

TOM'S TOMFOOLERY OF CINEMA

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Team America World Police ****

Paramount Pictures presents a film directed by Trey Parker. Written by Trey Parker and Matt Stone. Featuring the voices of Trey Parker and Matt Stone. Running time 98 minutes. Rated R for offensive language, graphic non-stop violence, and gratuitous sexuality all involving puppets.

As a film connoisseur living my life in the glories of cinema, I have always wondered what would be the most offensive film I would ever see. Congratulations to Trey Parker and Matt Stone for reaching that feat, and making the film with puppets.

For those who do not know, Parker and Stone are the duo who created South Park. This

film is offensive, crude, and violent, and also one of the funniest films, if not THE funniest film, of this year. The story deals with an elite squad of freedom fighters whose home base happens to be Mount Rushmore. The team recruits a Broadway actor to disguise as an insider so he can infiltrate the terrorists and find out what their next target will be. As it turns out Kim Jong IL, leader of North Korea, has secretly developed weapons of mass destruction and plans to use them at a peace conference hosted by the Film Actors' Guild (note the acronym) to wipe out the world leaders. It is up to Team America to save the world.

The use of puppets is both hilarious and impressive. It reminded me of my youth and being an avid fan of The Thunderbirds, which was essentially the same plot without the political connotations and the sex. This film is essentially what Jerry Bruckheimer would produce but

stars puppets instead of Nicolas Cage or Bruce Willis. Parker even got composer Harry Gregson-Williams to compose the score to the film, a frequent composer for Bruckheimer productions. The film starts with a cheesy puppet street show with an obviously fake Paris backdrop and pans up to reveal a Paris setting as realistic as can be achieved without actually being there.

Parker also wrote songs and lyrics for the characters to sing besides the main theme song for Team America. Parker spared no expense with the equipment; the team had supersonic jets, boats, submarines, and a custom miniature Hummer for transportation. Team America World Police got their information from a super computer whose acronym spelled out I.N.T.E.L.L.I.G.E.N.C.E.

The dialogue from the terrorists and villains is when most of the offensive material occurs. The

terrorists' language, as well as Kim Jong IL attempting to speak English, is stereotypical and downright insulting. Needless to say, the film works with the material, and the puppets show on their faces realistic emotion that even real actors could not achieve.

The pitch to Paramount Pictures from Parker and Stone must have been hilarious and should be worth mentioning on a DVD track when released. This film is in no way, shape, or form suitable for children. Try to not even hint at its existence until they are in college. To accurately explain the film, follow this simple recipe. Take one part Bruckheimer, mix two parts of political and social issues currently under discussion in the world. Add three parts offensive material about everyone on the planet, bake for 100 minutes and sit back and enjoy the laughter.

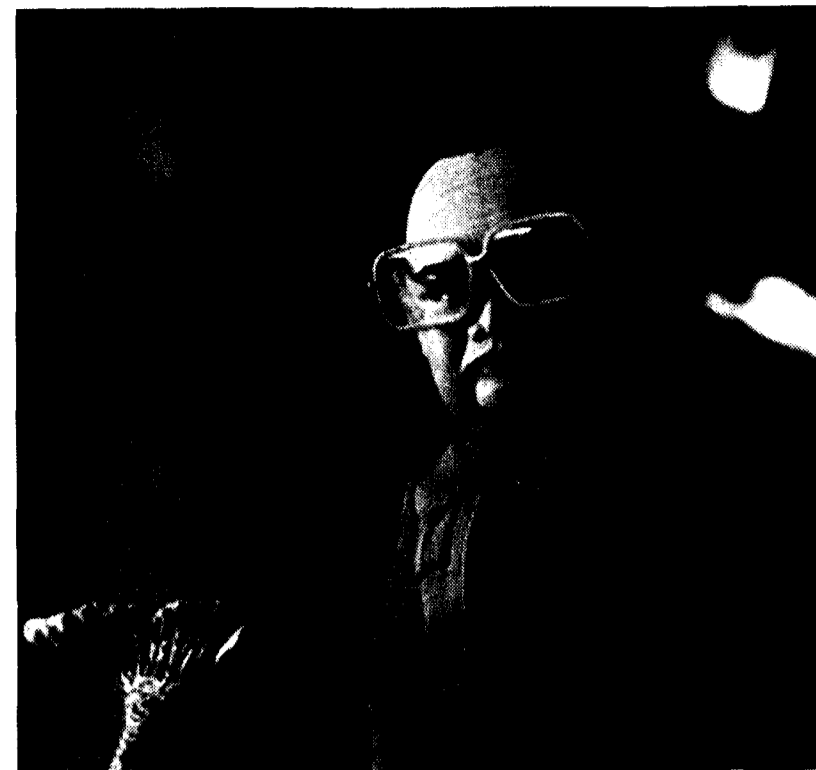


Photo courtesy of Yahoo Images

North Korea's Prime Minister Kim Jong IL is angered by the presence of U.N Weapons Inspector Hans Blix. Both Jong IL and Blix are portrayed as puppets in "Team America World Police."

Punk band Green Day puts on lively show

By Alyson Davis
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Men and women, young and old, piercings, tattoos and different colored hairstyles lined the sidewalks of the Giant Center on Tuesday night October 26th. What do all these people have in common? They came to see three well-known bands in the punk rock world today. Sugarcult and New Found Glory were the opening bands for the one and only Green Day, who paid a visit to Hershey.

Lead singer/guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong, accompanied with bassist Mike Dirnt and drummer Tre Cool delivered a remarkable and interesting performance leaving their adoring fans screaming for more. The band came with their own saxophonist and trombonist, or as I like to call them their "Horn Section."

Sugarcult performed first. They are a fairly new band to the punk rock world and created the mood for the concert. They delivered a nice harmonious short set consisting of only a few songs. One of which being their latest single, "She's the Blade." The sense of energy was lacking from the band, but the crowd definitely made up for it.

New Found Glory followed, giving the performance of a lifetime, or that's what they wanted you to think. They were too loud and

with the acoustics in the Giant Center you could only make out every third word in their songs. They did have a lot more energy compared to the earlier band. Singer Jordan Pundik got the crowd motivated and got everyone in the mood for Green Day to finally take the stage.

Green Day was definitely the band to see. As for me, I am not a fan of punk rock, but I was very impressed with their performance and if asked to another concert by Green Day would definitely go again in a heartbeat. They opened the show with

tracks from their new CD "American Idiot," which ranks 11th on the Billboard 200 list. The first half of the show was mostly geared toward the tracks on their new CD. The mood changed with every song. It went from snotty, to downhearted, to cheerful. Songs played in the first half were "I Don't Care," "Tales of Another Broken Home," "Dearly Beloved," and "Jesus of Suburbia."

Throughout the entire concert the sound was much more clear compared to the earlier performing bands. Armstrong's vocal

excellence and staying power bounded on extraordinary.

The second half of the concert consisted of Green Day's greatest hits along with tracks that were previously recorded by other artists. It was at this time audience members were chosen from the crowd to come up and play the instruments to basically put on their own concert. Armstrong picked from the crowd a guitarist, drummer, and bassist to fill the shoes of him and his bandmates. The gentlemen chosen kept the rhythm, melody, and the over-all energy alive. The transition from professionals to amateurs was to my surprise flawless and the audience members who performed did a great job. At the very end the band did the unthinkable. The audience members chosen at random got to keep the instruments they performed with. Talk about making their day.

Green Day wrapped up their performance with "Basket Case" followed by the oldies favorite "Shout." They ended the performance as though it was the beginning with all the energy they had from the start. It felt as if you were listening to the end of the "American Idiot" CD. The band ended their show with "Homecoming," "Nobody Likes You," and "We're Coming Home Again."

And we thought the night was ending! The boys came back on stage for a twenty-minute



Photos courtesy of Google Images

(left to right) Tre Cool, Billie Joe Armstrong and Mike Dirnt make up Green Day, who recently released a new CD, "American Idiot."

encore. The band performed "Boulevard of Broken Dreams" and "Minority." They followed these two performances with none other than "We Are the Champions" and made their huge hit song "Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)" the very last song of the night.

This was by far one of the best concerts I have ever seen, and one of the best concerts ever performed at the Giant Center. Green Day has raised a bar so high that the two opening bands never had a chance competing with them; they gave meaning to the saying, "saving the best for last!" Green Day had fireworks,

exploding flash pots, and confetti to make their show just that much better. The crowd really got into it. Everyone was on his or her feet the entire time. The crowd on the floor was either in a mosh pit or was body surfing through the crowds to the waiting security officers on the other ends of the gates - all in all a fabulous night at the Giant Center spent with Green Day. This concert opened my eyes and I have actually gone out and bought my first punk rock CD. I recommend if you ever get the chance to do something out of the ordinary, DO IT!



Punk band Green Day recently played a concert at the Giant Center with fellow bands Sugarcult and New Found Glory

PURE VALUE.

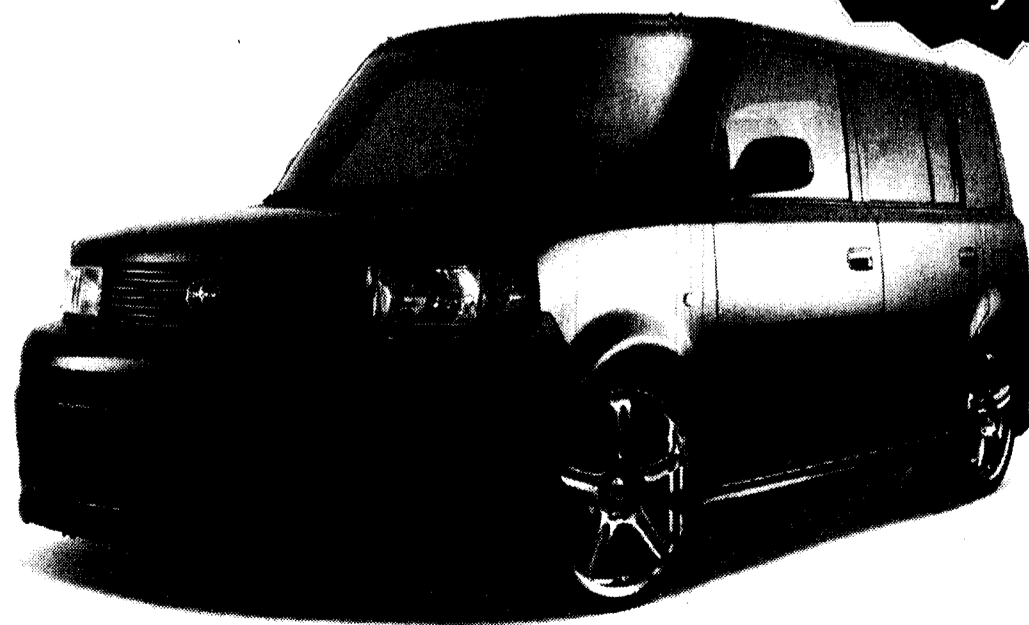
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