

## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

## They never thought they'd be on a boat:

COMEDY TROUPE THE LONELY ISLAND SAILING THROUGH AN OCEAN OF MEDIA

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What happens when three creative and very imaginative childhood friends grow up together watching movies and aspire to create their own?

First, they have to make it big in the mainstream media (with the help of the Internet and YouTube). Then, they have to audition for *Saturday Night Live*, hoping their talent is good enough: from there they have to sign contracts and basically sell themselves to different agencies.

Finally, they have to sit through a year or so of *SNL* to finally be able to produce and write their own scripts.

Technicalities aside, the comedy troupe known as The Lonely Island has gone from nothing to everything in a typical fashion.

The Lonely Island (TLI) was officially created in 2001 when founding (and still only) members and life-long friends Andy Samberg, Jorma Taccone, and Akiva Schaffer lived together in Berkeley, California. The group now resides in New York, where it has produced numerous comedic short-films, song parodies, YouTube videos and music videos.

Most of their short films began appearing on the website Channel 101. While writing for the MTV Video Music Awards in 2004, the "Dudes" (as they are often referenced) met Jimmy Fallon, who suggested that they audition for *SNL*. The most notable face, Samberg, was cast as a feature performer while Taccone and Schaffer were hired as writers for the show. It is speculated that Taccone's brother Asa Taccone

(who also writes for *SNL*) hooked the three up for the positions.

Since their *SNL* audition in 2004, the three have written (with the exception of actor, Samberg) almost exclusively for the show. Many of their skits have been for the popular *SNL* "Digital Shorts," while another large portion of their popularity has spawned from YouTube. Recently, the "Dudes" have received a lot of recognition for their musical talent, most notably Taccone who won the 2007 Emmy for Outstanding Original Music and Lyrics (under the title of "music by") for the song "Dick In A Box," which featured Justin Timberlake. In particular, the group's music video for "I'm On A Boat" (which features rap artist T-Pain), has reached almost four million views in less than two weeks since its release. Though not directly stated, some may notice striking similarities between this video and the video for Akon's "I'm So Paid."

TLI's popularity has increased exceptionally with the help of the internet. Their hit videos, "Jizz In My Pants" and "I'm On A Boat," have become a huge pop culture success. However, the aforementioned songs are merely singles from their full-length album, *Incredibad*, released under the artist The Lonely Island. As of Feb 11 (one day after the official release), the album had reached the number one spot on iTunes, but has since dropped to number three. According to their website, [TheLonelyIsland.com](http://TheLonelyIsland.com), a second album is already in the works.

"The Lonely Island epitomizes the genre of comedic music, and will probably remain popular through many generations," says Jay Trott, a freshman accounting major.

While the trio may be best known for its work with *SNL* and their music videos, they are all avid writers. After parting at the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Andrew Samberg is gaining fame and fortune due to his increasing popularity on Saturday Night Live.



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Top photo: The Lonely Island's cover-art for their first album, *Incredibad*. Bottom photo: pictured from left to right, Jorma Taccone, Andy Samberg, and Akiva Schaffer.

## Jessi Campbell entertains Bruno's crowd, laughter abounds

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Many students attended the cafe comedy event in Bruno's on Friday, Feb 6.

The Lion Entertainment Board (LEB) sponsored Jessi Campbell with help in funding from the Student Activity Fee. Jessi Campbell, an enthusiastic and successful comedian, brought her quirky, yet witty, sense of humor to the Behrend crowd, which gathered in Bruno's Friday night.

"She was great and I really enjoyed her stories, all thanks to the LEB for bringing her," shares Michelle Wunderley about Campbell's performance two Fridays ago. Andrew Voris, LEB Comedy Chair, thought, "she was a great storyteller and was very endearing to the crowd." Another spectator, Dan Fuhrman, also commented on Campbell's comedy act. "I thought she was really fun and I cannot wait to see what LEB comedy holds in the future."

One of Campbell's comedic skits involved a phobia of bears and a rather humorous story about a woman being eaten alive by a bear after feeding it fruity pebbles from the palm of her hand. Campbell followed up the story by commenting on the

bear's perfectly natural motives.

She compared the bear's hunger for the woman to her hunger for donuts and pizza. She stated that if a pizza approached her with a donut, she would highly consider devouring the pizza after finishing the donut. In her opinion, the bear had every right to eat that woman since she had obviously not thought through the situation extensively enough.

Another comedic skit involved the conflict between the ownership of a gun and encounters with police officers. As mandated by state law, a driver must admit to the possession of a gun when pulled over by a police officer. Campbell questioned her capability in declaring the possession of this weapon. Her weapon declaration began sounding more along the lines of a threat than a pure admittance.

Jessi Campbell performs at numerous colleges and clubs across the country. She performs at two other campuses of Penn State: Penn State Shenango and Penn State Mount Alto. Her acts are booked in locations from the University of Texas to Boston University. She has also made appearances at Clark College in Vancouver, WA and Georgia

Southern University to name a few. Campbell is also featured in the *Life and Style Magazine* and is a favorite at the NACA and APCA Conferences around the country. NACA and APCA are conferences that bring together talents from all areas of entertainment including comedy, music, and spoken word so that college and universities have the opportunity to book numerous acts during one compact weekend.

LEB, who sponsored Jessi Campbell two Fridays ago, is the organization for scheduling a majority of the entertainment that occurs on campus. LEB books music and comedy acts that usually occur on Friday and Saturday nights in Bruno's. LEB is, also, responsible for the weekly movies that play in Reed 117 on Wednesday and Thursday at 9 p.m., and Friday and Saturday at 10 p.m. LEB is open for new members to join. The organization is free of cost and general meetings are held on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Even if incapable of attending the general body meetings on Wednesday, contact Brad Kovalcik at [bck5013@psu.edu](mailto:bck5013@psu.edu) if interested in becoming involved with LEB.

Henry Selick sows up a box office success with *Coraline*

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Following in the footsteps of his previous Oscar nominated film *A Nightmare Before Christmas*, Selick weaves a tale that both scares and entertains on an innocent level. Though it never genuinely scares you, it still makes your heart race as the creepy factor increases exponentially in the film's last hour. It's original, fun, frightening and the best film so far this year.

*Coraline* chronicles the tale of a preteen girl as she moves into a new apartment complex with her emotionally distant parents. She is constantly competing with her parents' jobs for attention and is always sent on bogus errands whenever she gets in the way. After spending some time in her new home, she stumbles across a small door, covered by wallpaper. During the day, the door only opens to a brick wall, but by night it opens a gate to a world that seems like a dream come true. However, as the proverb dictates,

what seems too good to be true usually is.

An oddball cast of characters always keeps the story fresh and brings a chuckle that breaks the evergrowing tension. From the Russian gymnast that lives in the attic to the retired thespians that dwell in the basement, each have their unique quirks and senses of humor that bring laughs you never see coming. In some cases, the humor is so dark and different that it can only really be compared to a distasteful joke. One wouldn't be sure whether or not to laugh of cringe in the aftermath, but usually smiles prevail.

However, as the film enters its halfway point, the tone shifts from a Disney-esque fairy tale to a more *Brothers Grimm* format. The wondrous world that *Coraline* once enjoyed is twisted into a perverse monstrosity filled with danger and fear. It is up to her to save herself and the lives of her loved ones. For being pitched and advertised as a children's movie, it revolves around a lot of death and overly morbid settings.

To be honest, this really seems like a film that would scare any child under the age of ten to death.

The film is also played in 3-D and delivers the effects with great precision. Most previous endeavors into the third dimension flopped thanks to blurred vision and cheap "audience poking," such as *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *Beowulf*, and *Spykids 3-D*. *Coraline*, however, chooses not to throw things into the viewers face, but displays a much more subtle and continuous immersion where everything is popping off the screen. There are no corny 3-D gags of flying objects or things of that nature; just well designed and tasteful displays of the refined technology's power.

*Coraline* has been loved by critics all over the country and is already being considered a classic. This film is definitely worth seeing on the big screen in all its glory. So, pick a day this weekend and check it out while the opportunity is there.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Though advertised as a children's movie, *Coraline* definitely pushes the boundary between what is and is not suitable for children.

## Food For Thought

"Keep your mouth shut and let others think you are stupid, rather than open your mouth and give evidence of the same."

— English proverb