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Kellye's SOUND WAYVES

By Kellye Way
Staff Reporter
kjw203@psu.edu

Artist: Gwen Stefani
Album:
Love Angel Music Baby
Release Date: 11/23/04
Number of Tracks: 12
Rating: ***

Punk-Ska band No Doubt was never afraid to wander off of the beaten mainstream musical path, but Gwen Stefani has proved that she is able to wander way off. For her first solo album, Gwen collaborated with a number of different artists including Linda Perry, Andre 3000 of Outkast, Dr. Dre, Eve, and the Neptunes. The end result of this musical car crash sounds more like a freaky mixed CD rather than a multi-platinum artist's solo album. The majority of the collection sounds like a blend of cool Asian pop and something reminiscent of Aqua's "Barbie Girl."

Love Angel Music Baby takes listeners along Gwen's journey to really find herself as a solo artist and it seems to take her in every direction except for her rock roots in No Doubt. With a blaring neon feel and eclectically energized beats, many tracks on this album are hard to classify. The Neptunes collaboration produced "Hollaback Girl," a weird song/cheer/rap jumble, followed by the track "Cool" which sounds more like a revival from 80's princesses Debbie Gibson or Taylor Dayne. In one aspect, it is interesting to see the number of ways that one artist can be portrayed in one album, but it doesn't give listeners a sense of who the artist really is at heart. Gwen is already enjoying success from this album by her first singles "What You Waiting For?" and more recently, "Rich Girl" featuring Eve. As the musical spectrum continues to evolve in 2005, Gwen Stefani will most likely be at the forefront of these exciting, and sometimes chaotic, changes.

Over the years, we have seen Gwen Stefani reinvent herself in true Madonna fashion. She has always marched to the beat of her own drum, but her solo album sounds like she's trying to keep up with her circus of producers and do a little something to please everyone.

If you're looking for something different in the after-Christmas music slump, try Love Angel Music Baby, but if you'd rather wish to remember Gwen in her No Doubt glory days, don't feel bad about skipping over this one. All Music Guide critic Stephen Erlewine remarks on Gwen's album by saying, "Nevertheless, even if it doesn't work all the time -- and some of its best tracks still have moments that induce a withering cringe -- it's a glitzy, wild ride that's stranger and often more entertaining than nearly any other mainstream pop album of 2004."

Entertainment

Spice Up Your Life

By Elizabeth Wingate
Staff Reporter
eaw191@psu.edu

It is not often that one wanders into a restaurant and is immediately enchanted by the sight. Restaurants, like people, are most intriguing when they possess a great deal of character and substance; a trifled concoction whose nuanced layers unfold with each visit, repeatedly drawing the diner back for more. Big cities boast such places by the hundreds, but it is a true delight to discover an authentic culinary experience locally at Thai Palace in Camp Hill.

In the early darkness of evening, candles flicker at intimate tables dressed with emerald cloths set with bamboo-patterned china. The golden light dances across the temples of a gleaming Buddha, his meditative posture nestled amidst leafy plants that discreetly separate tables and evoke the lushness of an Ulthai Thani jungle. Seemingly transported, patrons may wish they had stopped at the bank to change some dollars into Baht as they breathe air perfumed by the clean, intoxicating aroma of lemongrass and Thai basil; yet the atmosphere is one that both Thais and Central Pennsylvanians alike will find inviting.

The presence behind this lovely establishment is just as refreshing as the place itself, if not unexpected. At 28, Phaviny Phouasalith (Bebe to friends), is already a veteran of the restaurant business, a fact belied by her fresh-faced elegance and unruffled persona. Phouasalith was born in Laos and then immigrated to Thailand before settling in Detroit with her family in the early eighties. After operating a successful Thai restaurant in Detroit for several years, the Phouasalith family relocated to Harrisburg, where they opened Bangkok House restaurant on

Hartzdale Drive in Mechanicsburg.

Phouasalith learned the intricacies of Thai cooking from her father, Lenh, and later began experimenting with the cuisine's broad range of flavors while maintaining her appetite for "real" food. "I have a passion for fresh, authentic, yet different food," said Phouasalith, who assumed control of Thai Palace

introduction to a variety of Thai dishes and is available for take-out.

Food with an emphasis on freshness and quality requires little adornment, and a simple salad of young green papaya tossed with tamarind, lime juice, tomatoes, and hot pepper is a splendid counterpoint to a luscious peanut and chicken curry infused with lemongrass, galan-

sautéed in coconut milk with red curry, bell pepper, bamboo shoots, and fresh basil can pack a bit of punch (spiciness can be altered according to individual preference), while a medley of shrimp, scallops, squid and mussels (Pad Prig) is heightened by a mellow infusion of red onion, lemongrass, lime leaves, and basil. A green curry loaded with vegetables is so subtle that one

Singha or other adult beverage for a great accompaniment.

Well-known, much-loved Thai dishes such as Pad Thai (rice noodles stir fried in tamarind sauce with egg, green onions, bean sprouts and peanuts), egg rolls, chicken Masaman, and Woon Sen Pad Pak (steamed or stir fried glass noodles with tofu, bamboo shoots and vegetables) are all on the menu, and men everywhere will sigh with pleasure when they see that (Thai) hot wings are also available. Thai Palace offers catering and take-out and delivery of its menu.

The former Siam is a mélange of verdant islands, tropical jungles, breathtaking temples and people whose hallmark is their gentle kindness. From the ancient Mons who are believed to have constituted Thailand's first civilization, to the Burmese invaders of the 16th and 18th centuries, to its current status as a constitutional monarchy with His Majesty King Bhumipol Adulyadej serving as head of state, Thailand is a land of many facets, and nowhere is this better observed than through its cuisine.

Thai Palace embraces the subtleties of this vibrant, multifarious place with restraint and élan, and after a few mouthfuls, so will the diner.

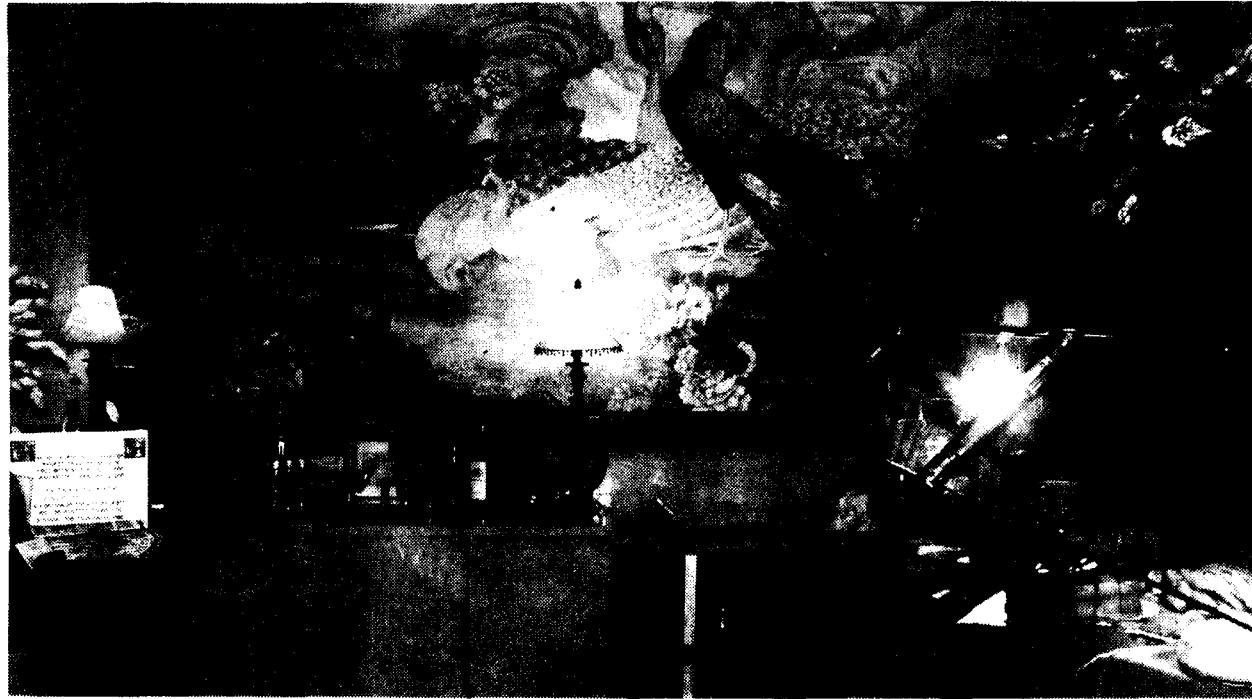


Photo by Sharon Furlaro/Capital Times

The Thai Palace offers an exotic atmosphere, as customers dine among orchids, palm fronds and beautiful artwork.

in July 2004 and serves as the restaurant's chef. "I hope to create an experience that encourages diners to sample all that Thai cuisine offers."

Phouasalith provides diners with more than enough incentive to try unfamiliar dishes. Thai Palace offers a tasteful lunch buffet that changes regularly and features a plethora of traditional Thai salads, curries, noodle and stir-fry dishes that satisfy both the timid and the adventurous. The buffet, a very reasonable \$8.95, is an excellent

palette-whetting appetizer of thinly sliced roasted duck (Yum Ped Yung) gently seasoned with ginger and Thai herbs or the crispy tofu with a refreshing peanut-cucumber sauce (Tofu Tod) will, along with a steaming bowl of lemongrass soup (Tom Yum Gai) or chicken coconut milk soup (Tom Kha Gai), provide an ideal start to a memorable meal.

The menu offers many engaging curries in a rainbow of colors and flavors. Tender beef lightly

cannot discern where the hint of lime leaves and galanga begins and the earthy sweetness of basil ends.

A deliciously crisp whole fish (Pla Lard Prig) cloaked in stir-fried mushrooms, onion, carrots, scallions and basil is a pleasing choice, as is the smoked chili chicken sautéed with broccoli, scallions, bamboo shoots, and carrot dressed with the vaguely haunting essence of smoked chili. Grilled barbeque chicken with a generous portion of sticky rice is fantastic- bring your own

THAI PALACE RESTAURANT
3608 MARKET STREET
(ACROSS FROM DAIRY QUEEN)
CAMP HILL, PA 17011
(717) 763-8800

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A champion for local bands

By John Fox
Staff Reporter
jtf153@psu.edu

For many years, punk and hardcore bands indigenous to the Harrisburg area had virtually no local venues in which to play. Going out to see a punk band usually meant taking a drive to Philadelphia, Jersey - basically anywhere but Harrisburg. In spite of the lack of local punk clubs, the Harrisburg punk and hardcore scenes were able to stay alive and even thrive due to dedicated bands, musicians and scensters who for years were forced to throw shows in places like rented-out fire halls, VFW's basements and back yards.

One such dedicated musician is Tony Bavaria. A guitarist for local favorite The Commercials, Bavaria is a veteran of the Harrisburg area punk scene. He also started an indie club called The Champion Ship in June 2004. Bavaria co-owns the club with his brother Chris and friend Colby Black. All three have a band of their own called Those Who Remain. Located at Hoover Plaza in Lemoyne, The

Champion Ship is frequented by local and national indie bands of all styles.

"We'd all been booking shows in the area for a long time," said Bavaria. "We'd done stuff at clubs, fire halls, wherever we could. The Wire in New Cumberland was doing shows for a while, but they closed. Then many of the local fire halls we did shows at stopped doing shows, so there was a lack of venues in the area. Bavaria explained how he came upon the decision to open up his own club. "We just took the next logical step and opened our own place. We're all big supporters of the local music scene, and we wanted a place for bands to be able to develop, but we also wanted to be able to continue to bring in national acts."

The opening of The Champion Ship is probably the most important contribution ever made to the Harrisburg punk and hardcore scene. The venue provides a legitimate venue for struggling local punk and hardcore bands. "Yeah, we were some of those same kids," said Bavaria, "It feels good. It's a lot of work

though. I don't know if people realize how much work it is to run a place like this. We knew that going into it, and we do this because we love it. We've all grown up with punk and hardcore... it's our whole life."

This is the climate in which all local punk and hardcore bands had to overcome to create and

maintain their own scene: When somebody mentions going out to see a band in Harrisburg, images of an unoriginal bar band doing covers or trying hard to sound like "modern rock" come to mind. Although there has been significant improvement in the last ten years, Harrisburg is not considered a cultural Mecca,

and is certainly not known for its music.

Because most residents of the area are still uninformed on matters of punk and hardcore, some speculate if a scene even exists in Harrisburg. "There is a scene for sure," he said. "There's a ton of

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CHAMPION SHIP CD'S & RECORDS

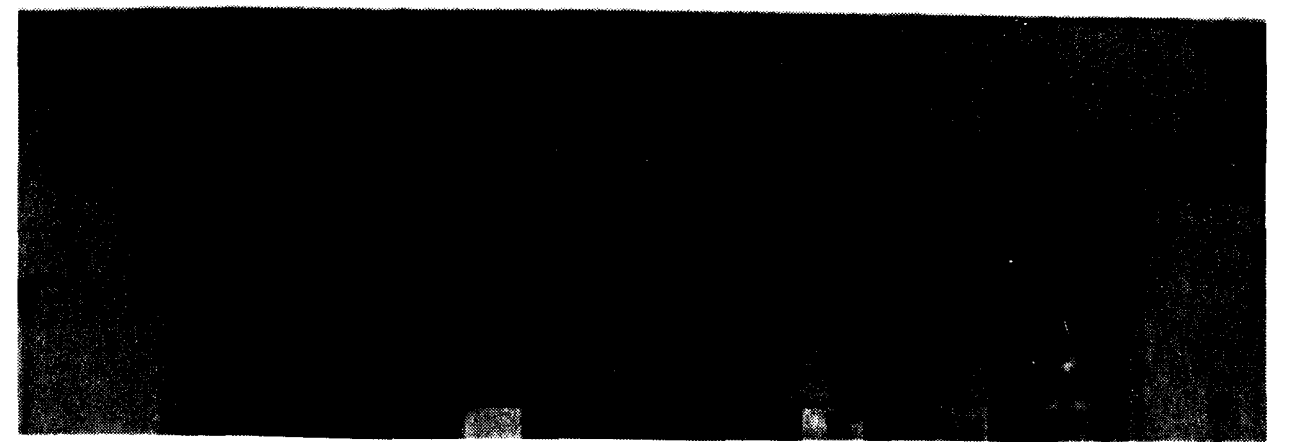


Photo by John Fox/Capital Times

The Champion Ship, located in Lemoyne, is frequented by indie bands from both the local and national scene.