

# ARTS IN REVIEW

14 | TUESDAY, OCT. 19, 2010

THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

## ALBUM REVIEW

### 'I Am Not A Human Being'

Reviewed by Joshua Glossner  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Lil Wayne may be Drake's mentor — but now Drake is taking Weezy to school.

"I Am Not A Human Being," Lil Wayne's newest album, consists of 10 songs — eight of which are collaborations with other artists. Frankly, I think this shows Lil Wayne can't confidently make a solo album.

Then again, maybe I'm being a bit hard on poor Weezy.

But after being away, I expect he would create an album worthy of his fans' anticipation — not to mention have some fresh, new lyrics.

Lil Wayne reused some of his lyrics from Young Money's "Bed Rock" in the song "Popular" and used it as his chorus.

Did all that jail time suck the creative juices out of Lil Wayne?

Another depressing thing about this album is that Drake out-raps Lil Wayne in the four tracks they collaborate on.

For example, in the song "Gonorrhea," Lil Wayne raps about not wanting to catch someone's gonorrhea and wanting to inflict pain on a person.

But when Drake comes in, he is actually using creative lyrics to get his point across instead of using profanity in every other line.

"With You" — another song featuring Drake — gives me a vibe that Lil Wayne was trying to create the next "Best I Ever Had."

Sorry, Weezy. Nice try, but I think Drake already stole ladies' hearts with that one.

Lil Wayne seems to be keeping fans interested by featuring Drake, not by his own merit.

Jay Sean and Nicki Minaj each shine on both of their feature tracks. In all honesty, the only reason I listened to those songs was to hear Sean and Minaj sing during the choruses.

One of the two songs Lil Wayne goes solo on is "Bill Gates." I thought Wayne would rap about how rich he is, but I was wrong.

Wayne raps about shooting people, having sex and drinking alcohol. I'm pretty sure Gates is not referenced in this song besides Lil Wayne claiming he's "Bill Gatin'" (whatever that means).

I didn't find "I Am Not A Human Being" worth my time, but if you are a huge fan of rap or Lil Wayne, maybe you will.

But you'll probably regret it.

Grade: C-

Download: "What's Wrong With Them? (feat. Nicki Minaj)" and "That Ain't Me (feat. Jay Sean)"

To e-mail reporter: [jdg5299@psu.edu](mailto:jdg5299@psu.edu)

## MASOCHISM IN 3D

### Film's skits still funny

Reviewed by Karina Yücel  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

"Jackass" takes it to a whole new level of craziness, and I'm not just talking about the movie being in 3D.

Johnny Knoxville and the boys are back with their wildest stunts and pranks in "Jackass 3D."

But it seems to me that this movie will be the last installment because the "Jackass" crew just doesn't seem that into it anymore.

They still take pleasure in seeing each other get hurt, which is all the good old fun on which the show was built. But the guys give the impression that they're a little tired.

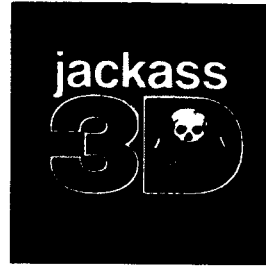
They have been living this life for the past decade — maybe they are moving past it.

But just because they don't seem as into getting hurt as they used to be doesn't mean they failed to bring the pain.

The screaming oohs and ahhs from the crowd prove just that. The stunts were a mix of old and new combined with a whole slew of pranks in between.

The "High Five" where Wee-Man sets up fellow cast members to walk into a room where a big hand slaps them and knocks them down puts you in the mood for the rest of the movie.

Another good stunt is "Duck Hunting." One guy dresses up in a life vest and



Speedo covered with feathers and goes flying through the air while the other cast members try to shoot them with paintballs.

"Electric Avenue" is one of the best stunts. Bam Margera and some other cast members run through a Taser obstacle course, and Bam ends up getting launched through the air.

Steve-O takes part in a lot of the stunts this time around. After his stint in rehab two years ago, I think he wants to prove to everyone he can still be a jackass while sober.

Personally, I think he does a pretty good job. I mean, how many times can you do something where you know that you are going to go

through an intense amount of pain without wanting something that will take the edge off?

But he does seem scared before a lot of the pranks and stunts that he takes part in. There is even one prank where he struggles just to introduce the stunt because he knows how much it will hurt.

Many of the stunts and pranks are old favorites with a new twist. Steve-O gets slapped inside a poop-filled port-o-potty and bungeed into the air.

You can probably imagine what happens next. All in all, the movie was hilarious, gross and made me wince more than 10 times. To top it all off, putting it in 3D format just makes the pranks that much better.

It made me flinch even more when Knoxville was run over by a bull, because it felt like I was really there and really watching it happen.

The fun of "Jackass" isn't just the cast members' intent to hurt themselves and one another, but seeing that these guys get to do it for a living and have the best time together.

After 10 years, the crew is obviously still a family, and being able to laugh at themselves and one another just makes the movie that much more entertaining.

Grade: B+

To e-mail reporter: [kzy5015@psu.edu](mailto:kzy5015@psu.edu)



## Band loses musicality

Reviewed by Lauren Ingenu  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

To the Kings of Leon's most loyal fans — the ones listening years before the band was "on fire" — the band's second CD wasn't nearly as good as its first, the third couldn't live up to the second and the fourth appealed to too many pre-teen girls.

And the fifth? The most devout will think it's garbage.

Before listening to the Grammy-winning band's newest album "Come Around Sundown," which was released today, I promised myself I would avoid such musical snobbery.

Kings of Leon, which gained overwhelming success in the U.K. long before American fans took notice, eventually earned stardom with their 2009 album, "Only By the Night," which made it to the Billboard Top Ten.

But just because they sell albums in their own country now doesn't make them sell-outs.

They didn't tell every radio station to play their two worst and most mainstream songs on repeat day after day.

Even after walking off stage (post pigeon-pooing incident in St. Louis), I admittedly called them divas, but I didn't write them off. Success doesn't always equal bad music.

Unfortunately, this time it did. With an unimaginative album title as lethargic as most of its 13 songs, "Come Around Sundown" may prove that Kings of Leon feels largely apathetic to its current success and to making music in general.

Gone are the filthy and crude lyrics, fast-paced melodies, Caleb Followill's raw, raspy voice and the general rocking, roaring pulse that

pumped through the band's other four albums.

These elements have been replaced by boring and similar-sounding songs, with choruses that play out like strung-out moans.

Kicking off the album with the repetitive "The End," maybe Kings were sending us a message: The end of their music is near. They were tired of their own CD before it began.

Basically, Kings of Leon doesn't sound like it used to, which isn't a bad thing by itself.

A band is supposed to grow and change its sound. But the songs sound a lot like Kings is fighting between what it used to sound like, what it wants to sound like and what it thinks fans want it to sound like.

The album picks up by the second song and first single, "Radioactive," with an upbeat tempo and a mounting energy. Unlike many other tracks on the album, this deeply soulful song makes you want to keep listening because it sounds like it's actually going somewhere.

These two songs are followed by the drowning songs "Pyro" and "Mary," in which Followill makes strange cooing sounds accompanied by melodramatic lyrics.

I couldn't wait for both songs to end.

Their mellow music from past albums seemed like an angry, in-your-face sad.

But these new songs, along with others on "Sundown," just sound depressing.

The song "Back Down South" on the other hand is hugely refreshing. It has a country blue-grass feeling and sounds drastically different from anything else I've heard from Kings.

And yet, it's easily my favorite song on the album with its upbeat melody and sweet lyrics.

Instead of whining about wanting to go home, this song, along with the ending track "Pickup Truck," sounds like Kings singing along, having some nostalgic fun with their friends back in Tennessee.

Overall, I think Followill summed it up best.

"We know you're sick of Kings of Leon. We're f—ing sick of Kings of Leon, too," he once shouted to a crowd at festival in the U.K. last summer.

Well, Kings of Leon, the truth is, I wasn't sick of you until you became sick of yourself.

Inside an album that was an overall disappointment were some great tracks that hopefully provide insight into where the band is headed.

I'm not completely jaded by Kings, but I think it's time the southern boys start rethinking how they can combine "popular" sounds with the gritty music from their roots to make music that fans enjoy listening to.

And more importantly, music the band enjoys making.

Download: "Back Down South" and "Radioactive"

Grade: C+

To e-mail reporter: [hms510@psu.edu](mailto:hms510@psu.edu)

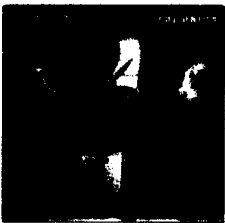
## ALBUM REVIEW

### 'The Union'

Reviewed by Josh Bollinger  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

How do you match the compositional genius and piano mastery of Sir Elton John?

By being a master yourself.



Courtesy of amazon.com

That's where John's fellow pianist and legendary session musician Leon Russell comes into the picture.

John and Russell released "The Union" — a masterful collaboration of blues ballads — today, marking Russell's return to the world of big record

labels since his last major release more than 10 years ago.

"The Union" is an organic ode to rock 'n' roll blues and a bit of a departure from John's usually ostentatious pop performances.

The blues genre started as a way for artists to express their anguish and tell of their hardships in the only way they knew how — through music.

Russell and John hit the nail on the head. One unchanging factor on the new album and all of John's records is all the emotion that goes into his playing. John uses the piano as a means of expressing his uttermost pain and turmoil.

This applies to Russell as well, but his means of expression lie more in his voice than his instrument. The aged rasp of Russell's voice brings a level of maturity to the blues-based tunes the duo plays.

John and Russell prove to us why they're two of the most respected pianists in rock.

Each and every song features beautiful interplay with Russell's soulful backbone and John's typical rolling melodies played overtop and in substitution of chords.

This record strikes me as mellow and melancholy, with spots of upbeat, yee-haw rock 'n' roll.

"There's No Tomorrow" is a showcase of the slow blues drudge feel on a lot of the record. The guitar solo on it shows the listeners John and Russell aren't the only talented musicians playing on the album.

Serving mostly as a melodious backdrop to the keyboards with a slightly crunchy, reverberated tone, the solo takes the music into a world of imperfect bliss not seen with John's virtuoso performance. The solo features sloppy, almost chaotic playing that's wrapped up with the bluesiest of pentatonic runs and nearly screams in your face at the end.

"Hey Ahab" ventures into a much funkier realm that will have you bobbing your head and tapping your foot to the thunderous back beat and appreciate some of the more stupendous piano playing on the album.

The few imperfections of the record don't detract from its charm — they add to its character and make it more interesting to listen to.

Grade: A

Download: "Hey Ahab"

To e-mail reporter: [tjb5267@psu.edu](mailto:tjb5267@psu.edu)

