

STUDENT LIFE



Contributed Photo
Five piece British band The Duke Spirit is made up of (Left to Right) Joby Butler (bass), Leila Moss (vocals), Dan Higgins (guitar), Luke Ford (guitar), Olly Betts (drums)

The Duke Spirit catches on in England

By Sean Mihlo
music columnist

Over the past year, the music industry has been relentlessly abuzz about an explosion of British bands in the music scene, ushering in the return or revitalization of Britpop. Bloc Party, the Kaiser Chiefs, The Futureheads and a slew of others are leading the pack, gaining popularity amongst critics and fans across the globe. Equally as talented, but unlike they're counterparts, the Duke Spirit, a five-piece from England, are breaking Britpop norms with their hip-snapping, glass-shattering guitar licks, heart-pounding bass lines, fist-pumping drums, lead singer Leila Moss's captivating, brutally sensual, biting snarl and, most importantly, an effervescent, no-holds-barred attitude.

With its roots stamped in London, the Duke Spirit was born in 2002. Vocalist Leila Moss, guitarist Luke Ford and bassist Toby Butler met while studying at Cheltenham College (or the equivalent to American high school) and eventually moved to London. Guitarist Dan Higgins was introduced to the three in a student house in North London. After their initial meeting, the four students began jamming together and soon after, met drummer Olly Betts through a friend.

From the beginning, it was evident that the Spirit began fashioning its own brand of unadulterated rock and roll. "We didn't want to rip off another band," says guitarist Higgins, who was interviewed recently. "We had a real shared love of music being hard and soft, light and dark, high contrast, I guess." Yes, it's apparent that the band has experienced classics by the Rolling Stones, My Bloody Valentine and the Cocteau Twins (whose Simon Raymonde helmed the band's debut LP), but the aforementioned are simply nourishment for a hungry beast. As Higgins puts it, "I believe a lot of the bands we're into feed a bit of you, they each give you a notion that you then take into yourself and use."

In October of 2003, the band released their first EP on City Rockers, garnering critical praise and establishing themselves as a force within the London scene. In 2004, the Spirit signed with former New Musical Express editor James Oldham's Loog Records. After recording what would become their debut album, City Rockers experienced financial troubles, causing the band to leave the label. "It wasn't totally clear who was paying for the record," Higgins explains, "which made it even more spicy."

"Cuts Across the Land," the band's first proper record, was recorded in North Wales and released in May of this year. Along with Raymonde, veteran producers Flood also helped to master the Spirit's sound. "We'd try and record most of the instruments together and then overdub parts, add other instruments," explains Higgins regarding the recording sessions. "We were in a studio and you'd be hearing this amazing song on playback, and you knew no one outside the room had heard it; that's almost the best bit, the little moments when you all hear what you've done and no one knows about it yet."

Although the album has yet to be released in the U.S., the band recently signed a deal with Interscope to eventually bring the album stateside, including a tour as early as this January. And according to Higgins, the band has some material in the works for their next album. "We've got new songs written and more to come. We tend to need to get round each others houses with a cup of tea to write anything." But don't expect to hear a barrage of new songs while the band is on tour: "We don't write on the road really; it's more visiting art galleries and staying off hangovers."

Signs by Todd clothes clubs

By KJ Margraff Jr.
student life editor

For a club or organization, it can be hard to get noticed around campus. Sure, throwing on-campus events and mixers is a great idea, but there is one surefire solution that tops the charts: custom T-Shirts. The Greeks on campus wear their "letters" proudly to show their involvement and so can your club. Having custom shirts printed can make your group stand out and help you to advertise events or to help recruit new members. The one downside, however, is that shirts can get expensive. That doesn't have to be the case.

Signs by Todd is a new Greek apparel/shirt printing store that has opened up on the third floor of the Masonic Temple (32 West 8 Street), across from Gannon University. Here, owner and operator, Todd Hays specializes in Greek lettered shirts and jackets, custom t-shirts, banners, vinyl signs and much, much more. Hays understands that college students are short on cash so he strives to offer a quality product at discounted prices. Yet, while he specializes in Greek apparel, he is capable of fulfilling the needs of any group. Hays proudly states, "If you want it, I'll find it and get it." Taking one look around his shop will convince you that he truly can. Hays spent four years working for Brink Ink, a Greek store located in the Edinboro area so his merchandise is top notch.

A club or organization that wants to have shirts made simply needs to pick a design of some sort and explain to Hays what they want. Not only can he scan in any artwork you may bring him, but he is also a skilled artist capable of drawing a design on the computer for you.

Hays has worked incredibly hard to get where he is today, which is a tribute to his work. He started from the ground up, originally having to work full time at another job until his store was up and running. Truly, he is living the American dream and he is an example to students and adults alike who desire to one day own their own business. "I wanted to not have to depend on anyone; I wanted to be able to do whatever I want to do," Hays stated. "Same with this. If I have my mind set on it, I'm going to do it. I said I'm going to do this and I did. Here I am."

So any clubs or organizations, especially the Greeks, can be confident in taking their business to Signs by Todd, knowing that they will get quality merchandise at a fair price.

Retraction:

In last week's edition, the caption placed below Jeffery McDaniel's photograph was unintentional and was not meant to be demeaning of his opinions or character.

The honeymoon is over: when roommate matching goes wrong

By Ashley Bressler
staff writer

College life is all about experiencing unfamiliar situations, but sometimes the most difficult situation college students may encounter is learning to live with their roommate. During orientation and the first week of classes, the Resident Assistants were all given instructions to stress the importance of establishing a friendly relationship with those whom you live with. Many students are familiar with the Resident Assistants' coined phrase "the Honeymoon" period which explains why there are less roommate disputes in the first three weeks of classes. By this time of the year, the fifth week of classes, the harmonious "Honeymoon phase" is over and all the real quirks, disgusting habits and natural annoyances swirl though Behrend's residence halls. The question that remains in many students' heads is, "Can I really live with this person?"

Not all roommate miss-matches are grounds for bringing out the pad locks and room dividers. In fact, some students find that they share an instant bond with their roommate. The development of a strong, trusting relationship with ones roommate

is very important and can alter one's college experience accordingly. If you become great friends with your roommate, you will always have someone to turn to when you are feeling stressed with school or other relationships. Roommates Heidi Plunkard and Sheri Kroskie, who live in Senat Hall, are the perfect example of Behrend students who were

matched together and instantly became best friends. When asked to describe her relationship with her roommate, Plunkard commented, "Amazing, she even offered to make me soup when I was sick." Plunkard's roommate, Kroskie, responded with, "We're a lot alike, so it's easy to get along with her. We go out together all the time and walk to classes together. We were just lucky." A strong relationship can

change a cramped dorm room into a home, which is the ideal situation for all of us here at Penn State Behrend. We are all just trying to find a place where we belong and can feel at home. For those individuals who have found true friendship in their roommates, consider yourselves very lucky!

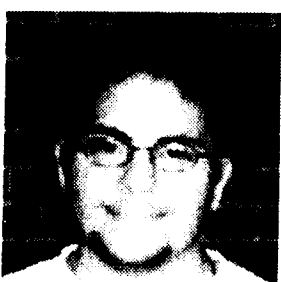
The room assignment committee at Behrend works hard to try and make "good matches" for students by considering their majors, backgrounds, and study habits. Unfortunately, all matches are not successful. In many cases, students find themselves afraid to talk to their roommate about controversial situations including problems with the neatness, personal hygiene, and having common respect for each others belongings. One Behrend student who chose to remain anonymous

commented, "My roommate and I never talk. I don't know anything about her. I think she took one look at me on move in day and completely wrote me off. We have nothing in common; it's not a good situation." In these cases, great resentment often forms and sometimes escalates into full blown arguments. Here is some advice taken from "The List - 429 Secret Ingredients for College Success:" "If your roommate smells, don't suffer. Tell him/her." This helpful guide stresses the importance of communication. If you hope to reconcile with your roommate, communication is key.

For those that have tried to compromise and are still finding it very difficult to live with their roommate, don't worry. There are other options, besides throwing your roommates clothes out the window. Penn State Behrend has a program called Direct Room Switch on eBoard, an electronic "bulletin board" where you can post your interest in switching rooms with another student. Here, students can request to switch rooms with other students without breaking their housing contracts. If this avenue still does not prove to be successful, students can contact housing for more extreme options.

"We're a lot alike, so it's easy to get along with her. We go out together all the time and walk to classes together. We were just lucky." -- Sheri Kroskie

The "Family Guy" Movie, Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down?



Thumbs Up
"They're making one?"
Rudy Becker,
COMMUNICATIONS,
01



Thumbs Down
"My mom said it was awful. I haven't seen it yet."
Amanda Charney,
COMMUNICATIONS,
07



Thumbs Up
"Family Guy is the epitome of America."
Kay Smith
CREATIVE WRITING,
01



Thumbs Down
"I didn't see it, and I don't plan on seeing it."
Rob Covert
BIOLOGY, 07



Undecided
"It had it's moments, but it was completely pointless at times."
Katie Sweeney
POLITICAL SCIENCE,
07