

ALBUM REVIEW

'100 Miles From Memphis'

Reviewed by Kathleen Loughran
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

For the most part, Sheryl Crow and I seem to see "Eye to Eye" on her newest album, "100 Miles From Memphis."



Courtesy of Amazon.com

Though I'm not entirely sure why the album is called "100 Miles From Memphis" — it definitely wasn't one of the best songs. I don't even remember how it sounded — the album is a solid effort.

The upbeat swing of the songs provides the perfect complement to a happy-go-lucky summer afternoon. They're the type of songs you can't help snapping your fingers to.

It's the ideal album to tune into when you want to unwind and relax and don't want to listen to someone trying to pass screaming for music.

It's refreshing to hear a voice like Crow's, one that hasn't been modified or altered. It sounds true and natural — and beautiful.

Then there are the lyrics of her songs. I'm a huge fan of her ability to remain G-rated in her choice of words. Color me innocent, but there's something nice about not incorporating vulgar terms and actually relaying a strong message, like Crow does in her song "Peaceful Feeling."

But my personal favorite song on the album is "Stop." I love how she slows down to provide a contrast to the other more upbeat songs. And call it cheesy, but I also like how the song actually stops whenever she sings "stop" — it's the simple things that make the difference.

But if you're looking for the perfect summer song, make sure to check out "Summer Day," because it is exactly what the title says. It's the kind of song that I would like to listen to while driving my make-believe convertible along a vacant highway next to the beach.

But the album has its downsides as well.

First off, some of the songs seem a tad too long, especially when she's not saying too much. Cue the first song of the album, "Our Love is Fading": It's more than six minutes long. I'm sorry, Sheryl, but my attention span isn't that long for one song.

Though I like the lyrics, sometimes they sound repetitive and a tad meaningless. How many times can one person sing "nah, nah, nah, nah..." without it getting annoying?

Overall Crow's album is one to consider purchasing, especially if you're looking for some music that can instantly put you in a good mood.

Grade: B

Download: "Summer Day," "Long Road Home," "Peaceful Feeling" and "Stop"

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Summer Jams

Mixed by "DJ" Megan Rogers
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"Waka Waka (It's Time for Africa)" by Shakira — I have no idea what "waka waka" means, but if it's good enough to be the official song of the FIFA World Cup, then it's good enough for me.

"Boys of Summer" by Don Henley and "Summer in the City" by The Lovin' Spoonful — These songs are as essential to summer as beaches, boardwalks and tan lines.

"California Gurls" by Katy Perry ft. Snoop Dog — Sure, California girls are "unforgettable," but Katy was clearly referring to East Coast dwellers when she sings "Fine, fresh, fierce, we've got it on lock."

"Your Love is My Drug" by Ke\$ha — She's trashy and I want to shun everything she stands for, but her music is too damn catchy.

"Can't Be Tamed" by Miley Cyrus — Teen queen Miley says it herself: She can't be tamed. And why would we want her to be?

"Chicken Fried" by Zac Brown Band — Every summer needs some twang. Plus who doesn't want some chicken fried and cold beer on a Friday night?

"King of Anything" by Sara Bareilles — Summer love doesn't always last. When it ends, pop Bareilles' latest into your car radio and belt out her punchy girl anthem.

"Summer Love" by Justin Timberlake — Not only did JT bring sexy back, but he also penned a song about two of the best things in the world: summer and love.

"Half of My Heart" by John Mayer, ft. Taylor Swift — If you can get over the fact that he's the biggest player in Hollywood, then you may like this song. Let's just hope this is the closest Taylor Swift gets to him.

"Young Forever" by Jay-Z — Taste nostalgia even before the summer ends. Jay-Z's jam is perfect background music for a summer night you know you'll want to remember.

"Haven't Met You Yet" by Michael Buble — Buble's voice is as calming as the ocean waves, and the lyrics are upbeat and peppy. There's no need to be jaded by love.

"Somewhere Over the Rainbow" by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole — Unfortunately summer isn't stress-free. When you're having a rough day, nothing can smooth things over like some soft tunes with a ukulele in the background.

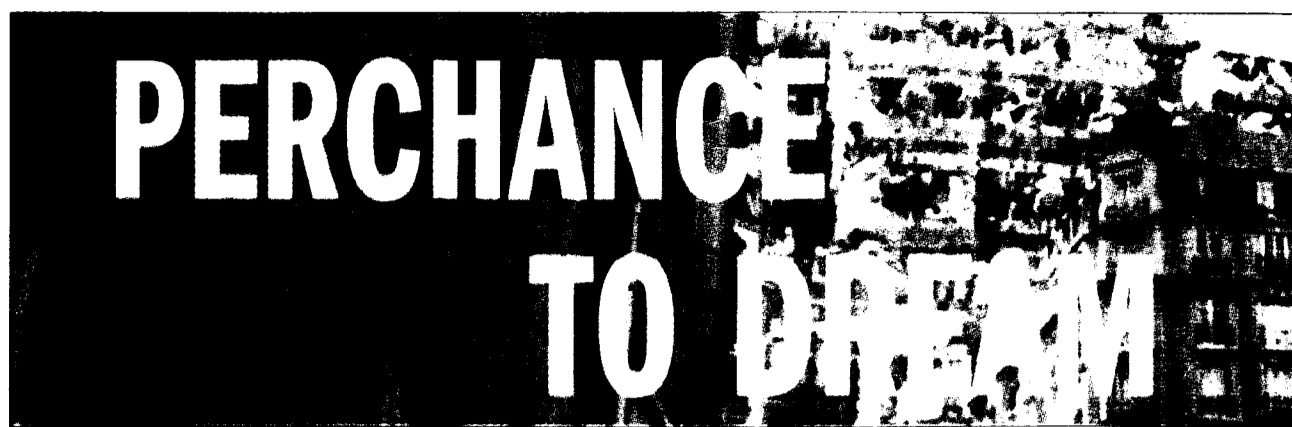
"Summer Girls" by LFO — Nothing beats music from middle school and — added bonus — it's about summer.

"Voltage" by B.o.B. — No, we can't pretend airplanes are like shooting stars in the night sky. But how about a different B.o.B. song?

"Bittersweet Symphony" by The Verve — My editor wanted this one in. Apparently, it's pretty good.

"Somebody to Love" by Justin Bieber, ft. Usher — Everyone's hopping on the Bieber train. First Sean Kingston, now Usher. Don't be the last one aboard.

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'Inception' no idle daydream

Reviewed by Zach Geiger
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Ask yourself: Are you awake or dreaming right now? How can you ever be entirely sure?

Conspiracy, theft and dreams within a dream are the subjects of Christopher Nolan's latest film, "Inception."

"Inception" stars Leonardo DiCaprio as Cobb, a master thief skilled in the art of extracting secrets from a sleeping individual's mind.

Nolan's gives the viewer a unique vision of a near-future world where stealing secrets from an individual's subconscious is the newest form of corporate espionage.

It's almost impossible to give away any spoilers for the movie since "Inception" is one of those films that should be seen twice in order to get the full effect. Similar to Nolan's 2000 film, "Memento," the story is complex and told through different layers that only make sense when seen as a whole.

If you're going to be late to the theater, don't bother going at all — you can't afford to miss any of the story.

In the film, Cobb recruits Ariadne (Ellen Page) as the architect, the person who designs the dreams where the thefts take place. Cobb's lessons on shared dreaming initiate both Ariadne and the viewer in the dreaming concept of "Inception," while also showcasing the amazing visuals seen in the film's trailers.

Entire streets explode and fold onto themselves, paradoxical staircases end abruptly and Ariadne is pursued by Cobb's subconscious defenses in a fight that grips the audience with intrigue and tension as she learns to manipulate Cobb's dreams.

The special effects in the film are mind-boggling. A battle involving Cobb's planner Arthur (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) in a zero-gravity hallway is one of the best fights of the film, and the scenes in a rainy downtown location inspired by Los Angeles rival the intensity of other action films like

"Heat" and "Shooter" for their gun fights.

Director Christopher Nolan's take on the subconscious is unique, and the film goes a long way to establish the director as a solid standout filmmaker.

Part of the success of "Inception" is DiCaprio's acting — which is some of his personal best. DiCaprio's character Cobb is a seriously tortured individual haunted by the memories of his past, and DiCaprio does a fantastic job of showing his conflicted and uncertain future.

But with the way that the film is structured, it's hard to tell the difference between Cobb's subconscious and reality. It's up to the viewers to tell what's real and what's not.

Page's role in the film is interesting, but her performance is actually pretty dull. Her face never changes throughout the entire film with the exception of when she pulls her hair back in one scene. And even then, it was mostly because she looked hot.

The bickering between Arthur

and Eames (Tom Hardy) are some of the funniest scenes in a movie otherwise packed with action and mind-bending questions. Arthur and Eames balance out Cobb's brooding nature and provide balance in the midst of so much action.

Marion Cotillard also stars in the film as Mal, Cobb's deceased wife. Her performance is haunting and really forces the audience to challenge what's real and what's a dream.

"Inception" will no doubt win a majority of the awards it will be nominated for — with good reason.

The film works on so many levels, which is good because there are a great deal of unique levels within the film's plot itself. Ultimately it's up to the viewer to decide.

"You mustn't be afraid to dream a little bigger, darling," Eames quips to Arthur at one point in the film.

Clearly, Nolan agrees. **Grade: A**

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OUT WITH THE BOYS

HBO show starts new season

Reviewed by Paul Osolnick
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The seventh season of the HBO hit show "Entourage" premiered June 27, and after three episodes the show is venturing into new territory — for everyone.

The new season reminds us: The more things stay the same, the more things change.

Vince. After filming "Ferrari," Vince is working on an action-packed movie, which requires him to perform his own stunts at times. One in particular involves a jump sequence in which he is instructed to crash the car into a building. Though he is hesitant at first, after completing the stunt he is inspired into a stereotypical search for adrenaline (he buys a motorcycle, goes skydiving) in his personal life. Adrian Grenier's performance as an adrenaline junkie is sad — if it was a Vincent Chase performance, it would be "Medellin."

E. E is now engaged to his on-again, off-again girlfriend Sloan. And just like in real life, marriage has made the story boring. Instead of joining in on parties with Vince where the girl-to-guy ratio is great (in more ways than one), he is "enjoying" quiet dinners with his fiancée. While the relationship side of E is boring, the work side may be heating up as he is in competition with a co-worker for Vince's management and friendship — could be interesting, could be anticlimactic, both are completely possible.

Ari. After purchasing his former boss and rival's talent

agency, Ari Gold is on top of the world in Hollywood. A position that comes with perks including power, fame and a possible NFL team in Los Angeles. Ari is negotiating with the league to start his own team and while the scenes are exciting, the show is based off a large amount of reality — so unless a team is actually coming to LA, Ari's new team won't probably happen. While things are relatively good for Ari now, the recent decision to fire a talented employee could have the makings of a regretful decision that could give another Emmy-worthy rant from the fiery agent.

Drama and Turtle. These two are classed together out of respect for the previous seasons that saw them as an inseparable duo. But in this season the two are their own men as Turtle has started his own business — though it's failing — and Drama is teaming up with E to try to turn his constantly-flopping acting career around. The recent effort will have him take a complete 180 as he will most likely

star in a comedy. But obviously, he doesn't do comedy.

Season seven has much of the same: Vince's crazy parties and lavish spending; E's rising career and relationship with Sloan; Drama's hopeless search for acting work; Turtle's attempts at having a purpose other than Vince's driver; and Ari's constant search for more power, money and fame. But the show is entering into a new stage.

There have been changes before, but in the end they were always four guys from Queens. But it looks like that is changing as each character goes his own direction. It isn't bad or at least it hasn't been bad yet — it's just different. If they continue down this path, the writers will have to change the name of the show from "Entourage" to "Five Dudes Doing Their Own Thing."

Not as catchy. **Grade: B**

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