

Code:Blue

By: Kelly Anne Walch and Tom Harrison

On Friday, February 12, while snow, ice, and bitter winds whipped through the campus, a small yet captivated audience of lunch patrons-turned-blues enthusiasts basked in the sultry sounds of Code:Blue. This innovative band is made up of Bob "Robo" Vaughn and Rene Campbell with their rich and deep voices providing lead and backing vocals, Kristy Hinchee and Jenae Williams the substance giving back-up singers, Chris Younken a master on lead and wave guitar, Jerry Zolten giving rhythm on glue guitar and backing vocals, Harry Werner providing a "bluesy" touch on bass, and John Raiser who can be likened to Charles Watts of rolling stones on drums. These electrifying eight members ignited their audience with classics, such as, "Respect Yourself," "Who's Making Love," "The Same Rope," "I'd Rather Be (Blind, Cripple, and Crazy)," "Back in Baby's Arms," and "I Wish It Would Rain," as well as original songs "(You're So) Busy," "Not Enough Joy," and "Joy Jam," all of which are featured on their album "Stages Then and Now." The group considers this album their "...first stage in bringing the drive and energy of early Rhythm & Blues into a body of new music," and the group thinks of their origins as "Code:Blue has carved its sound from the roots of R&B, inspired by original soul artists such as Otis Clay, O.V. Wright, Etta James and Sam Cooke—all masters who were compelled to pour out life's emotion on stages."

Everyone who attended was, to say the least, impressed. If you, because of the aforementioned bad weather or general apathy, missed this truly one-of-a-kind musical experience, take heart. All of the songs performed are available on CD (for the small sum of twelve dollars) or on tape (for the even smaller sum of eight dollars), and can be ordered from Splash Records by calling 1-814-234-1412. If you are not sure if you are ready to invest on Code:Blue without hearing them first, then head up to State College where they often make appearances, or maybe if we are so fortunate they'll be back here next year!

Loaded Weapon I

By: Todd Ritter

In the great tradition of "Airplane", "Naked Gun" and "Hot Shots" comes "National Lampoon's Loaded Weapon I," a spoof of the "Lethal Weapon" movies. This time Emilio Estevez and Samuel L. Jackson play the Mel Gibson/Danny Glover roles. William Shatner plays the villain, with Tim Curry as his sidekick and Kathy Ireland as the love interest.

Unfortunately, unlike "Airplane" and "Naked Gun", "Loaded Weapon" fails to create little more than a chuckle. "Airplane", for all its worth, is a brilliant movie. Never before or since has a movie contained so many jokes, political satire and off-color references. It was an hour and a half of pure, giddy laughter, nothing more and nothing less. The makers of "Loaded Weapon", however, felt that they had to give it a plot, albeit a weak one about drug smuggling in girl scout cookies. Sure, "Loaded Weapon I" is funny, especially in its spoofs of "The Silence of the Lambs" and "Basic Instinct", but here are too many scenes where not much happens.

Another problem here are the jokes. They've been used several times before. (One character's name is Miss Demeanor-funny, yes, but ancient.)

Next to "Airplane" and the rest of its kind, "Loaded Weapon I" pales in comparison. The producers expected a barrel of laughs but instead it only misfired.

The Crying Game

By: Todd Ritter

Surely you've heard about it. It's the new movie that has people lining up all across the nation. This is the movie that has sold out every showing in New York City for months. It's the movie that has garnered six Oscar nominations and landed on over 100 film critics' Ten Best lists. It is the movie that, according to the ads, "Everyone is talking about but no one is giving away its secrets." It is "The Crying Game" and it's great.

I'll explain the plot as best as I can, without giving away too much information. An English soldier, Jody (Forest Whitaker) is kidnapped by IRA terrorists at a carnival in Northern Ireland. During his captivity he befriends Fergus (Stephen Rea), the most humane of the terrorists and the only one who treats Jody with respect. As Jody puts it, "It's in your nature to be kind. You can't help it." The two form an odd friendship, talking about the future, the past and everything in between, including women. This leads Fergus to promise that if Jody dies, he will go to London and seek out his girlfriend, Dil (Jaye Davidson). After an unfortunate accident in which Jody dies, Fergus finds himself in London, falling in love with the enigmatic Dil. That's really all I can tell you without ruining the whole movie. (In fact, I've already given away too much.) Let's just say that the acting is spectacular, especially by Best Actor nominee Rea, and Jaye Davidson, who is unbelievably brilliant as Dil.

Then, there's the surprise. Halfway through the movie comes an astounding plot twist that draws collective gasps from the audience. At that point everything you thought you knew is discarded and the movie takes a completely different direction. (Several directions, in fact.) Instead of becoming a standard thriller, it becomes a meditation about love, friendship, devotion, loyalty and the odd quirks of the human heart. It is violent, sometimes moody, often hilarious and totally unforgettable.

Sommersby

By: Todd Ritter

It is post Civil War Tennessee and Jack Sommersby (Richard Gere) has just returned home after a six-year absence. But home has changed dramatically in six years. Sommersby's wife, Laurel, (Jodie Foster) is engaged to another man and the War has left the town permanently scarred. Sommersby isn't the same, either. He doesn't drink as much, he isn't as abusive to his wife, his shoe size, according to the town cobbler, has diminished two sizes and even his own dog doesn't recognize him. These small idiosyncrasies plant doubts in his wife's mind, yet the rest of the town remains convinced of his identity.

That is the basic plot of "Sommersby", the dazzling new film now playing in theaters everywhere. It raises the question of identity. What if you could erase your none too pleasant past and assume a new life? Would you do it and how far would you go to keep it?

"Sommersby" is very well done. It's beautifully photographed and the attention to detail is excellent. Jodie Foster is, as usual, wonderful.

Richard Gere is great, too. I really think this is his best performance yet. It is not hollow, like his work in "Pretty Woman" and it isn't over dramatic, like his performance in "Internal Affairs." His Jack Sommersby is charming, intelligent and ultimately human.

The film is unabashedly sentimental, and all the better for it. It revels in its romanticism and even the most jaded viewer can't avoid getting teary-eyed. The ending, although incredibly sad, seems justified and, in a way, it wouldn't have been the same movie without it.

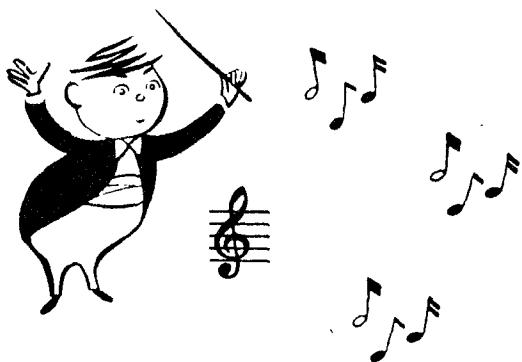
Air Force Quartet at Hazleton

By: Lisa Hornberger

A clarinet quartet from the U.S. Air Force performed on February 19 at Penn State Hazleton Campus. The concert started approximately at 7:30 p.m. in the Upper Highacres Commons. This quartet was one of many acts performing for Penn State's Family Weekend.

The attendance at the concert was overwhelming and many students came with their parents to listen to the quartet. Even students who were not participating in the weekend's formal events stopped in to hear the ensemble.

The quartet is stationed at Langley Air Force Base located in Virginia, which is part of the Air Force Combat Command Heritage of America.



Quartet members, from left, are Senior Airman Karen Wright, Airman 1st Class Jennifer Littlehole, Staff Sgt. Alison Christofoli and Staff Sgt. Peter Foreman.

