

ARTS

The Smithereens new album covers the Beatles

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As I browsed through iTunes for new music, I saw the Smithereens album, *B-Sides The Beatles*. "That's curious," I thought, "is that band really ballsy enough to release a Beatles cover album?" I was skeptical as I pressed the "buy album" and put ten of my precious dollars down the drain. I transferred all the songs to my iPod Touch, laid on my bed, and pressed play on the first track, "Thank You Girl." Within the first few measures of the song, all my doubts were dispelled. A couple new ones [doubts] cropped up, but I was satisfied.

The Smithereens are an average New Jersey band with a semi-interesting history. Singer

Pat Dinizio, guitarist Jim Babjak, drummer Dennis Diken, and bassist Mike Mesaros formed the group in 1980.

After some circulation of a single from the 1986 album, *Especially for You*, the group was confronted by Rolling Stone magazine for being too much into the mod scene/British invasion. The article claimed they were too akin to the Beatles, an influence they proudly wear on their sleeves.

In the early 1990s, the Smithereens were a slight influence to Kurt Cobain when he was writing *Nevermind*. Since then, the group had been fairly uneventful until 2006, when Mesaros left the band and was replaced by Severo "The Thrilla" Jornacion. This brings us to their latest album, *B-Sides The Beatles*.

As I [sort of] mentioned previously, I'm pretty cynical when it comes to bands who aren't the Beatles trying to be the Beatles. Usually it's just some indie hipster with his buds playing "Come Together" in the garage. Hell, that's what *Across the Universe* was—a collection of low grade covers. The Smithereens' *B-Sides The Beatles* captures the Beatles' sound quite well.

Jornacion doesn't neglect his bass guitar, as is most common with Jersey bands like the Smithereens. The George Harrison bass lines are fully intact, especially in "Cry for a Shadow." Dinizio's throaty croon is shocking to hear in lieu of John Lennon, but as the album progressed, I grew accustomed to and even fond of it. There were a few songs where the vocals could have used some more emotion, though—"I'll Get You," for one.

The Smithereens do a fantastic job covering Beatles songs. In fact, they do too good of a job. If this album's aim were to get the band booked for weddings as a cover band, it would do a great job. But they're not a Beatles cover band, they were an inspiration for Nirvana. These covers give you no reason not to listen to the original Beatles tracks. Even Ringo's simplistic drum beats are emulated. The album offers little creativity, no matter how tight the recording and sound are.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The members of the Smithereens doing the cliché "we pose against a brick wall."

Heroes makes its season three debut September 22

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As each day passes, the moment all of America has been waiting for looms closer. It's an event so monumental, so spectacular that Lord Voldemort would wet himself. It's the beginning of an era of awesome Monday nights.

I'm talking about the season primer of the NBC hit *Heroes*, the greatest TV show of all time. Some readers may disagree with this view, but one cannot deny the impact the show has had on television programming history.

You may remember back in 2005, when NBC was in a bit of a pickle; they were about to go under. Competition was steep back then, or in the "Big '05" as I like to call it. NBC was being steamrolled by the competition, (i.e. *Grey's Anatomy*, *Lost*, *Smallville* and *House*). With only game shows like *Deal or No Deal* and a slew of reality shows, death for the network

seemed imminent. But then a champion rose from the gloom.

On Sept 25, 2005, *Heroes* received more viewers than any other NBC show in five years, with an average of 14 million viewers a night. It was a season filled with 25 episodes of awesome that saved NBC from imminent doom. Critics raved over the incredible mix of comic book action and *OC* drama.

However, most good things must come to an end. With a second season, plagued by the 2006-2007 Writers Strike, the show kind of lost its way. Between feudal Japan and some random place in Mexico, most fans got rather impatient. Now, a beacon of hope shines through the haze. With a full staff of writers and no problems in sight, this season can't do anything but reclaim its title as the best show on TV.

Granted, it is rather boastful to claim that *Heroes* is better than other hit shows such as *Grey's Anatomy* or *CSI*. But please before you gum up my

inbox with all of the hate mail. Please, allow me to submit this rebuttal.

In the case of *Grey's Anatomy*, I must ask one question: are you female? If the answer is "yes," then please continue going about your business. If you answered "no"; then I'm going to have to ask you to please turn in your manhood into the Behrend Beacon Office. Yes, *Grey's Anatomy* is very popular among women, but only for the exact same reason *Heroes* is a better show than *CSI* for men. Can you guess why? No? I'll give you a hint: It involves the opposite sex.

It is a well-documented fact that Patrick Dempsey is the main weakness for all women between the ages of twelve and dead. If you don't believe me, try this experiment. Simply walk into Dobbins and say the nickname, Dr. McDreamy. Every woman within earshot will whirl around wildly, searching for the source of her hormone rush.

The same thing happens to young men if you flash a picture of *Heroes*' biggest starlet, Hayden Panettiere. It will seem as though time has stopped inside the aura of the photograph.

Heroes definitely wins in the sex appeal category for men. Just look at the roster for proof. With such lovely ladies as Hayden Panettiere, Kristen Bell, and Ali Larter in the cast, it is mathematically impossible for it to not be the most awesome show on television.

If that's not enough proof for you, I have another question for you. Have you actually seen the show? The special effects for one episode alone are better than the most of the crappy horror movies that flood the cinemas every week. To make matters better, this season will actually include real super-villains. It's going to be a wild ride that you do not want to miss!



GOOGLE IMAGES

Kristen Bell and Hayden Panettiere co-star in NBC's *Heroes*.

Professor holds on to comedic aspirations

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Joe Falocco is not only a professor at Penn State Behrend but also an aspiring stand-up comedian. Dr. Falocco will be performing this Saturday night at Jr's Last Laugh, a comedy club on State Street. Falocco will be opening for comedians such as Andy Woodhull and Joby Saad.

The admissions fee will be slightly under 13 dollars and people under the age of 21 are welcome. The comedy club not only offers entertainment but one can also purchase food and drink. There will be a show at 6:30 pm and 9:30 pm.

An interview with Dr. Falocco reveals an edgy man with a humorous background and upbringing. When asked why he got into the comedy scene and what age he started at, he replied, "I started doing comedy in my 20's. It was the 1980's; everyone was doing it." He started out as follower and grew up to be a leader as a teacher and a comedian with his own material. His first performance "bombed" he said, but he didn't stop trying to make people laugh. He used to

try to do political humor in his acts, but now gets his material from "apolitical observations."

Dr. Falocco's icon in comedy is either the late George Carlin or more recently Lewis Black. In Dr. Falocco's "inart" comedy class the students watch DVDs about different concepts and views of comedy.

Lewis Black and George Carlin are both in the DVDs along with other comedians that he shows. How many Zen monks does it take to change a light bulb? Give up? Anytime you want to hear that joke or the answer, talk to Dr. Falocco.

"That's my favorite joke to tell," he says. The answer is two: one to change it and one to not change it. Get it? Anyways, Dr. Falocco explained what we should expect from the show Saturday night. "I don't want to exaggerate my contribution at Jr's Saturday night," he says. "I'm only doing five minutes, then I'll be introducing the other acts: Joby Saad and Andy Woodhull. They are both established comedians with national

reputations, but I have not seen their work."

This promises to be a good time, and the audience will get a whole lot of laughs from three different comedians. When asked if he has ever had a really bad experience on stage he replied, "Oh, yes."

"I was almost killed during the performance of a Theme Park Stunt Show," he continued. That inspired me to go to graduate school. When asked who his favorite comedian to listen to or watch and he said [Bill Maher], because he does the kind of typical, political humor I wish I could pull off."

In Dr. Falocco's class, the students watch and learn different types of jokes and comedians. He shows video clips and DVDs of comedians doing stand-up and then critiques or laughs hysterically at the performances. Now it is his turn once again to be watched on stage. Come on Saturday, watch him perform, and laugh at him. Whether you are laughing with him or at him, only you will know.

Yarina brings "Rhythms of Life" to Erie

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Yarina is a music group that was founded in 1984 in Ecuador and consists of four brothers.

They played in Bruno's Cafe on Tuesday. According to their website, yarina means remembrance in the native Quichua language of the Incas, and they say they are dedicated not only to musical excellence, but also to

the preservation and sharing of the beauty, courage and survival of the ancestral traditions and culture of the indigenous peoples of the Andes.

They have traveled throughout Europe and the Americas and have won several awards at the Native American Music Awards. Their music involves a variety of string, wind, and percussion instruments that you may not have heard of before, such as the quena, a traditional bamboo flute

with seven holes, and charango, a very small ten-string guitar made of armadillo shell, but they also play guitars and violin.

Yarina feels that everyone can relate to the beauty and magic of their music. Band member Jose Manuel Cachimuel said during their show Tuesday afternoon that their music is, "both relaxing and entertaining." One thing is for certain, Yarina brought an interesting style of music to Behrend.

Food For Thought

"The moment a little boy is concerned with which is a jay and which is a sparrow, he can no longer see the birds or hear them sing."

—Eric Berne

Janet Neff Sample Center
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"To be persuasive, we must be believable; to be believable, we must be credible, we must be truthful."

Edward R. Murrow