

MUSIC

Top 10 Songs to Sing/Play by a Campfire

By Chris LaFuria

10. Mr. Big- "To Be with You"
9. Weezer- "Say It Ain't So"
8. Bob Dylan- "Blowin' in the Wind"
7. Wilco- "What Light"
6. The Violent Femmes- "Blister in the Sun"
5. CCR- "Bad Moon Rising"
4. The Beatles- "Blackbird"
3. The Get Up Kids- "Campfire Kansas"
2. The Shins- "New Slang"
1. Cat Stevens- "The Wind"

Got a Top 5, Top 10, or Top 20??
Send it to rpg5004@psu.edu by Wednesday at 5 pm.

"I was totally open with the band and my family and my friends and certainly the people I was sleeping with. I thought it was pretty obvious. Now I recognize that to have public figures be very open about their sexuality helps some kid somewhere out there."

-R.E.M. lead singer Michael Stipe, on his sexuality

Tapes 'n Tapes is as outdated as....well, tapes

Read below to hear Chris LaFuria's thoughts on why this recently released album just doesn't have what it takes...

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Blog-ressive rock is back in action with the release of Tapes 'n Tapes sophomore album entitled *Walk it Off*. Taking a backdoor approach to fame, TnT got their start after an uprising of reviews on internet blogs. As the world seems to advance into the technological era, TnT, led by the marble-mouthed Josh Grier, have devolved into a more lo-fi, unorganized, copy rock.

TnT teams up with producer Dave Fridmann (Flaming Lips, Mogwai), who also produced the band's fraternal twins, Clap Your Hands Say Yeah. CYHSY, another exploding online band, had Fridmann on board for their successful album *Some Loud Thunder*.

Many of the songs on *Walk it Off*,

sound like the love-child of Stephen Malkmus and Frank Black.

The first two tracks off the album give listeners hope. "Le Ruse" and "Time of Songs" indulge in the predictable easy guitar with flowing lyrics that founded the band's success in their 2005 debut release *The Loon*. However, there doesn't seem to be any advancement and exploration into the variety that lies within the TnT four.

Drummer Jeremy Hanson does exhibit the different methods of which he is capable. Like the drunk, rapidly-changing yet elaborate drums from "Demon Apple," Hanson proves that his role is more than just filler.

While the band does allow the listener to explore the nature of the album, many of the songs sound like Malkmus and his Pavement cronies were caught in an electrical storm, raw and progressive, yet rather uno-

iginal.

TnT does come alive in the latter portion of the album. Songs like "Anvil" and "Lines" are simple and melodic, yet inspiring. They prove that you can still maintain your roots yet advance technically.

Their first album was produced in their buddy's basement by the band's current bassist, Erik Appelwick. This time around, Fridmann and TnT headed to Tarbox Road Studio in Cassadagga NY for recording.

While the band may struggle musically to evolve, they have played their cards in the fame game. In July of 2006, the band played their hit single "Insistor" on the Letterman Show.

This past week, the band appeared on *The Conan O'Brien Show* and had a sound that was more "bluesey" and soulful than the actual album. Their live track "Hang Them All"

should be physically sucked from Conan and slapped on the album.

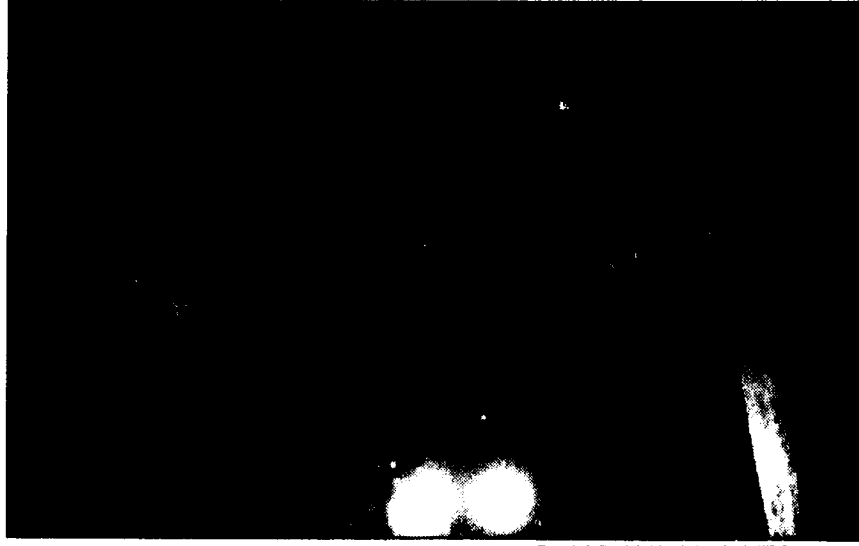
They also appeared at the 2007 Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. This year, the band opted not to appear alongside Malkmus and other indie/alternative bands.

TnT have also appeared on more than just the Myspace scene. The band was featured on the MTV show "Human Giant," in which the character discussed TnT in the blog and Mp3 scene.

I've decided that if you don't post that Tapes 'n Tapes mp3, I'm going to come back here tomorrow and give you a Colombian necktie," says Human Giant's Aziz Ansari.

As popular as the band may get on the internet scene, their lo-fi, bland sound may soon be as outdated as the product in their band name. Simple elaborate advances could push them above that line.

Grade: C



Daniel Smith/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Third Eye Blind visits Behrend

Continued from page 1.

objects across the gym or crowd surfing over top of people's heads before falling on a random group.

Midway through their set, lead singer Stephan Jenkins was left on stage as he sang a slower song. As he exited the stage, lights shined and music started to play from the back of the gym. During Jenkins' song, the band had moved itself to the rear of the room to play several numbers for the fans that weren't shoulder-to-shoulder in the front.

The band has plans to return to the recording studio to release a new album towards the end of the year. The band played several songs that they plan to include on their new album as a sneak peak into the band's new style.

"The new stuff they're coming out with definitely has a different sound to it," sophomore management major Chris Behn said. "It might be something I could get into."

However, many agreed that the acoustics of the gym made it hard for the audience to clearly understand everything the band was saying.

"You really couldn't hear the singing that well," sophomore communication arts and sciences major Aaron Marks said. "It was mostly all music."

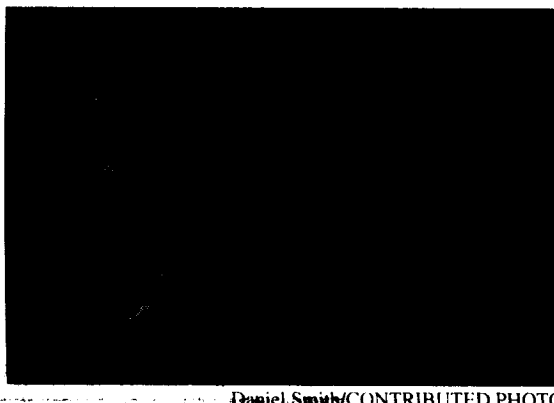
Fans chanted for one of their favorites, "Slow Motion." However, the politically active band responded to the crowd's request for the controversial song by saying, "We can't play that [song]. George Bush won't let us." The band eventually played the song as the final encore.

At the end of the set, Jenkins began singing lyrics in a jam session type of atmosphere. The crowd quickly realized they were lyrics to Nelly's "Must Be The Money." The crowd immediately joined in and responded to Jenkins' "Oh, why must I feel this way," with "Hey, must be the money!"

Through the complaints, most students that attended the concert left with a positive view of the event.

"It was a good time," Behn said. "But, towards the end it seemed like it dragged on."

"I liked it a lot," Marks said. "I liked the throw back to the 90s."



Daniel Smith/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Tapes 'n Tapes releases their sophomore album.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Decemberists' leader releases *Colin Meloy Sings Live!*

"Thanks for singing, you know the other thing about this solo show is that it's really set up to be kind of like a campfire sing along. So everybody's welcome to sing as much as you'd like. That's really the feeling that ought to be being evoked here tonight. Kumbaya."

-Colin Meloy



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By Ryan P. Gallagher
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Colin Meloy, front-man of the mysteriously melodic indie-rock band, The Decemberists, spent two weeks on a nationwide musical journey in 2006, and the recordings, entitled, *Colin Meloy Sings Live!*, were released on Tuesday; though it may be difficult to find a copy in any store. Meloy stated the quote in the headline after pleasing the audience with just two opening songs, then proceeded to preview his own set with these words that describe the ultimate essence of the show, which made my job easier but not as fun. The reasoning for this is that that quote literally describes what you hear when the album echoes through your ears. To reiterate, Meloy announces, "Thanks for singing, you know the other thing about this solo show is that it's really set up to be kind of like a campfire sing along. So everybody's welcome to sing as much as you'd like. That's really the feeling that ought to be being evoked here tonight. Kumbaya."

It's a one-man show performed by Meloy throughout the night's entirety. Amusing the dedicated audience with subtle, humorous phrases between songs, he delivers one of the best "campfire" performances to date, while continuing with his dry, intellectual stand up comedy-esque routine at the appropriate times. Though many songs are based off of simple, familiar chord progressions, keep in mind that the majority of these tunes are derived from intricate classics, originally performed by The Decemberists (Meloy is still the primary writer, for the record). This provides an entirely fresh aspect to the listener's perspectives on these songs because we are able to focus our complete attention on the surreal brilliance of Meloy's lyrical ingenuity.

His words are reminiscent of a never before experienced intrapersonal past that only appears in our dreams. I realize that sentence may be hard to interpret, but take a quick glance at the words and you may get an idea of what I'm getting at. An impressive portion of his poetry is a beautiful representation of life, an almost manifest destiny feeling, while the rest of his poetry hits on a thousand different scales.

If you are unfamiliar with The Decemberists, then it is certain that Meloy's work is just as foreign. To enlighten those who are unfamiliar, the album represents a Neutral Milk Hotel sound vocally and musically, adding in a chilled out Oasis and possibly an ultimate Ben Gibbard feeling. Keep in mind, the entire album is live, so the reality sinks in deeply, enhancing the "campfire" sound to the max.

This album is truly sincere in every way. Not only through his unique musical styling, but he also jokingly tells a tale of the worst song he ever wrote, "Dracula's Daughter." Bracing the audience for destruction, he repeatedly warns the crowd that this will be ultimate hell.

"In any show really," begins Meloy, "the band on stage wants to exhibit the best effort, the best songs that they've written. So I think it's fair that you should also do the worst songs you've written just to give people a sense and balance, so tonight I'm going to play you the worst song I ever wrote. And it's bad to the core; I mean you know right away. I don't know how I got past the first two chords, I mean the fact that I even put pen to paper is really terrifying." He commences with this "masterpiece" with these opening lyrics, "Dracula's daughter/Dracula's daughter/Dracula's daughter got it bad." He ceases the music at this point and continues to commentate, "Now that's really bad. But the terrifying thing that keeps me awake at night is that I didn't just stop there." He finishes with, "You think you got it bad/try having Dracula for your dad/see how it looks on you." Ending with, "And that's where I stopped," the audience laughs, feeling very appreciative of Meloy for exhibiting the honesty of how most music is created- through trial and error.

I admit, that was a terrible example after just acclaiming the insightful lyrical work of the man, but it gives us a realistic look on musical theory, portraying how every musician writes at least one terrible song in a lifetime.

Omitting the one obvious track, this album masters a true piece of intellect through the telling of "campfire stories" in an idealistic setting. If you love The Decemberists, you will undoubtedly love this. If you simply have never heard the band's work, then take my advice and purchase this album before the summer arrives because it is an essential tale of music for a summer full of memorable nights, good stories, and great friends. I hate to give an album an "A" two weeks in a row, but that's precisely what I'm doing.

Grade: A+

Weekly Musical Trivia for the Behrend Beacon

Who was Black Flag's original vocalist?

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| A. Henry Rollins | C. Jim Lindberg |
| B. Tim Armstrong | D. Keith Morris |

Answer to last week's question: C. Morrissey

Writing music articles is as easy as listening to music and writing your thoughts. If you want to be a writer for the Fall '08 semester, e-mail rpg5004@psu.edu. It's as easy as pie, and come on, how good is pie? So good, so good.