

MOVIE REVIEW

# Bright Lights, Big City

by Brett Taylor  
Collegian Staff Writer

It took two years and just as many directors, but Jay McInerney's novel, *Bright Lights, Big City*, finally made it to the big screen. My friend Roy, who read the book and is thus an authority on the subject, thought the movie was overwhelmingly not bad. I have to agree, mainly because I don't remember enough about the movie to argue the point.

I'm not saying that *Bright Lights, Big City* is bad - it wasn't interesting enough to be bad. It's just sort of there. By the time the credits roll up the screen you realize that the only people who have had a good time are the evil, shallow, coke-snorting lounge lizards we're supposed to find so repulsive.

Michael J. Fox stars as Jamie Conway, an aspiring young writer who has taken a job as a research editor at Gotham magazine. I don't call him an aspiring writer because he isn't going anywhere: he has never had anything published, and he continually lets down his employer by making mistakes and coming in late. It seems the only thing he can do well is snort Bolivian Marching Powder in the unisex restrooms of New York dance clubs.

Michael J. Fox's acting is strong throughout this movie; however, I couldn't believe that his character had already graduated from college, left two jobs, and gotten married as well. Fox, who is approximately the same age as the character in the book, doesn't look old enough to get into

these clubs he haunts night after night. No matter how well he portrays his character, his appearance betrays the film's credibility.

Maybe this problem is just a symptom of *Less Than Zero* syndrome. Like Andrew McCarthy in his Just-Say-No rule, Fox is too easily made the film's hero, turning his back on the false values of the corrupt city in favor of absolutism and self-righteousness. In the space of a few frames, Jamie suddenly realizes that his friend Tad (lost boy Keifer Sutherland), not himself, is to blame for his drug habit. Jamie's not a bad boy after all, just misguided. Frankly, I thought the evil Tad was far more likeable than Jamie. "Society did this to me" Conway.



A great performance is given by Swoozie Kurtz as a secretary at Gotham magazine who tries to cover up for Jamie's mistakes. Also worth watching is Jason Robards as an alcoholic ex-writer. I've always hated Robards before, and I watched ABC's *The Day After* just to see the guy get nuked. He makes a really interesting figure here, though his character just kind of disappears halfway through the movie. And Diane Wiest, who looked so much like a dying cancer victim in *The Lost Boys*, actually gets to play a dying cancer victim here.

The movie hits some dazzling lows at times. Beware of some really cheap crotch humor involving a ferret. Also, interspersed throughout See *Bright Lights*, pg. 6

## Review Ratings

- Poor
- Average
- Above Average
- Excellent

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MUSIC REVIEW

# Jerry Harrison - Casual Gods

○○○ 1/2

by David Friend  
Contributing Writer

For the past 14 years, the Talking Heads have been hailed as one of the most creative bands around. It was always thought that David Byrne was the creative genius of the band with Jerry Harrison, Tina Weymouth, and Chris Frantz as good musicians fulfilling Byrne's vision. But *Casual Gods*, Harrison's second solo album, shows that Byrne is not the only creative genius in the Talking Heads. With musicians who play with the Talking Heads on tour, Harrison creates a striking, innovative album that becomes

"...Byrne is not the only creative genius in the Talking Heads."

more enjoyable with each listening.

What you immediately hear from the beginning of "Rev It Up" to the last polyrhythmic bars of "Bobby" is an amazing amount of funk. But not funk in a traditional sense. A lilting guitar in "Rev It Up" provides the song's basis, with drums and bass following the beat. The production of the album is perfect-balancing the ability of the performers with the overall vision of the song. The only problem Harrison has, albeit a small one, is

with his lyrical sensibilities. All the vocals fit in with the music of the song, but sometimes just do not make sense.

Imagination is the operative force behind this album. "Cherokee Chief" has a riff in it that any good guitarist would be proud to have created. But Harrison uses it as a synth riff. Not only that riff, but the entire structure of the song is twisted. Harrison uses the tried and true verse-chorus verse-chorus, etc. structure on one or two songs at the most. "Man with a Gun" has this structure, but Harrison uses the structure extremely well. It has a swaying rhythm coupled with a restrained guitar that fades in and out of the song. What is most

impressive about the song is the fact that you will hear the chorus for hours after listening to the song. Even though the rest of the album is quite good, "Man with a Gun" stands out as a 50 carat diamond in a treasure chest.

The most that can be said about this album, though, is that it can be played again and again. There are no tacky pop cliches running throughout the album. Each time you listen to the album, new things appear in it. But the true quality of the album only really evidents itself after repeated listenings. My copy is almost worn out, and I still cannot put it down. I believe that must be happening a lot with this album.

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## CAMPUS CONCERT CORNER

- Apr. 14 Screaming Blue Messiahs at Buffalo State Univ.
- 14 David Lee Roth and Poison at Cleveland.
- 14, 15 Tiffany at Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh.
- 15 Richard Marx at Robert Morrison College, Pitts.
- 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.
- 21 Screaming Blue Messiahs at Pea Body's Down-under, 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 5 Midnight Oil and House of Freaks at Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh.
- 5 Ted Nugent and Lita Ford at Syria Mosque, Pitts.
- 7 White Snake and Great White at the Aud., Buffalo.
- 11 The Smithereens and Walking Clampetts at Phantasy Theater, Lakewood Ohio.
- 12 The BoDeans at Phantasy Niteclub, Lakewood Ohio.
- 13 Bill Cosby at Civic Arena, Pittsburgh.
- 13 Pink Floyd at Toronto.
- 15 Pink Floyd at Philadelphia.
- 15 AC/DC and L.A. Guns at Civic Arena, Pittsburgh.
- 20-22 Bill Cosby at the Front Row, Cleveland.
- 23 Belinda Carlisle and Bourgeois Tagg at Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh.
- 25 Manhattan Transfer at Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh.
- 27 AC/DC and White Lion at Richfield Coliseum, Cleveland.
- 28 Pink Floyd at Ohio Stadium, Columbus.
- 30 Pink Floyd at Three Rivers Stadium, Pittsburgh.
- June 25 Van Halen's Monsters of Rock at Municipal Stadium, Cleveland.

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— David Ansen, NEWSWEEK

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