

Poisoned Professor

D.O.A. -
Movie Review
OOO 1/2
by Brett Taylor
Contributing Writer

I've been waiting to see a really bad movie. Reviewers love to get their hands on a piece of trash so they can mercilessly tear it to shreds, invent colorful new metaphors to describe just how bad it is, and make lewd suggestions about the director and the key grip. Unfortunately for bored and repressed reviewers everywhere, D.O.A. is a pretty good movie.

Our hero this time is Dexter Cornell, object of fear and loathing in his university English department, played by Dennis Quaid. We learn from an introductory sequence that he has been poisoned, and has only 24 hours left to track down his killer. So the first half hour has Cornell enrage as many people as possible and drink every liquid substance put in front of him in order to make everyone on earth a possible suspect to the crime. Of course, Cornell can't understand why anyone would want him dead. As he explains, "English professors don't inspire that kind of passion."

As in any murder mystery, some of the prime suspects are provided with a pretty good alibi: they are dead before the second reel. So Cornell, assisted by an adoring student named Sydney (Meg Ryan), finds his investigation turning up more questions than answers as his time ticks away. The plot takes on a great tone of desperation through its gimmick: whether or not Cornell finds his killer and escapes alive, he will be dead within 24 hours.

From the opening credits, we know we are in for something different. The film begins in grainy black and white, and the camera

takes more than a few angles from Late Night with David Letterman. We've got the thrill-cam, the monkey-cam, and the stagger-cam in heavy use here. In the final confrontation, the camera is never once parallel with the floor. When Cornell rolls off the bed, the camera rolls off the bed. When Cornell walks around in a stupor, everything moves in slow motion and the colors all blur together. As the film closes, the colors gradually fade away and we find ourselves back in black and white. Movies rarely get this experimental.

Two shots are particularly striking. When Cornell arrives at his house, he finds that his estranged wife has changed the locks. We look through the thick, colored glass in the door and think we see a struggle, but we can't be sure, because the view is so

distorted. The suspense generated is incredible -- you really have to see it to believe it. Also, the apparent suicide of one of Cornell's students is absolutely haunting. Once again there is a debt to Hitchcock, particularly to his movie, Vertigo. The makers of D.O.A. know how to elicit fear from the audience.

So, what's wrong with this movie? I can't give away the ending, but believe me when I say that it takes quite a bit of imagination to believe the killer's motive. Also, the music, a curious mix of lush strings and electric guitar, varies from being perfect to being wildly inappropriate. At times the movie reduces itself to the level of a poor music video: fight scene=drum machine. Cornell, dazed by the news that he has been poisoned, stumbles through the

streets to the tune of "The Waterboys' 'Don't Bang the Drum.'" The song is great, but it doesn't belong in this movie.

The problems with the plot are mirrored by Cornell's physical and mental state. He lapses into unconsciousness at least a thousand times during his final day of life, and I lost track of his whereabouts at least that many times. In order for him to get around to all of the places he visits in such a small amount of time, the town he lives in must only cover about 50 square yards.

The movie is pretty bad at times, but the heights it reaches are so high that I can overlook the weaknesses in the plot. The makers of this movie were unafraid to experiment, and the result is a powerful blend of action and suspense.

le Pet Peeve

Bryan Ferry
Bete Noire
OOO
by David Friend
Contributing Writer

In the early 1980's, after the thrashing-running-all over the place-crazy punk movement, British acts slowed down to a more somber tempo and feel. This was the so-called Romantic Movement, with one-hit wonders Spandau Ballet and ABC are the leaders in America. But the best band, and perhaps the least known on this side of the Atlantic was Roxy Music. Their music flowed, it was never forced, and their lead singer had an immaculate voice. Bryan Ferry was that lead singer, and his new album, Bete Noire, flows in the same manner. Although overproduced at times, most typically in "Zambe," the album has an overall smooth texture.

What may surprise some is the fact that all of the songs with the exceptions of "Zamba" and "Bete Noire," are extremely danceable. A steady rhythm pushes through "The Right Stuff," Ferry's collaboration with ex-Smith's guitarist Johnny Marr has a smooth exterior. "Kiss and Tell" may be the most commercial track off this album. Not only is it on this album, but also on the Soundtrack of Michael J. Fox's new movie, "Bright Lights, Big City." This song has a very sharp hook on it that will keep people listening to it for a while.

What does not surprise the listener is his choice of lyrics. They are dealing exclusively with relationships ("Name of the Game"), love ("seven Deadly Sins"), or frustrated love - as in "Kiss and Tell", he sings, "Your Lips are Moving/But I Will Never Know/What They Mean." This is the reason most people will continue to lump Ferry in with the old "Romantic" mold. But musically, he is moving on. More complex arrangements, more use of electric guitar, and a heavier beat

distinguishes his music from Roxy music.

The only real flaw in this album is the fact that Ferry seemingly has trouble writing ballads. "The Name of the Game" is an excellent ballad, but is too glossed over by production. The other two ballads, "Zamba" and "Bete Noire" are good songs, at the end of each side, but are a let-down for the listener with the excellent up-beat earlier songs.

Overall, Bryan Ferry's "Bete Noire" is a good album, with mostly good tracks. It is his best album since Roxy Music, but it will be interesting to see where he goes from here. He could put all this in the Dark Ages as his "formative" years.

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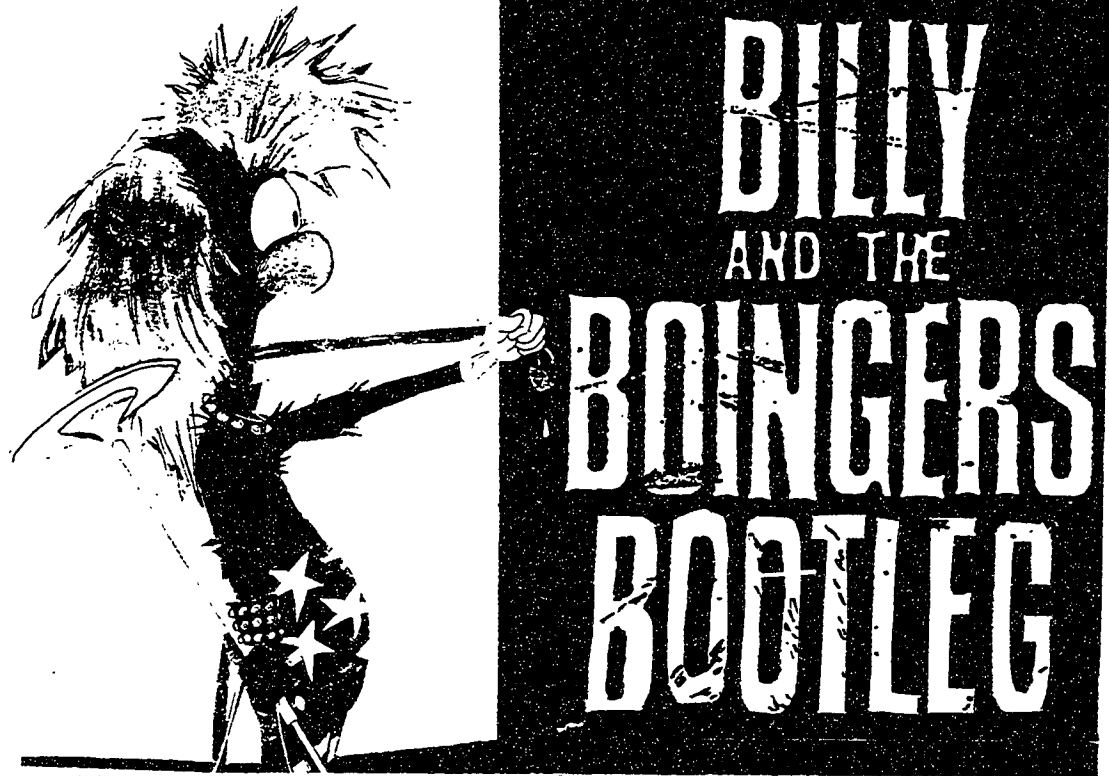
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Billy and the Boingers-
Bootleg
OOOO
by Chevy Metal
Contributing Writer

Billy and the Boingers released a remix version of their hit album, Bootleg. Steve Dallas, the manager and producer, says, "This album is the hottest in Heavy Metal disco." A year ago Steve, an ex-lawyer organized one of the most original bands in heavy metal history. The band consists of Steve himself on guitars and lead vocalizing and socializing; Wild Bill Cat, Tongue Twangin' and head bangin'; Opus Croakus on Electric Tuba, Mouth Harps and Sweethearts; and Hodge-Podge on Skins, Squints and Creme Rinse.

Billy and the Boingers got their start under the name Death Tongue but were forced to change it to their present name after being subpoenaed by the Parents Music Resource Counter. The PMRC found their name not particularly conducive to positive, christian, all-american thought in our nation's youth. They accused their songs of leading teens into prostitution,

pregnancy, drug use, cults, runaways, suicide and poor hygiene.

This band if far from being guilty of doing any of this. On the flip side of "Demon Drooler in the Sewer" is a song called "Hell's Bells." A nationally known columnist found that if you play this song backwards it says, "Goo To Church . . . Saay Yoour Prayers."

Although Wild Bill Cat is known for biting the head off a live roach on stage, I find their music quite relaxing. If you look past their lipstick and panty hose and listen to their lyrics, you'll find that the band consists of a bunch of sensitive guys. One of my favorite songs on the album is "U-STINK-BUT-I-LOVE-U." Wild Bill Cat wrote these sensitive lyrics that just make me melt when I hear them, "When I Got You in My Backseat/And I Tried to Make My Move/I Had to Roll Down All the Windows/To Keep My Face From Turning Blue/You Make Me Sick/You Really Stink Girl/You Make Me Sick!...But I Luuv You." Also there is an incredible tuba solo in the middle of this song by Opus Croakus which

demonstrates excellent syncopation, innovation, modulation, annihilation and most of all disintegration.

Billy and the Boingers are quickly moving up the charts and are finally being recognised as being competitors to top name acts such as Bruce Springsteen, Madonna and Bruce Willis. U2's guitarist, the Edge once said, "We think they're great. In a grand, mystical, neopolitical sense, these guys have a real message in their music. They don't, however, have neat names like me and Bono." Tammy Faye Bakker loves them and once remarked, "I don't know what 'boinging' is, but I'll bet Jim does."

This album is one of the best heavy metal compositions written since Twisted Sister's last album. I suggest that any heavy metal enthusiast should unglue their eyes from MTV, get off the streets, get a job and buy a copy of Bootleg.

"And three years down the track/We'll be a Las Vegas Lounge Act/We'll Be Back/We'll Be Back, 'Cus We're the Boingers" (lyrics from "I'm A Boinger", Booleg).

CAMPUS CONCERT CORNER

Apr. 1 Billy and the Boingers at Behrend College, Erie.
3 Terence Trent D'Arby at Syria Mosque, Pitts.
5 David Lee Roth and Poison at Civic Center, Erie.
5 Kinks at Coliseum, Cleveland.
6 Flesh For Lulu at Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh.
7 Expose at Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh.
9, 10 Oak Ridge Boys at Front Row, Cleveland.
14 David Lee Roth and Poison at Cleveland.
15 Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers at Hanna Theatre, Cleveland.
16 Tiffany at Warner Theater, Erie (Two Shows).
18 Icehouse and Men Without Hats at Phantasy Theatre, Cleveland.
23 The Statler Brothers and Holly Dunn at Civic Center, Erie.
26 Love and Rockets and Mighty Lemon Drops at Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh.
27 Love and Rockets at Hanna Theatre, Cleveland.
May 7 White Snake and Great White at Memorial Aud., Buffalo.
13 Pink Floyd at Toronto.
15 Pink Floyd at Philadelphia.
15 AC/DC and L.A. Guns at Civic Arena, Pittsburgh.

Close Lobsters; British Underground

Foxheads Stalk
This Land
OO 1/2
by David Friend
Contributing Writer

O.K., so I listen to obscure music. Fortunately one of my favorite music shows, SNUB (a program on USA Network's Night Flight showcases British underground groups twice a month) was on during Spring Break. The Close Lobsters were on, and I was immediately impressed.

Last Friday I withstood an hour of the male side of Perry hoping to catch another SNUB show. Yet again, the Close Lobsters were on. Last Saturday, I spotted their tape in a record store and luckily I had the \$10 I needed to

get the only copy they had. I've listened to it for the past week. This band has the talent and the creativity to be one of the greatest bands since the Sex Pistols.

Definitely influenced by the punk era, the Close Lobsters, though, prefer a more controlled guitar style. Still, thrashing about is not foreign to them, as evidence in "Pathetic." The percussion is loud and uncompromising. No hexagonal electronic drums here, just some madman hitting some animal skins HARD! The bass lines compliment the driving rhythms perfectly. Lyrically they must improve, although "Oh I Had a Dead Body in My Mouth/What Could I Do but Spit It Out?/Oh I Had a Sewer Pipe Down My Throat/What Could I Do but Watch

You Choke?" has a quaint ring to it. They also have some quality lyrics.

"I Kiss the Flower in Bloom" and especially "A Prophecy" shows the Close Lobsters' excellent potential. "A Prophecy" has a good guitar lick with steady, slow drums. Towards the end, the tempo slowly, almost imperceptibly, speeds up, heightening the song's moody effect. But they should not evade the interesting musical ideas they explore in "In Spite of These Times", "Foxheads", and "Mother of God" for a formulaic approach. What the Close Lobsters seem to be most about is seemingly conflicting styles, (heavy drums and bass, quiet guitar, and mostly good, horrid lyrics) that mesh together to produce a pleasing, likeable sound that catches ahold of people. The Close Lobsters seem to be drawing from punk influences and post-punk ideas, with a Smiths-sounding guitar in their better tracks. But most of all, they make it work. Although I don't recommend this album for people who want to buy music they instantly like, people who want to listen to an innovative, emerging band whose force will be felt well into the 1990's should scarf this one up, it's good.

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