

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Playlist

A look at the world of music, from the obscure to the obscure, the new and the old.

Coheed and Cambria to release a new album

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Coheed and Cambria readies for their new album

In 2002, music enthusiasts saw one of the greatest progressive metal bands come onto the scene. With the release of *The Second Stage Turbine Blade*, Coheed and Cambria flew onto the charts and blew most listeners away. Unfortunately, I wasn't in that group of individuals. I found out about them only two years ago from a friend back home. Listening to that band is nothing less than the most amazing auditory experience you'll ever have. The first song I heard by them was "The Running Free," and it was on their most recently released album, *Good Apollo, I'm Burning Star IV: No World for Tomorrow*. After hearing that song, I thought it couldn't get much better. I quickly realized that the rest of their music is much better than that song, and now it's hardly listened to.

The thing about Coheed and Cambria that makes them so interesting and original to me is that all of their songs follow a storyline. That's what most people don't know about the band. Every one of their songs follows a science fiction storyline called The Armory Wars, a comic series written by lead singer Claudio Sanchez. That was the starting push the band needed in order to get their project on the right track. Claudio had been practicing guitar in his spare time between writing the comics and had actually been carrying a side project with his friend Travis Stever called Toxic Parents. The pair tapped into their progressive roots and really hit the studio in 2001 to practice up for their 2002 release, *The Second Stage Turbine Blade*. With tracks like "Delirium Trigger," "Devil in Jersey City," and "33," there wasn't much more to be expected from a first album than that.

After that record, *In Keeping Secrets of Silent Earth* was released in 2003, and they finally achieved radio play with the single "A Favor House Atlantic." They began touring and the rest was made in historically epic heaven. They released *Good Apollo, I'm Burning Star IV* in late 2005 with a quick follow-up album, *Good Apollo, I'm Burning Star IV: No World for Tomorrow*. With those combined albums, Coheed and Cambria has really exploded onto the scene. The most famous of these songs were "Welcome Home," "The Running Free," "Feathers," and "No World for Tomorrow." "Welcome Home" was even featured as a base track for the revolutionary video game *Rock Band* and was the basis behind their advertising campaign as it was featured in a commercial.

They've been doing an international tour for the last four months and are starting another tour with Trivium and Slipknot to go across the country. A new album is in discussion and several singles have been rumored, but there hasn't been much released other than remixes of older songs. However, they are going to be releasing a boxed set of all of their records called *Neverender* to be seen soon on the shelves. Look for it, and check out for yourself what an amazing band these guys comprise.

Burn After Reading or burn after watching?

By Emily Reichert
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Burn After Reading is a comedy/thriller film released last September starring Brad Pitt, George Clooney, and other stars — and is playing in Reed 113 next week, beginning Wednesday.

Is it worth your valuable dollar? RottenTomatoes.com, a website that features "dependable, objective resources for coverage of movies and DVD's," says yes. The Rotten Tomatoes experts gave the film a 79 percent and anything over 50 percent is considered good. The consensus, according to RT, is that "the Coen brothers have crafted another clever comedy/thriller with an outlandish plot and memorable characters."

The Coen brothers mentioned are Joel and Ethan Coen, who

both directed the film. Their previous work includes *No Country for Old Men*, *The Big Lebowski*, and *Fargo*.

The film's plot begins with CIA analyst Agent Cox (John Malkovich) discovering that he is going to be ousted from his job and reacts by returning home to his cheating wife, his memoirs, and his drinking. Agent Cox's memoirs become misplaced and land in the hands of Linda Litzke (Frances McDormand) and Chad Feldheimer (Brad Pitt), both employees at Hardbodied Fitness Centers. Upon finding the disc, Chad and Linda become determined to find out everything about it. As the movie continues, the plot begins to go out of control for the two coworkers in a very dark and hilarious way.

Peter Travers, a reporter for *Rolling Stone*, states in his review on the movie, "The brothers have conjured a crazy-quilt comic thriller that takes on our growing national stupidity in the form of a sex farce. The result is wildly funny, but just as wildly uneven." This unevenness he speaks of refers to the contrast between *No Country For Old Men* to this film.

Other critics have also pitched in their two cents. J. R. Jones, a reporter for the *Chicago Reader*, praised the film saying, "After the portentous *No Country For Old Men*, Joel and Ethan Coen return to their trademark brand of cruel, misanthropic farce, and for dark laughs and hurtling narrative momentum this spy caper is their best work since *Fargo*."

Other critics were not so impressed. Tom Long from the *Detroit News* called it, "A thoroughly disposable comic romp made by a bunch of people who probably should have been working on bigger and better things. *Burn After Reading* is sure to frustrate just about anyone who goes to see it."

Despite some opposing views, one thing is for sure, *Burn After Reading* is perfect for anyone who is looking for a way to unwind and have a good time after a long day of classes. The film will be playing Wednesday and Thursday night at 8 p.m., and Friday and Saturday at 9 p.m. The admission price is one dollar per person.

Twilight fails to meet expectations

By Neil J. Peters
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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The cast of Twilight

In recent months, news of a *Twilight* film had put the industry in a stranglehold. In local venues, tickets for opening night sold out three nights before the film was even released. Women of all ages, the majority of viewers, flooded theaters, eagerly awaiting the sight of everyone's favorite family of vampires. Some dressed up and others had to put all their will power into restraining themselves. However, with all of this hype, did the movie live up to the expectations?

Sadly, in my opinion the answer is "no." I've read the entire series from cover to cover. I loved the books and was eagerly awaiting *Midnight Sun* before

it was leaked and scraped. Unfortunately, the film left something to be desired.

From a story aspect, the film was dead on. It closely followed the story of Bella Swan (Kristen Stewart), a 17-year-old girl who moves to Forks, Wash. for a change of scenery. Upon arrival, she is welcomed into a group of friends and begins to assimilate into Forks life. Soon after, she meets her Biology lab partner, Edward Cullen (Robert Pattinson). He is attractive and suave, yet mysterious and slightly odd. Bella falls for Edward after he saves her life, and she subsequently discovers his family's supernatural secret.

The Cullens are funny and

bright, with the exception of Rosalie, Edward's sister. The Nomads are heartless and you can't help but hate James with every fiber of your being.

The problems lie not in the story, but in the direction. There were several scenes that were not necessary at all. They just seemed like time that could have been easily put to better use.

Instead of showing Edward jumping through trees for the third time, why not go into Carlisle's back-story? The majority of the Cullen's only had what seemed like brief cameos. They hardly brought up Edward's origin, let alone the rest of the family's. In the book, Carlisle, Edward's father, had an

entire chapter devoted to his origin. Whereas in the movie, he only had about 15 minutes of face time.

Another issue with the film was the ridiculous lack of special effects. In a movie where special effects would have been a no brainer, Stephanie Meyer, demanded they use as little CGI as possible. This means that the movie was filled with out-dated wirework and lame CGI that has worse production value than most primetime television shows. Seriously, *One Tree Hill* has better effects than *Twilight* did. The fight scene in the end was entertaining, but it had so much more potential. Two vampires with super speed, strength, and regenerative capabilities could do so much more than toss one another around a room.

If you are looking for well choreographed vampiric combat, then *Twilight* probably is not your best bet. In a time where super-human films are flooding the theaters, it falls flat on its face in comparison.

Granted, no cinematic adaptation of a book is going to be perfect. However, the *Twilight* Saga swept the nation with *Harry Potter*-like hysteria. Speaking as a man who went to the midnight releases for both phenomena, Edward seemed to generate an even bigger reaction than *The Chosen One*. So, one would think that *Twilight* would be given the same treatment of care in its production. Fans can only hope that the film's creators will see such flaws and make the proper adjustments for the sequels to come.

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