

Shooting for Stars: *Lucas website invites young filmmakers to use the force*

by Erin McCarty
staff writer

Let the spoofing begin! George Lucas, creator of the sci-fi cult classic *Star Wars*, has agreed to team up with online movie site AtomFilms to launch the *Star Wars* Fan Film Network, a forum for novice movie makers and George Lucas groupies alike to submit their parodies of that fantasy realm which existed "a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away." This is certainly not the first time that Force-driven farces have ridden the bandwidth of computer screens. Indeed, one such parody, a nine-

minute film entitled *George Lucas in Love*, eventually went on to be released to video on Amazon.com, outselling *The Phantom Menace*.

What makes this new site special is that it has received the blessing of Lucas himself, and as long as filmmakers adhere to the rules of the site, they will know they are not violating copyright laws. Lucas has provided to the entrants, free of charge, a generous number of sound effects for use on the spoofs, as well as any clips in those sound banks. This is all the help film makers will get, however; no additional dialogue or music from the movies may be used. The site also mandates that

the parodies limit themselves to the existing world that Lucas has created. He does not wish entrants to build on his plot lines, merely to spoof them.

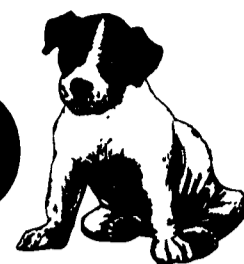
For amateur movie makers with a flair for sci-fi and comedy, this site is a dream come true. It allows them the freedom to have as much fun as they want in creating their film and, more significantly, it presents opportunities for recognition and payment. For more details on the submission process and possible benefits, check out www.atomfilms.com.



George Lucas in Love
FILE PHOTO

Sic' Em FIDO

by Deanna Symoski



On Second Thought...

A lesson in skepticism

This editorial is about the news. Oh wait, wait, actually I've just received word that this editorial is going to be about reporters. Hold on...no, it is indeed going to be about the news. Actually, this editorial is about both.

In light of the recent debacle we have humorously termed an "election," and as part of one of the few publications in the country that isn't retracting any projections, I think it's important to investigate what exactly happened on election night 2000. In our earnestness to discover who the new president-elect of the country was, news desks around the nation began projecting winners and losers at unusually early hours. You know this, and you know that we all still woke up the next morning without one. But how can that be, when at 2:30 a.m., CNN reported that Bush won? Were they lying? Were they cheating? Nope, they were just wrong.

Believe it or not, the instrument that helped raise you since birth sometimes disperses information that is not correct. Like your parents, sometimes TV is wrong. I know this is kind of like hearing there is no Santa, as a jarring statement like this tends to shake the very principles it has instilled in you since your *Sesame Street* days--and if you recall, *Sesame Street* was never wrong about anything. They taught you the alphabet, for God's sake. But a fiasco like the election coverage is a perfect reminder not to believe everything you see.

Television is a business, and like all businesses, its existence hinges upon its ability to make money. All too often, that is the ulterior motive that can sometimes skew otherwise logical production and reporting decisions. For instance, if MSNBC touted a winner and CNN didn't, you would naturally flip over to MSNBC to get the latest news. That would make CNN lose ratings and, by default, lost money. It's a game of one upmanship.

The other overlooked characteristic of journalism is that it consists of people--completely fallible and only sometimes competent. Everything you watch, read and listen to is filtered through a mind, not unlike my own, that serves as a gatekeeper of the information in which you are interested. This week I decided to run an article on Outkast, but that's not to say this is the only entertainment news of the week. It is your job to question my decisions and dig further for the information I left out, either unwittingly or intentional.

Usually, it is the practice of the *Beacon* editorial staff to explain the meaning of their column titles in their last editorial. I'll do that early because I think it is appropriate here. I once learned that there is something called a "watchdog function" of the media. It is the media's role in gauging the activities of society, celebrating some things, and blowing whistles on others. I've taken that function and turned it around on itself. Through my column, I hoped to employ common sense to question the motives and ethics of the people who distribute information and to actively engage their methods. For this reason, I have called my column "Sic' Em, Fido," as I aspired to make you all think more about the onslaught of images thrown at you everyday. (Get it? Watchdog--Fido?) My goal in writing almost 800 words each week is to make you more skeptical of the institutions and practices that we sometimes--most times--take for granted.

This is not to say you should be cynical, and I wouldn't encourage you to lead such a negative and untrusting existence. Besides, you will never be able to hate all TV or all movies or all books. And you shouldn't, you would miss out on some great stuff. Just remember that there is a motive "they" don't want you to see and a grand plan you may unknowingly be buying into. Make sure you know what it is.

'Outkast' but not outmatched

by Douglas Smith
sports editor

The college rap favorite Outkast recently released *Stankonia* to the public. This is their fourth album on Arista Records, following the watershed 1998 album, *Aquemini*. *Stankonia* opened up as the number two album Halloween week, the week of its release, just behind another rap album, *The Dynasty*, from Jay-Z.

Outkast is a part of the Atlanta based "Dungeon Family" clique made up of Goodie Mob, Witchdoctor, and producers Organized Noize. *Aquemini* made Outkast a household name and proved to the critics that they did indeed have talent. The great dance hit "Rosa Parks" helped college students find a greater interest in the group, and made them receptive to the beat-based album. In the continuing tradition of Outkast, however, they have changed their style once again as they search for a new method to their madness.

The new album features twisted R&B, new-wave pop, and a deep bassy bump to many of the songs. This can be seen in the craziest single on the album known as

"Bombs over Baghdad." It is an all-out assault on the conventions of hip-hop, with a full-length guitar solo and a sung chorus never heard before in rap. The gospel choir sings "power music, electric revival," over electro breaks. Of course this is the way of Big Boi and Dre, the two vivid personas that make up Outkast.

Big Boi stated, "we're not just a hip-hop group. Outkast is funk. We see ourselves as an actual band, with influences from Sly Stone to Jimi Hendrix to the 2 Live

most moving song is "Ms. Jackson." It is an unusual sort of apology. Dre and Big Boi rap dispatches to their estranged girlfriends' mothers, revealing a manner of hurt, regret, and respect. They say that they are sorry, and they are doing their best.

The new initiative taken on *Stankonia* can be summed up on "Humble Bumble," which features Erykah Badu, the mother of Dre's child, Seven. On the track Outkast raps, "the game changes everyday, so obsolete is the fist and marches.

level with George Clinton. Recently during an MTV performance, two guests were singled out and underwent a *Stankonia* makeover. They came back out with red feather boas and patterns straight out of the 70s. His counterpart, Big Boi, is very smooth and has a deep voice that holds down many of the slower raps on their album. He maintains the thug appearance on tracks like "Snappin' and Trappin'" and "We Luv Deez Hoez."

"Gasoline Dreams" is sure to be

British Invasion

by Susan Taylor
staff writer

After the plane crash that killed Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper, Rock and Roll came to a virtual standstill. However, it was rescued when four guys from Liverpool, England, who called themselves "The Beatles" came to the USA. When they performed "I Want to Hold Your Hand" on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964, the people went crazy. Who would guess that in the 21st century, you'd be able to buy action figures of the soon-to-be-famous four? Now 36 years after their first television performance, the Beatles have released yet another album, *Beatles I*.

The album comes 20 years after John Lennon's tragic death. It also comes while Lennon is being memorialized at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio. The remaining Beatles, George Harrison, Ringo Starr and Paul McCartney, put the album together. Its cover is orange with the single yellow number "1" on it. While critics claim it boring, this tactic has worked for other artists like Chicago. It's not necessarily what the album cover looks like, but the quality of music contained on the album. And the music must be of good quality, as most of the ratings on Yahoo have been positive.

The album, currently at number 23 on Billboard's Top100, contains 27 classic Beatles tracks. It starts out with "Love Me Do" and ends with "The Long and Winding Road." But you could never leave out "Hey Jude," "Yellow Submarine," and "Let It Be." Of course, they'd never forget the favorite of *The Ed Sullivan Show*, "I Want To Hold Your Hand." A tribute to John, "The Ballad of John and Yoko" is track number 23. And best of all, this album comes out just in time for Christmas.

Released on November 13, 2000, at midnight in the U.K., some British fans were a little harsh on the album, calling it "more of the same." But a spokesman said that even though most fans had the tracks contained on the album, it was still doing very well and they hoped it would reach number one. Some British shops were selling five times as many Beatles albums as Irish boy band Westlife's album that had just finished beating out the Spice Girls' album for the number one spot. This comes after the album's sales picked up during the day, since the midnight store opening was a bit of a disappointment. Even European fans would rather sleep than buy CDs.

This album will be a hit for any Beatles fan, young or old, this Christmas season. Even if they can't remember seeing the Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, this album would make anyone think that they had.

Crew to Too Short."

That can explain the reach into the future for this album. *Stankonia* is the place for all things funky. The album is very funky, but indeed can be emotional in the futuristic beats. The

Speeches only reaches those who already know about it. This is how we go about it."

All of this transfers over to Dre's outfits. He is one of the few male artists to perform in a platinum wig or genie outfits. He is on a

played on the radio and sell a lot of copies. To some true fans it may be hard to take, but the adjustment will come. This could be an album that eclipses the innovation of groups like De La Soul, but only time will tell.

New Releases

Movies

Bounce
The Grinch
Rugrats in Paris
11/17

Video*

Chicken Run
Dragon Ball Z
Dragon Ball
Gundam Wing
Romeo Must Die
Britney Spears
Star Wars Trilogy
X-Men

Music*

Backstreet Boys
Erykah Badu
Capone N Noreaga
Eight Bail & MJG
Enya
Everclear
Elton John
Tim McGraw
Rage Against the Machine
Sugar Ray

DVD*

*Nsync
Chicken Run
Escape from NY
Gladiator
Gundam Wing
Neon Genesis
Britney Spears
X-Men

* release date 11/21

