

entertainment

Fall of Troy rise again on 'Horizon'

By DYLAN JOHNSON
STAFF WRITER
DJJ5043@PSU.EDU

Progressive, hardcore veterans The Fall of Troy have released their latest album. *"Phantom on the Horizon,"* which will knock your teeth out over and over again. This selection of songs might be their best yet.

The concept behind the album follows the voyage of a Spanish galleon and the events that occur when it meets a ghost ship from an alternate dimension. From the opening build-up to the closing breakdown, the Mukilteo, Wash, three-piece's music does not let the listener down while it takes them on a story told through the mind of The Fall of Troy.

Five years ago, front man Thomas Erak began composing material for an early EP known as *"The Ghost ship Demos."* However, the songs were put on the backburner in order for the band to complete their full-length release *"Doppelganger."*

Now, after five years, Erak has

brought back the *"Ghost ship"* back from the dead. The deck has been swabbed, the sails set, and there is even a new crew on board.

"Phantom on the Horizon" opens up with "Chapter I: Introverting Dimensions". The guitar tones paint an atmosphere of thick fog, black water, and life aboard the seven seas. After a three-minute crescendo, the thunderous drums of Andrew Forsman beware the listener of the stormy seas ahead. From that point on, there is no turning back.

The song does not follow the structure of a standard song. It is divided up into segments that rise and fall with the events of the story. For example, as the Galleon is being attacked, a climactic guitar solo breaks through and single-handedly destroys the ship. After the chaos, the music slows down as if being pulled underwater. Seamlessly, the track ends and the next begins.

"Chapter II: A Strange Conversation" furthers the story

along telling about the crew's encounter in unfamiliar territory. They have been whisked into a realm where reality is not what they once knew. Here, The Fall of Troy utilizes the new talent of bassist Frank Black. He and Erak trade vocals as if they were the characters. This technique is one that I enjoy throughout the album.

As the listener moves onto the keystone of the album, "Chapter III: Nostalgic Mannerisms", they will hear a brand new composition from The Fall of Troy. This track also includes my favorite moment of the

entire album. Erak launches into a frenzied riff on his guitar that does not seem to end. His technicality is paramount to any guitar playing I have heard in my life. The rising action of the entire album culminates halfway through "Chapter III," and after a short resolution, panic mode sets in.

The opening guitar of "Chapter IV: Enter the Black Demon" gives a sense of urgency that is also reflected in the lyrics, "I hear that dark masked voice that I thought I only dreamt about/It tells all of my fears to everyone else."

Black's vocal work on this song is classic hardcore. He belts out intense exclamations of, "MURDER!" which contrasts Erak's high-pitched shrill of mercy. The Captain pleads to no avail and finally accepts his defeat in a calming of music that transitions the album to set up its finale, "Chapter V: The Walls Bled Lust".

After a raw twanging of strings, the song picks up into a catchy verse riddled with tones of acceptance and compromise that "this is just not me/ at this point you see/ we are finally satisfactory." Erak tells us that the only thing left for the Captain to do is "pick up the pieces". Then, all hell breaks loose. The band leaves the listener with an in-your-face breakdown that is sure to make the earth tremble. It is the unexpected and unsettling conclusion that only The Fall of Troy could pull off.

"X" marks the spot on *"Phantom on the Horizon"* and The Fall of Troy just dug up gold.



Photo courtesy of PODBOP.ORG

In defense of 'Twilight'

By AMY KIRBY
STAFF WRITER
AMK407@PSU.EDU

The Twilight saga for teens has swept the nation. The saga was written by Stephenie Meyer, and is a modern Romeo and Juliet tale with an unexpected twist. How do a vampire and mortal co-exist without one destroying the other? This is what "Twilight," "New Moon," "Eclipse," and "New Dawn" explore.

According to *USA Today's* "Top 100 Books of 2008," the Twilight saga holds the first four slots. The first book, "Twilight," was recently made into a major motion picture, which according to Ew.com grossed 70.6 million dollars.

By writing the book in first person perspective Meyer was able to explore a young adult's mind and inner workings. The



Photo courtesy of FANPOP.COM

story starts with a young adult, Isabella Swan, "Bella," leaving her mother's home in Phoenix, Arizona and moving to Forks, Washington. Bella describes Forks as a place where the sun rarely shines and the normal weather forecast often includes rain.

It is in Forks where she encounters the Cullens, a family of "vegetarian vampires" opting to hunt animals rather than humans to quench their "thirst." Carlisle Cullen is the father of the family, and the youngest of the Cullens is Edward, who captures Bella's attention the most.

At first Bella and Edward's relationship seems like a roller coaster of emotions and adventure. From when Bella first understands what the Cullens are, to them trying to be "human," to the suspenseful chase of James, a tracker, whose specialty is the hunt.

Not only is the first book "Twilight" full of suspenseful scenes, but it also depicts typical teen emotions and hormones across each page.

The last three books are equally fascinating as Bella begins to encounter werewolves, and the relationship they have with the vampires living on their back door steps.

Bella also discovers an ancient clan of vampires that live in Italy, who seem to be the royalty of all vampires.

The Twilight saga is a series for those who are not faint of heart. It is full of adventure with the right amount of romance to balance the book.