

STUDENT LIFE

Q&A with Morningwood's Chantal Claret

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Since 2003, New York City's Morningwood has been perfecting their brand of in-your-face, pissed-off, musical-ruckus and unleashing it on unsuspecting audiences across the country. Shortly after their conception at a record label showcase in New York, the band (front-woman Chantal Claret, guitarist Richard Steel, bassist Pedro Yanowitz and drummer Japa Keenon) destroyed all competition by delivering the most brash, kinetic performance of the night. Following the aforementioned gig, Morningwood signed with Capitol Records, which, in retrospect, surprised Claret the most. "We're usually the underdogs," she said, "but we like to surprise people." The group's first album, "Morningwood," is set for release in January of next year. Until then, the quartet will continue to tour across the country. Recently, the group served as an opening act for post-punk pioneers Gang of Four's fall U.S. tour. "They had me come on stage for their encore at our last show, and I got to sing 'I Love a Man in a Uniform and Damaged Goods,'" said Claret. "I can die in peace now."

The Behrend Beacon: How did the band come together? Did you have any previous musical experience?

Chantal Claret: Pedro heard me singing one night at the Dakota [apartment complex in New York City] for Sean Lennon's birthday party. I had never been in a band before, and I had never performed in front of a group of musical peers either. I had written songs for fun since I was younger; I was always a writer. Pedro then asked me to come and sing some parts on some of his songs. Then, he asked me to officially start a band with him, and our first telephone conversation was coming up with the name "Morningwood."

BB: From live reviews that have been written recently, many critics are saying that Morningwood are saving NYC's music "scene" from its recent monotony. Was that the band's initial intention, to try and pump some energy back into a lackluster music community?

CC: We never really paid attention to the "scene" going on around us. I honestly don't even remember there being one. Perhaps there was/is, but we were never

really a part of it, and I think that happens to be both a blessing and a curse. We don't want to be lumped in with a certain place or time. On the other hand, we do miss out on that "community" that people refer to. We have friends who are in other bands, but it was never a "we'll all get out of here together" vibe. As for the energy, we are being honest: we are energetic people and that is what we enjoy. Not to say we might

I was enjoying myself so much.

BB: Since your album has yet to be released, is it tough to play in front of a crowd who might not be familiar with the band?

CC: It is very difficult playing in front of people who do not have your music. I equate it to showing up to school unprepared. People come to our shows and it is the equivalent of going "Pop Quiz! Now



Chantal Claret, Richard Steel, Pedro Yanowitz and Japa Keenon (left to right): the band Morningwood

not mellow out or have the capacity to do so, right now we are just psyched to be rocking. We aren't good at playing it cool, that shit is overrated anyways.

BB: Your songs, particularly "Nü Rock" and "Jetsetter," are not only clever and catchy, but dynamically stunning. What was the recording process like?

CC: The recording process was intense, natural and amazing. Going to London, although silly in regards of a budget, was the best thing ever, and I think it has a profound effect on the record. I can't imagine having made it anywhere else. We were there for three months. All of the material was written by the time we went in there, we did two weeks of preproduction in our rehearsal space on the Lower East Side. Gil [Norton, producer of the band's debut, "Morningwood"] made everything seem just natural. He knows exactly how and what to ask of his artists, which is an incomparable talent. I kept waiting for the pressure to start building and to get stressed out about having to do my parts, but it never came. He made it a pure pleasure. When we were done, I wanted to just record our second record right then because

get out your pencils.' Then, the audience goes 'Wait, no one told me there was going to be a test.' We are forced to say "Tough, let's do this. Maybe next time you'll do your homework." Unfortunately, it is not their fault for being unprepared because the textbook has yet to be released. On the other hand, it is sort of refreshing because the fans we make now are solely there because of our live show which is really genuine and means a lot.

BB: You've been a band for a few years now, so has playing live gotten any easier?

CC: It is never EASY playing live. It is always hard work: we ALWAYS PLAY FOR OUR SUPPER. That is my motto. I get really disappointed with myself if I have a bad show. It is all about energy and honesty (also Red Bull helps).

BB: What's up next for Morningwood?

CC: We are doing a few headlining dates on the way back [from the West Coast], and then there will be a mini-tour on the East Coast in a few places. [The band is] arranging it now. Then, Je ne sais pas. They tell me where to go and I go (unless I don't want to).

Treats and computer tricks

By Logan Stack
staff writer

It's close to Halloween, so I'll give you some computer tricks (the nice sort). I'll start with Windows, follow with Mac, then give a bit on Linux at the end.

The "Windows" key is useful for more than just opening the start menu from the keyboard. If you hold down the Windows key like you would hold Shift, then press "D" ("Windows-D" for short) your computer will minimize all your programs, as though you pressed the "show desktop" button.

"Windows-E" opens Explorer, just like clicking on "My Computer." This is useful on the lab computers. You can type a URL into this. "Windows-E" opens the program quickly, unlike clicking on the Internet Explorer icon.

To start other programs quickly, "Windows-R" opens a little command box. You can type in the name of a program to start, like "Excel." That opens Excel without going through the script, like when you open it from the start menu. This way it opens in one second instead of 15. If you want to do this with Word, you have to type in Microsoft's name for Word: winword.

Mac OS X also has a couple of convenient features. In your System Preferences, click on "Expose." Here you can set special actions when you move your mouse to each of the corners of the screen.

For laptop users, in System Preferences, under "Keyboard & Mouse," you can click on your trackpad. The option labeled "clicking" allows you to just touch the trackpad to click, so you don't have to use the big button.

Your username is in the upper right corner of the screen. If you click on that, you can switch users while staying logged in, just like Windows XP - only the Mac transition between users is far cooler.

The computer center staff may have told you that if you put your Mac to sleep, the Virtual Private Network software is too poorly made to allow you to reconnect without rebooting. They weren't quite right. If you restart your network stack, you can reconnect without rebooting. Under System Preferences, Network, Air Port, click on the TCP/IP tab. Change your configuration from "DHCP" to "Manual," hit "Apply", then change it back, and hit "Apply" again. You should be able to connect now. If you disconnect from the VPN before putting your Mac to sleep, you don't have to go through all that.

Because OS X is Unix, all the nifty tricks in the Linux section apply to you too. In Linux and Unix, everything is text. That makes it easy to program. On the console, the "user@host>" prompt is just the contents of the variable "PS1." You can change this to make your prompt cooler and make it stand out from all the text that the commands you have run generated. The "Bash-prompt-howto" at tldp.org gives help and examples.

It is possible to run a server, like Apache, in the dorms. The firewall prevents only incoming connections, so you can set up what amounts to "call forwarding." Article 16 of issue 52 at phrack.org explains how.

This column is here to help readers. Would you like to hear more tips for lab computers and the Penn State network? Would you like to know how your computer works? Do you want to learn how to get around the 30 day limit on trial software? Then ask! E-mail ASCII@psu.edu with "Ask ASCII" in the subject line and I may answer your question next week in Ask ASCII.

Regional options for students

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Being an on-campus student who's unfamiliar with the Erie area can be difficult, especially when it comes to eating somewhere other than Bruno's or Dobbins. Finding a decent restaurant can be tricky, and discovering one through trial-and-error isn't always the best thing to do. Erie does offer a surprising amount and variety of great places to eat, if you know where to go.

If you're looking for quantity and quality at a good price, try China Garden on Peach Street. The Chinese restaurant is open Tuesday through Sunday and offers a very inexpensive all-you-can-eat buffet until early afternoon. For evening meals, China Garden has an extensive menu, including a vegetarian section. The restaurant is located in front of the Tinseltown Theater and is a great stop if you want a filling meal before your movie. The average price for a dinner entrée is about \$7 and includes fried or steamed rice and free hot tea.

If you're more interested in Italian food, Barbatos is a great, locally owned restaurant to visit. The Barbatos menu includes pizza, wings, submarine sandwiches, pasta dinners and many other Italian foods. Barbatos has seven locations in Erie. The locations closest to Behrend are on Buffalo Road (in Wesleyville), State Street (off exit 27 on I-90) and East 38th Street (next to the Red Fox Inn). While only the Buffalo Road and State Street locations offer a dining-in option, all three have delivery and carry-out. Prices for dinner vary, though they are reasonable.

For really good, authentic Mexican food, El Canelo is the best place to go. Located on Peach Street (about a mile south of East 38th Street), West 12th Street (a few miles west of I-79) and Buffalo Road (in the Kmart plaza), El Canelo has an enormous menu, including every Mexican dish you could ever want. The service at El Canelo is excellent, and the atmosphere is just as good. While waiting for your food, you can snack on the free bowl of warm tortilla chips and mild salsa. Though the mixed drinks at El Canelo tend to be fairly expensive, you can buy a reasonably priced pitcher of lemon or lime margarita to split with your friends. The average dinner entrée costs about \$7 and the lunch meals, which are proportionally smaller, are less expensive.

If you're just looking to have a good time, take a group of your friends to Doc Holiday's Bar and Grill (located off exit 27 on I-90). Wednesday and Thursday evenings, karaoke and 15-cent wings start at 9 p.m. If you're not 21, however, you can't benefit from this deal. Only legal drinkers are welcome in Doc Holiday's after 9 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and the 15-cent wing special isn't applicable to carry-out orders.

Jimmy Z's, located on Buffalo Road (in Wesleyville), offers a slightly more expensive deal. On Mondays, wings are 25-cents a piece. If you don't really care how much the food is, but you want cheap drinks, visit Jimmy Z's on Wednesdays for quarter-draft night. If you bring a group of friends, you can buy a pitcher for two dollars. However, don't expect many choices of high quality beers for that price. Your only option is Keystone Light.

So next time you're not in the mood for Bruno's or Dobbins, visit a local restaurant.

Movie is "Doomed" to mediocrity

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Finally, it has arrived. The kind of film I've been craving. A sci-fi horror action flick just jammed full of explosions, monsters and gore. The storyline is as follows: Far ahead in the future, a group of Marines is sent to investigate a disturbance at a laboratory on Mars. One of the lead roles is played by The Rock, who has certainly influenced the success of such previous movies as The Scorpion King and The Rundown; this film is not one of them. I'm going to be honest; Doom is not going to win awards on anything other than the MTV Movie Awards for some ridiculously specific category such as "Best Film of 2005 Based on a Video Game." What do I mean? Well, for instance, let's first talk about the "well acted" drama scene(s). Much worse than I had hoped, but about par with what I expected from such entry level cast members. The "first-person shooter" action sequence during the massacre of mutated monsters is well worth the cover charge. This is a great technique for a movie based on a "first-person shooter" video game. You might remember how games like Nintendo 64's GoldenEye 007 revolutionized the way video gamers interact with its unique point-of-view portraying what the game character would actually see. The directors recreate this first-person view in an edge of your seat action sequence, which is sure to please any action movie buff. I was a bit disappointed with some of the "monster attack scenes." I expected such a dark video game to be full of elaborate battle scenes with lots of fake blood and gore. While directors attempt to keep it a bit classier by not going overboard on the gore, their efforts



Dwayne Johnson, also known as The Rock, seen in his new movie.

are analogous to spitting in the wind. Don't forget, this is a movie about monsters on Mars in the future - sci-fi movies don't usually capture audiences across America. But this movie sure is entertaining.

At one point in the movie, The Rock stumbles upon an advanced weapons room in a high tech laboratory and ends up taking a gigantic black gun that shoots some type of blue plasma balls. Buttons on the walls activate "Nano-Walls" in which characters walk through and end up coming out of another Nano-Wall somewhere completely different in the building. Another similar device is a teleporter that is capable of instantly transporting anything to a planet or location millions of miles away. Thanks to the help of advanced computer graphics tools, the director succeeds in pulling off the use of these make believe devices with convincing results.

To sum it all up, Doom offers plenty of explosions, a handful of decently gory battle scenes, a few exciting action sequences, one alien autopsy, a few severed heads and hands, face eating Doom-monsters, poor dialogue, poor acting (although it does offer a few laughs), and one movie sure to cut down The Rock's reputation.

Money for College

The Army is currently offering sizable bonuses of up to \$20,000. In addition to the cash bonuses, you may qualify for up to \$70,000 for college through the Montgomery GI Bill and Army College Fund. Or you could pay back up to \$66,000 of qualifying student loans through the Army's Loan Repayment Program. To find out more, call (814) 868-9979.