



## THIS WEEK IN USC HISTORY

Nov. 10, 1986 - About 245 of Columbia Hall's residents received notice of the university's decision to move them off of the top five floors of the residence hall because of the need of an asbestos removal.



# Christian Music Is it a genre?



## ■ Justin McRoberts disputes genre label 'Christian rock'

BY ZEINA MAKKY  
THE GAMECOCK

Justin McRoberts could easily pass for an average college student, except he has recently released his second album, "Father." The industry, fond of making up categories and sticking different artists in the same group, decided to identify him as a Christian rock musician, a label that annoys him.

"Christian music is not a genre. Rock 'n' roll is a genre. Folk is a genre. I'm not so convinced there is such a thing as Christian music," he said. McRoberts classifies himself as "pretty much rock 'n' roll."

However, McRoberts does claim he has felt God's presence in his life. "As a Christian, I believe that God is involved in everything, in every relationship I've had, even in this present moment," he said. This does have an influence in his music, even though he rejects the Christian music label. "I try to write songs about my life and my relationships from the perspective that there's God's hands in my life," he said.

Surprisingly, McRoberts wasn't raised a Christian. "I didn't meet God until I was 18, and I became a Christian through the Ministry of Young Life," he said. In fact, McRoberts claims he was "very Anti-Christian back in high school. I thought these people were morons."

Though he converted, he still has "a lot of criticism and issues with the Church. We [the Church] entertain ourselves like crazy, make our churches look really great and bring in fantastic musicians while the community around us continues to suffer. That's not Christ. Christ was a poor man," he said.

McRoberts started out like any child who enjoys music more than anything. "I just picked up a guitar and farted around, and 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' turned into what I do now."

Yet something inspired him to go further. "I had always been a music fan," McRoberts said. "I found a lot of inspiration in the songs I listened to and decided to write a song instead of just try to find something I could resonate with."

"The most powerful songs are those that get into people's

McROBERTS SEE PAGE 6



SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

## ■ Nicole Nordeman shares spirituality through music

BY ZEINA MAKKY  
THE GAMECOCK

As a Christian singer, Nicole Nordeman recently released her latest LP, "This Mystery," and opened for Caedmon's Call on Nov. 8 at the Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia.

She started her career by taking piano lessons in first grade. "Music was a second language in our home," she said. "I listened to all kinds of stuff, and still do. I knew all the hymns that we sang in church, the sacred music."

"But my Mom, who is a fabulous pianist, was really great about exposing my brother and me to George Gershwin, Ella Fitzgerald, country music and opera. We were exposed to a broad range of music."

Nordeman realized she wanted to become a singer when she was in college. When she began writing songs, she moved from Colorado Springs to L.A., where she entered a songwriting contest.

"I didn't have any hopes of being discovered. I thought it was a good chance to meet some other Christians in L.A. and other musicians. It ended up opening a lot of doors for me in terms of meeting the right people at record labels, management, etc.," she said.

Nordeman has now been in the industry for eight months and has grown considerably.

"This experience has been very educational. I went into this not knowing the difference between a sound engineer and a caterer. I was naive and innocent, which was kind of a good thing as I didn't have any grand expectations or illusions that were disappointing," she said.

Nordeman categorizes her music as "piano-driven pop, edgy pop. It's not bubble gum pop like Britney Spears or Christina Aguilera, but I hope it's more along the style of Sarah McLachlan."

The difference is her lyrics deal with faith and God. "I don't know if I have an agenda, I don't sit down and write a song thinking 'I want people to hear this message.' I don't write

NORDEMAN SEE PAGE 6



MELINDA DIMAURO Special to THE GAMECOCK

## 'Indie' film discreetly delivers to traditional moviegoers

BY TUG BAKER  
THE GAMECOCK



Yes, the title does sound like the latest N Sync single. However, in a year filled with "Braveheart" remakes and stale plots, writer/director Ken Lonergan's "You Can Count on Me" has emerged as one of the best films of the year.

Already co-winner of the Best Film and winner of the Best Screenplay Award at the Sundance Film Festival, this touching and thought-provoking film may receive more awards before the year is over.

"You Can Count on Me" opens with a car crash in which Sammy and Terry Prescott's parents are killed, and then cuts to Sammy and Terry as adults.

Sammy (Laura Linney, "Truman Show") is living in her parents' house and struggling with the hardships of being a single mother.

Terry (Mark Ruffalo, "Ride with the Devil") is a drifter coming home, to "borrow" money to help pay for his girlfriend's abortion.

The two have kept in touch, but from the beginning it's obvious that problems are going to occur because of Terry's disregard for responsibility and possible bad influence on his nephew.

Sounds pretty typical, right? Not so. One of the main focuses of the movie is Terry's relationship with Sammy's son, Rudy (Rory Culkin).

Bruce Willis and Haley Joel Osment have nothing comparable to the bond Terry and Rudy share.

Another interesting twist in the movie is Sammy's love life. After her on-again, off-again boyfriend proposes to her, she has an affair with her married, uptight boss Brian, played by Matthew Broderick ("Election").

Her own immoral romance makes her question if she really has the right to scold Terry about the mistakes in his life.

While this is Ken Lonergan's first time directing, he does an exceptional job, succeeding in letting his terrific script simply unfold on the screen.

He manages to tell a complete story without spelling it out for the audience.

For example, the title is never actually said, only hinted at. Lonergan even appears in the movie as the touchy-feely priest who is an understated laugh-riot.

The rest of the cast does a fabulous job. Linney and Ruffalo give the performances of their careers. The entire cast comes across as completely real. They never cease to surprise.

In a world where "indie" film has become a bad word among traditional moviegoers, "You Can Count on Me" delivers to a wide audience.

The laughs drawn from the crowd aren't forced but are the natural humor people find in everyday life.

While seemingly an overused plot, the movie asks much more than what meets the eye.

"You Can Count on Me" opens in limited release today and nationally on Nov. 17.

The sneak preview was sponsored by Carolina Productions. For information on upcoming sneaks, call 777-7031.

The spotlight desk can be reached at [gamecockspotlight@hotmail.com](mailto:gamecockspotlight@hotmail.com).

## 'Into the Streets' provides day of community service

BY KELLY HAMILTON  
THE GAMECOCK

Into the Streets, a student-run community service organization, will bring students, faculty and staff together tomorrow for a day of service projects at various sites in the Columbia area.

According to Tim Miller, coordinator of Community Service Projects, students Janet Regal and Linsey Matthews planned the event as part of the Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

Miller said several of the projects serve that cause, but there are also various other causes.

"There are 11 different sites, and students will have the chance to learn about the volunteer opportunities out there," Miller said.

"My hope is to find that they like doing these activities and then maybe go back individually to volunteer."

According to Miller, the project has been funded by Student Government and the Honors College and has received financial support from Dick Smith Nissan and Carolina First Bank.

Regal and Matthews are honor students who organized the event as part of their senior thesis.

"It's been a lot of work getting this whole thing together, but we're both happy that we decided to do it," said Regal. "It was rewarding and at the same time more fun than writing a term paper for my thesis," Regal said.

"The experience has shown us a lot about how to run a business and

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Tim Miller

Coordinator of Community Service Projects

the logistics of setting something like this up. It's about deadlines, working with people. This has been very educational for us," Regal said.

According to Regal, they've been working on the project since the beginning of August.

"Not a day has gone by since then that we have not worked on this. We are working with 10 organizations, including the Department of Juvenile Justice, Epworth's Children's Home, Ronald McDonald House, Harvest Hope Food Bank, St. Lauren's Place, the Keep America Beautiful Program and a local elementary school," Regal said.

"First we contacted the agencies to find out what kind of help they needed. Then we called different campus groups to find volunteers," Regal said.

Regal is pleased that so many students will be participating this year.

"Right now we have almost 3,000 volunteers from the American Marketing Association, the Judicial Board, 360 Campus Ministries, Mortar Board, the Alumni Scholars Association, Golden Key Honor Society, SAE, sopho-

more scholars, Omega Phi Alpha, SACS, Phi Kappa Alpha, Club Management and two University 101 Classes."

Regal said the projects vary by site, according to what each agency needs.

"Many of them wanted cleaning done. At the elementary school, we'll be working on a nature trail and a butterfly garden. The food bank needs help with Christmas time. At the Department of Juvenile Justice, they wanted us to help some of the girls there to make placements for the elderly," Regal said.

Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. on the Russell House patio. Volunteers will be transported by bus to the different sites, where they will work for about four hours before returning to USC for a thank-you reception at 3 p.m.

There are a limited number of spaces left. Applications are available in the Office of Community Service.

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## Students prepare tiger for annual 'Tiger Burn'

BY WILLIAM  
SNYDER  
THE GAMECOCK

Sure there are athletic events, student organizations, student government opportunities and plenty other ways to get involved on campus, but how often is USC given the chance to unite and light stuff on fire?

One thing's for sure—it's not often enough.

USC and Carolina Productions recognize this lack of communal firestarting, and give students a chance to indulge in their more primitive desires once a year.

Yes, it's that time of year again. The annual "Tiger Burn" will once again allow students to come together and enjoy the orgiastic excitement of a blazing inferno.

Nothing's more gratifying than watching one of nature's most dangerous elements consume a 15-foot sculpture, unless, of course, you're Phillip Amerson or Jo Smith.

For these two dedicated Gamecocks, the true embodiment of school pride isn't found on a big, crowded lot, with fireworks, cheerleaders and a large, controlled blaze.

No, for these two devoted fans, supporting their school comes in the form of commitment and selfless devotion.

When production began last Wednesday, they sat on a vacant section of the farmers' market armed with little more than 84 feet



William Snyder THE GAMECOCK

For the first time in many years, the "Tiger Burn" will feature a standing tiger. So far, only the sculpture's legs are complete.

of uncut board, 50 pounds of newspaper, 300 feet of chicken wire, and a dream.

"The actual burn is exciting, but building [the tiger] gives us a chance to work together for a university program," Smith said.

With the ambitious goal of building one of the first standing tigers in many years, the hard-working students definitely have their job cut out for them.

"We could have built one laying down," Smith remarked, "but that would have been the easy way."

Sure, a standing tiger is more difficult and takes more time, but the extra effort doesn't discourage these spirited students.

Smith and the others look for-

TIGER SEE PAGE 6

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