplish great things.

Other aspects of the movie I enjoyed were the music and the images. From the sound of the Zulu rainmakers at P.K.'s birth to the chanting of the prisoners and South Africans, the music can really move you. So, too, can scenes in the movie. A boy, about six years old, standing up to a bull elephant in the middle of an empty plain, or the power and majesty of a waterfall where P.K. seeks his answers. They can really open your eyes.

This movie is great for just watching. At first, it is hard to understand, since P.K. narrates it as a child with a heavy accent, but once it moves past this, you're fine. Humor is put in, even though it doesn't seem intentional, so you get laughs from the movie as well. Some scenes, though, are unsettling and violent. Prisoners, as well as "free" South Africans are beaten and even killed, young P.K. suffers at boarding school, and a few others. Nonetheless, these only make the message of the movie stronger. Trust me on this one and make it a point to see "The Power of One." It's an excellent film and one I'm sure just about everyone can enjoy.



BEHREND--Talented new comic Troy Thirdgill will perform at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, on Friday, January 26 at 8:30 p.m. He will appear at Bruno's in the Reed Union Building. The performance is free and open to the public.

Originally from Portland, Oregon, where audiences packed his shows, Thirdgill has appeared on A & E's "Evening at the Improv," and on Fox's "In Living Color," and "Martin." His high-energy performances present a colorful and insightful take on life in the nineties.

Thirdgill recently landed a deal with Warner Brothers Studio to develop a sitcom based on his life. Currently, he is on an international tour, headlining clubs, concert venues, and college campuses.

Thirdgill appears as part of the Penn State-Behrend Cultural and Performing Arts Series. For more information, contact the Office of Student Activities at 814/898-6171.

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