

Eye on Entertainment

ARTIST REVIEW: "IF YOU WANT THESE KINDS OF DREAMS IT'S CALIFORNICATION"

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At the cusp of the new millennium, the Red Hot Chili Peppers (RHCP) released their smash hit CD, *Californication*, on June 8, 1999. This alternative rock band's seventh album sold over fifteen million copies worldwide and over five million in the United States. This CD had fifteen tracks that produced six singles such as "Scar Tissue," "Otherside," and "Californication." Additionally, this album features an array of fantastic vocals, guitar and bass riffs along with interesting and contemplative lyrics.

The song "Scar Tissue" won a Grammy in 2000 for best rock song; this song tackles a personal drug-related theme. Vocalist Anthony Kiedis was currently battling a heroin addiction and the song shows how he dealt with that situation. The next song, "Otherside" is another song that discusses hardships, suicide, and confrontations of drug addicts with their former habits. Yes, death and drugs are a fairly common theme in RHCP's songs, but their presentation always makes it sound poetic. These types of songs make the listeners wonder about their own lives and how can they improve. Some members of the band were known to do drugs, so this is the band's way of reflecting on that issue and saying how they could avoid these temptations, move on in life, and to see better days.

Finally, the CD's titled song is an interesting one and its music video is still memorable because of its video game approach. The music video featured all members of the band as they were video game characters and each had a special mission to do in the game before they reunited at



Photo Courtesy of rateyourmusic.com

the end; the video paid tribute to pre-existing video games of that era. The subject matter is not as heavy as "Otherside" or "Scar Tissue," but it does paint a dark image over Hollywood with criticism, sarcasm, and irony. This song took an interesting stand to lash out on California saying it is a corrupt, phony, and demoralized society. For example, look at the following lyrics, "Pay your surgeon very well / to break the spell of aging." This is a reason why RHCP are popular is through the realism they express in their songs. Even though they are from California, they recognize there are many social issues and they would not mind exposing it. Additionally, they set a superb melody to coincide with the lyrics to generate another fantastic hit.

When this CD was released, the band already had many famous albums and songs, but it was this CD that catapulted them into immortality. And these three grand songs are only a small sample of the geniuses hidden inside this album. Some songs have serious messages, whereas some have a lighter tone that can be comical, like the song titled "I Like Dirt." In addition, some songs will have their famous funky sound, whereas some will sound softer, like the song "Porcelain." This band still produces outstanding works in their lyrics and music prowess. Red Hot Chili Peppers' CD, *Californication*, contains an intelligent mixture of poetry, confessions, realism, along with great melodies, riffs, solos, and tones that anybody can listen to and just drift away to the sweet sounds of music and creativity.

Video Music Awards 2010

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The Video Music Awards, also known as the VMA's, which aired Sunday, September 12, 2010, have been held in every major city from New York City to the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles, where it was held this year. The VMA's have been hosted by many large named celebrities including, Chris Rock, Jimmy Fallon, Jamie Foxx and the last female until this year, Roseanne Barr. This year's host, Chelsea Handler, was the first female host in sixteen years, being all-around hilarious. She not only made tons of jokes about her alcohol and drug intake, but made fun of some of the nominees, including, young Justin Bieber, the cast of *Jersey Shore*, and most of all Lady Gaga. However, there were complaints that Handler was very inappropriate and there are rumors circulating that they are looking for someone new to host the 2011 VMA's. Starting in 1984 the VMA's have returned annually providing awards to the top voted music videos from the past year. This year had the most viewers since the year 2002, coming in around about 11.4 million people all tuning in on the same program on the same night.

This year's award categories covered everything you could think of with all different nominees and some were the same winning more than one award that night. The overall winner of the night was Lady Gaga for her music video, "Bad Romance." Gaga was the first ever to receive thirteen nominations and took home eight awards, seven of which went to "Bad Romance." This year's awards and winners are the following:

•Video of the Year: Lady Gaga, "Bad Romance"

- Best Male Video: Eminem, "Not Afraid"
- Best Female Video: Lady Gaga, "Bad Romance"
- Best New Artist: Justin Bieber
- Best Pop Video: Lady Gaga, "Bad Romance"
- Best Rock Video: 30 Seconds to Mars, "Kings and Queens"
- Best Hip-Hop Video: Eminem, "Not Afraid"
- Best Dance Music Video: Lady Gaga, "Bad Romance"
- Best Collaboration: Lady Gaga and Beyonce
- Breakthrough Video: The Black Keys, "Tighten Up"
- Best Direction in a Video: Lady Gaga, "Bad Romance"
- Best Choreography in a Video: Lady Gaga, "Bad Romance"
- Best Special Effects in a Video: Muse, "Up-Rising"
- Best Art Direction in a Video: Florence + the Machine, "Dog Days are Over"
- Best Editing in a Video: Lady Gaga, "Bad Romance"
- Best Cinematography in a Video: Jay-Z and Alicia Keys, "Empire State of Mind"

In conclusion, this year's MTV Video Music Awards were extremely successful, unlike past years with many mistakes and flaws. In years past there have been many issues, Kanye West interrupting Taylor Swift accepting her award last year, Brittany Spears being too drunk and a terrible lip singer, and let's just say this is the first year in a while they have ran smoothly.

Movie Review: The Social Network

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As a new convert to Facebook, the movie *The Social Network* was a pleasant surprise. It was a movie that I was looking forward to and dreading simultaneously. I wanted to like it, but I was convinced that I would be disappointed. The film is thoroughly satisfying; it is both enjoyable entertainment, and well-conceived. However, I did not know anything but the basic facts about the true story of Facebook before watching *The Social Network*, so I cannot say how accurate the events and characterizations in the film are.

The movie is about both the formation of Facebook and the legal complications that arose after the website's success. The two stories are blended so the film goes back and forth between the lawsuit scenes and the scenes of Facebook actually being invented. In many films, this type of chronology can be confusing and break the flow of the film; however, this style is expertly implemented and quite effective in *The Social Network*.

The storyline highlights an undergraduate student at Harvard University, Mark Zuckerberg (Jesse Eisenberg) who invents the social networking site Facebook. In the couple of years after Facebook's enormous popularity, Zuckerberg faces two different lawsuits. One lawsuit is filed by three students also attending Harvard, twin brothers Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss (Armie Hammer, who plays both parts) and their friend Divya Narendra (Max Minghella) who claim that Mark Zuckerberg stole their idea. Eduardo Saverin (Andrew Garfield), the co-founder of Facebook, files the second lawsuit against Zuckerberg.

Overall the performances and the script were excellent. The dialogue was, for the most part, believable, as were the actors. Eisenberg's representation of Mark Zuckerberg is an accurate portrayal of a socially inept genius. He also manages to show humanity in his depiction. The standout performance, however, was Garfield's character, Eduardo Saverin. Saverin is realistic and likeable; I truly sympathized with him throughout the film. The only problem with the major characters is the lack of background information given, particularly about Zuckerberg. I left the movie feeling like I knew the story of Facebook, but certainly not the story of Mark Zuckerberg. I realize the film did not set out to be a biography (and I'm glad that it was not) but some more information would have been appreciated.

My biggest complaint is that the story lagged a bit towards the end of the film. It could have had a ten or fifteen minute trim. There is not a particular scene that sticks out as being unneeded; just the overall flow of the film slows a bit towards the end. However, there is a satisfying ending that makes up for the pacing issues towards the film's conclusion.

Going into the film, I had two completely different fears. My first fear was that it would be a big advertisement for Facebook; it is anything but that. My second fear was that it would turn me against Facebook; I'm not someone who spends too much time on Facebook, but I didn't want the movie to make me want to delete my account. Thankfully *The Social Network* is neither of those things. The film makes the viewer question Zuckerberg and his morality, but it does not turn the viewer against him. Overall, it is a thoroughly enjoyable and well put-together film.