

## STUDENT LIFE

# Ask ASCII, where is psu.edu?

By Logan Stack  
staff writer

Dear ASCII:

When I type in www.psu.edu, how does my computer get the page?

- Confused

Dear Confused:

When you signed up for a connection with Rescom, they gave you a bunch of numbers, two of which were labeled "name servers" (something like 130.203.1.4). This number is the IP-address of a computer somewhere on campus. It's similar to your phone number or mailing address. Every computer connected to the Internet has a unique IP-address just like that.

When you type the name of a web site into your web browser, your computer contacts Rescom's name server. The name server doesn't know where the site you're trying to visit is, but it does know where it can find out. To locate www.psu.edu, it needs to find out where "edu" is, and then ask that computer where "psu" is, then ask some computer at "psu" where "www" is.

To find out where "edu" is, Rescom's name server asks an overstressed computer called a "root server" which answers this question and questions like "where's com?" and "where's uk?" thousands and thousands of times a second. The root server tells Rescom's computer where the IP-address of "edu" is, and "edu" tells it the IP-address of "psu," and "psu" tells it the IP-address of psu's "www" computer.

You can actually short-circuit the entire process by just typing the IP address into your browser (ex:

http://209.195.166.252), but that doesn't actually speed things up, as the entire process of finding out where www.psu.edu takes less than a tenth of a second if things are running properly. Plus, the entire point of having these names for sites is so that you don't need to remember long numbers. What's easier to remember: www.google.com or 64.233.161.99? Think of it like a directory service for free, and faster.

Once you know the IP address of www.psu.edu, your computer contacts it directly and asks for its web page. www.psu.edu is running a program called a "web server" which receives your request for the page, and sends a reply. That's how your computer gets the page.

www.psu.edu runs a web server called Apache (www.apache.org), the same one used by almost 70 percent of the web servers on the Internet. You can download a copy of it for free and install it under Windows, Mac OSX, or Linux/Unix. Once it is installed, you can contact that web site using your domain name (provided to you by whoever you connect to the Internet through, it'll be something like 27.br.sr5.xdsl.nauticom.net or lws118.rhbd.psu.edu). If you don't like the domain name provided, you can buy a cooler domain name for about \$15/year, like evilmonkeys.net. If you live off campus, you could host your own web site, but if you live in the dorms Penn State's AD20 policy forbids it.

To be true to "truth-in-column-writing", I must tell you that I made up this week's question. Nobody sent me any e-mails last week. I'm looking for questions from real users, so if you've got a concern, send it to lws118@psu.edu with "Ask ASCII:" in the subject line.

# CLOGS gave classical sounds a modern twist

By Sean Mihlo  
contributing writer

CLOGS is a quartet hailing from various regions of the United States and Australia. With the release of a new album, CLOGS brought their multi-talented musicianship to the Penn State Behrend campus on Sept. 21, 2004. Joining the original four members at this performance was cellist Simone Uranovsky. Along with sound engineer, Daniel Baker, and quasi-member, Uranovsky, CLOGS was prepared to introduce a few new songs along with some favorites from the past.

CLOGS performed in the Wintergarden of the Reed Union Building. As expected, the show was jam-packed. Without much hesitation, they began their first piece

Their first selection featured the acoustic guitar, beautifully played by Bryce Dessner. He played softly, matching the already slow tempo. Rachael Elliot would often chime in with her bassoon, emphasizing the influence that classical music has had on the group. Adding to the classical influence was Padma Newsome, violinist extraordinaire. A pleasant surprise to the song was the steel pan, or steel drum. Percussionist Thomas Kozumplik added a Caribbean-feel to the otherwise classically-based tune.

"Swarms," their second selection, opened with the electric guitar. Dessner's guitar playing, reminiscent to that of a lush, soft-rock tune during mid-70s, mixed well with Kozumplik's African-influenced marimba. "Swarms" was slightly faster than the first tune, but still slow enough to keep my head wandering about. The bassoon and violin were featured again, but couldn't help the song from dragging along.

After an abrupt ending to "Swarms," Dessner introduced their next song as being "inspired by improvisations." Immediately, Kozumplik began to bash away at his drum kit. His modern jazz-in-

fluenced improvisations made the first minute and a half of the song wildly intriguing. Also contributing to the fascination was Dessner's rapid guitar strumming, a la rock-and-roll. Keeping the purely rock-and-roll improvisations grounded were the Earth-toned bassoon and violin. After about two minutes, Kozumplik promptly moved from drums to marimba and the fast pace of the song quickly deteriorated.

Uranovsky and her cello joined the quartet for their fourth song. This song was a creative change of pace. Dessner's guitar playing was spaced-out; one minute he would be playing intensely, and the next, not playing at all. Within three minutes, all of the musicians were playing simultaneously. Each note from each instrument was short and sweet. Although short and sweet, delay pedals were used to draw out the notes. The delay pedals also added to the Martian-like vibe of the song. Uranovsky used the pizzicato method of cello playing, rather than using a bow. Elliot also kept notes short with her bassoon.

Their fifth song, "Thom's Night Out," was like the third: rock and roll influenced. Dessner continued playing short, explicit chords. Kozumplik stepped up his drumming skills this time around by using a foot pedal along with his hands. By using both his foot and hands, the drumming sounded much more complete. Newsome also became edgier with his violin, creating folk madness and evoking the spirit of a softer Jethro Tull.

Incorporating a number of influences, ranging from rock to classical and folk to Caribbean, CLOGS knows how to mix the old with the new. Each instrumentalist is focused and prepared to entangle genre upon genre. By putting a modern twist on traditional, classically-based tunes, CLOGS represents the new wave of genre-bending bands that can combine the past with present and create futuristic sound.

# 'Ladder 49' ablaze with heroism



Joaquin Phoenix stars as firefighter, Jack Morrison, in "Ladder 49." TOUCHSTONE PICTURES

Review by Annie Sevin  
staff writer

Director Jay Russell ("Tuck Everlasting", "My Dog Skip") delivers a fiery masterpiece with "Ladder 49." This day-in-the-life film debuted last Friday and quickly became a must-see movie. It follows the life of Baltimore firefighter, Jack Morrison (Joaquin Phoenix), and his experiences as a firefighter and a family man.

The movie begins at the end with an extremely large warehouse fire. Morrison becomes trapped in the building when the 12<sup>th</sup> story floor gives way. Throughout the film, the audience is thrown between the warehouse fire and Morrison's life as he passes in and out of consciousness.

The story itself is very endearing, the audience is meant to fall in love with Morrison and Captain Mike Kennedy (John Travolta). That task is well-accomplished thanks to an awesome cast and amusing male-bonding rituals. The chemistry between all the characters was perfect, and that's what really sells this movie. Without the chemistry, the life threatening drama and provocative ending, this movie would've flopped.

The cinematography in "Ladder 49" is absolutely astounding. The overhead aerial shots were beautifully done. The astronomical explosions during the fire scenes were incredible (and loud). Some of the firefighting scenes were so intense and thunderous that, the theater floor actually shook. On top of that the heart-pounding rescue scenes made the audience jump out of their seats.

The film balanced out with some less intense moments as well. The firefighters played pranks on each other throughout the film. There were also some romantic moments between Morrison and his wife Linda (Jacinda Barrett) that were scripted well.

The musical element of "Ladder 49" was excellent compared to most films. The soundtrack matched beautifully with the emotional impact of the scenes. The music really drew the audience into the movie; it definitely enhanced the quality of this film.

It's hard to find anything negative about Russell's film. Perhaps it's not the most original storyline ever created - it is slightly reminiscent of "Armageddon" (Michael Bay, 1998). However, it's an exceptionally good portrayal of the struggles of being a firefighter. Not to mention the fact that it is a painful reminder of all the lives lost on Sept. 11. It does provide some insight to what the FDNY went through that day and everyday. It also reminds us of the reasons that we salute and respect firefighters.

This film also slightly portrays Hollywood-heroics, inasmuch as the audience thinks they know how the characters will respond in certain situations. However, the unexpected twists turn it into a believable story about everyday heroes.

"Ladder 49" is a film that you can really lose yourself in. It's one of the few that makes the audience forget they're actually watching a film; it seems more like watching everything happen from a street corner.

Another reason this film seems so convincing is that it was shot on location. A Maryland native has informed me that the scenes in which the city of Baltimore was visible were authentic. The fires, too, were genuine, even local residents thought they were real. So kudos to Russell and crew for not trying to fool anyone with fake Hollywood sets.

"Ladder 49" is an awesome film exploding with things we love most about life. It's intense, it's funny, it's a pyromaniacs dream and the acting is brilliant.

# 'Donkey Konga' gives players new beats

Review by Aaron J. Amendola  
staff writer

For years, game companies have experimented with music and rhythm games. Somewhere in-between the success of "Dance Dance Revolution (DDR)" and the cult-classic, "Samba De Amigo," comes Nintendo's latest entry to the fray: 'Donkey Konga.'

The game is similar to many other musical games in the sense that when a symbol appears on screen, you need to perform an action on the game pad. Whereas "DDR" has a dance mat and "Samba De Amigo" had two bulky maracas, "Donkey Konga" introduces a pair of bongos as a controller. When a yellow half-circle turns up, hit the left bongo. Hit the right bongo when you see a red half-circle, and hit both when a purple circle appears. There's also a tiny "clap sensor" on the middle of the bongos where it detects a clapping noise, which you're supposed to make when a starburst circle comes onscreen.

It sounds pretty simple and laid-back, but when an up-tempo song like the Crystal Method's "Busy Child" comes on, your hands will be tested. With 3 levels of difficulty, you can work your way up to being a premier "Donkey Konga" master, that is, if you have the endurance to do so. Songs range from having as little as 50 beats to sometimes having more than 300. Your palms will feel the pain

of clapping and slapping bongos if you play a few of the harder songs in a row. The sting of your palms will be easily ignored with the small-yet-satisfying song list however.

Hits like Blink-182's "All The Small Things" and Devo's "Whip It" are only some of the more notable tracks of the game's 33 total songs. Nintendo staples like the Mario and Zelda themes are included, albeit with a bit of a dance flavor. By far the most enjoyable songs are Santana's "Oye Como Va" and the big band classic "Sing Sing Sing (With A Swing)." With a pair of bongos and this game at a party, it almost goes without saying that you'll have a good time.

Aside from the single player mode, there's a multiplayer option where you can connect up to 4 pairs of bongos so you and your friends can tackle your favorite songs as an ensemble. There's also a few nice yet forgettable mini-game akin to arcade fare like "Whack-A-Mole" that don't exactly use the game's bongos to their full potential. The real pleasure is derived from the basic music modes and not the mini-games though, so no one will lose sleep over the menial extras.

Bottom line is that if you love music and video games, this should be a no-brainer. For \$49.99, you'll receive the game and a free pair of bongos to use with the game. With such a rich gameplay experience with and without friends, this title should be in everyone's game library.

Have a story idea?

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