



THE MIX

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THEY SAID IT

JUDAS PRIEST: "You don't have to be old to be wise."

Love Apple

headlines first show at **GEEK ROCKTOBERFEST**

BY JUSTIN BAJAN
THE GAMECOCK

During medieval times, a love apple was a parting gift a husband and wife exchanged before the husband went to war. After the apple was traded, both took their respective gifts and stored them in their armpits to preserve their lover's scent.

While he was thumbing through a dictionary, Jason Sposa found this definition and thought it would make a good name for a band. The result is Love Apple, a four-man power-pop group based in Columbia. The band comprises Sposa on lead vocals and guitar, George Cooper on lead guitar and back-up vocals, Scott Cook on drums and Jebb Graff on bass. Though the band has been through changes in lineup, including one in which Sposa performed solo, the current Love Apple played its first show last year at Carolina Productions' Battle of the Bands, where it took first place for covering Weezer songs. Sposa said the band had only practiced twice.

Sposa, the youngest of four, became familiar with the entertainment industry when he was a teenager. "I was a huge Nirvana fan," Jason said about his pre-college days, and wanted to emulate the band. His mother didn't want him to own a guitar, but his ex-stepfather supported his urge to play and bought him an amp and a guitar.

Sposa, originally from Richmond, Va., came to USC in 1998 hoping to find a band. In various playing situations, Sposa didn't find a combination that worked; so, he instead took the stage alone, with a drum machine and guitar, a set-up Sposa said he never liked. After playing some acoustic gigs, Sposa left for home for the summer with a little optimism. The next year, he returned with some homemade demos and a need for band members.

While working as an R.A. in the towers, Sposa met a student wearing a Weezer shirt, a promising sign. Sposa soon struck up a conversation with Jebb Graff, Love Apple's future bassist. Guitarist George Cooper was an R.A. with Sposa, and the singer linked up with drummer

Scott Cook through a mutual friend.

These chance meetings gradually led to a chemistry that moved the band toward success. "We set goals every year; junior year was to play the Elbow Room. We did it, and this year was to record a full-length." About the band's plans once the album is released, Sposa said, "The future looks good; we're gonna be out of town a lot."

Love Apple's success can be attributed to a variety of factors, one of which is the placement of its music on MP3.com. Sposa said the "MP3 page helped a lot." Even though posting music isn't a good way to earn a profit, he said it's a "good way to open up your music." With its credibility on the Web page burgeoning, the band was selected by an online label to participate in a Weezer tribute album. Love Apple's cover of the B-side "Jamie" was included on the album's first release. When the album was re-released, Love Apple's track didn't appear because its sound quality was poor compared to the tracks of bands that could afford to use a studio. Though



Jason Sposa, lead singer for power pop band Love Apple. PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

the band was disappointed, it had already made new fans around the country who began requesting that Love Apple tour their cities.

The band is widely known on the Internet, but the best place to listen to Love Apple is in concert. Jason said he likes "being able to look out and not see the floor" when the band plays to a large crowd. Satisfying fans with its carefree "rock it like you rock it" attitude, the band is notorious for stealing the crowd at every show it plays.

Love Apple's influences explain its innovative sound. Sposa's favorite band is Ozma, and his other favorites include Fountains of Wayne, Superdrag and older groups such as the Cars and the legendary Elvis Costello.

On Saturday, Oct. 13, Love Apple will achieve one more goal. It will play at the Geek Rocktoberfest at New Brookland Tavern — its first headlining show. But although it's the prominent band on the bill, it doesn't want to be pigeonholed as a geek-rock band. Sposa said Love

Apple makes music that "makes you smile, happy. We're not talking about the important topics of today." Love Apple would like to be considered genreless, but, for practical purposes, it prefers the label power-pop, a term more "suitable to a band, respectable; it's more open to availability." Sposa thinks geek-rock is a fad, something his band doesn't want to be associated with.

Love Apple will join the Beatloles and Timmy Orangeburg this Saturday at the New Brookland Tavern. Check out <http://loveapple.cjb.net> for more information, and listen to the band at <http://www.mp3.com/loveapple>.

LOVE APPLE
The Beatloles
Timmy Orangeburg
Geek Rocktoberfest,
New Brookland Tavern
\$5; October birthdays get in free.
Saturday, October 13
9:30 p.m.

Drivers, beware: Hondas abound



DENISE LEVEREAUX
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Because my boyfriend now goes to Georgia Tech, I spend a lot more time on the road this semester than I used to. This gives me the chance to improve my driving skills and learn the fine art of road-tripping.

Unfortunately, the stretch of interstate between Columbia and Atlanta is the most desolate stretch of road ever created. The asphalt is torn to shreds, blown tires litter the road and Ma and Pa Kettle tow their antiquated Winnebago at 55 mph, making I-20 a perpetual obstacle course. I didn't expect it to be a smooth drive; I expected some problems. I didn't expect, however, the awful driving I witnessed once I made it back to Columbia. Here's the story:

I was merging onto I-26 from I-20, minding my own business, making sure I checked my blind spots, using my turn signal, everything a good driver is supposed to do. I made it from the entrance ramp to the far right lane without a problem. Then, I encountered the Honda Accord.

Ms. Honda Accord was in the middle lane of I-26 and decided she wanted to get off at the Broad River Road exit.

The thing is, the Broad River Road exit ramp is the same as the entrance ramp onto I-26 from I-20. People have about 25 feet to get onto I-26 from I-20 and get out of the way of everybody trying to get off onto Broad River Road. It's an accident waiting to happen.

So, I merged into the right lane of I-26. Ms. Honda Accord was to my left in the middle lane. Without using her turn signal and without so much as a glance over her shoulder, Ms. Honda Accord swung her car into my lane — more accurately, into the space occupied by me. There was a slamming of breaks, a squealing of tires, a honking of the horn and a use of some not-so-choice words on my part, while she continued on her merry way down the exit ramp to Broad River Road without even a glance in her rearview mirror to see what all the commotion was about.

As she obliviously sped away, I noticed a telltale sticker in the back window. A university parking sticker. Ms. Honda Accord goes to school here.

It constantly amazes me that people, especially young people like us, take such risks behind the wheel. Where do our brains go when we crank the car? Obviously, we're not paying attention to the road.

Now, my driving record is less than pristine. When I was sixteen, I rendered my family car-less in fewer than ten days. The result of these catastrophes was that I had to go without a license for two-and-a-half years. It was either that or pay \$14,000 a year for my insurance.

Four years and many miles later, some people still love to rub it in my face. I can't drive, they say. I'll never be a good driver. I argue that I'm a better driver for my wrecks. I understand all too well what can happen when you're not paying attention.

I forget that most people haven't been in the wrecks I have. Most people haven't been T-boned by a speeding Buick. Most people haven't had their wrist snapped by an airbag. Most people don't have scars from an exploding windshield. Most people haven't had to lie in bed and think, "If it had happened a little differently, I could have killed somebody. I could have died."

So, put down the cell phone. Pick what CD to listen to before you leave. Don't put on your makeup in the car. Check your blind spot. Use your turn signal.

Above all, stay focused on the road.

Peek behind the curtains of The Birdcage

BY ASHLEY VAUGHAN
THE GAMECOCK

Pulsating techno-remixed pop classics and energetic performances dominated The Birdcage, the Bisexual Gay and Lesbian Alliance's annual drag show, held Tuesday in the Russell House Ballroom.

Patti O'Furniture began the show with a rendition of "It's Raining Men." Other highlights included a performance of "Lady Marmalade" featuring Samantha Hunter, Marla Vega and Nicole Roberts; a mind-blowing version of "Rescue Me" by a Cher look-alike, Chanel Stevens; Hunter's amazing impression of Tina Turner; and several Dolly Parton songs, lip-synched by Nicole Roberts, reigning Mrs. South Carolina Gay Pride. Roberts confessed that Parton is one of her inspirations. "I think she is wonderful, and she's even said that, if she were a man, she would be a drag queen."

The drag queens have between one year and 26 years of experience, and five out of the six queens live as men. Chanel Stevens, the exception O'Furniture describes as "the illusion that causes mass confusion," goes about her daily life in full drag. "I'm one of those people that they talk about in line at the grocery store," she said.

The performers take an average of an hour to put on

their makeup, but it can take some up to two hours. Hunter claims she can do it in fifteen minutes flat. "I'm a miracle woman!" she said.

Many of the performers got into drag because of others' encouragement. For some, however, becoming a drag queen was a life-long dream. "Years ago, when I was a little bitty boy, I've always had this dream of being a drag queen. I would dress up in my mother's clothes and makeup and high heels, and it just started from there, I guess," Vega said. Most of the performers don't shave their legs, but they do have to suffer the pain of other female rituals, such as plucking their eyebrows and wearing high heels. The experience has given some of them a new respect for women who endure these activities daily. "The first time I did this, I called my mother the day afterwards and told her that I have more sympathy for her and my sister and women everywhere. Pantyhose, high heels and makeup should be outlawed. You all are beautiful just the way you are," O'Furniture said.

The Birdcage's entertainers offered some advice for those curious about becoming drag queens. "Just pay attention and practice and don't give up," Vega said.

O'Furniture said, "Find a mentor, and go out to the clubs. Most female impersonators and drag queens that I know are always



Samantha Hunter (front), Marla Vega and Nicole Roberts demonstrate their runway abilities. PHOTO BY ANNIE LEE

willing to share the tricks of the trade."

All the entertainers say they're happy with USC's response to them. "The students are always so wonderful... they always give me a thunderous round of applause, so I love it," Roberts said.

O'Furniture added, "We are always excited about doing this show. All of the performers, and I think I can speak for them, are thrilled. This is one of the best-attended events that the BGLA does... I just want to thank all of the USC students for being such a good crowd."

'Theatrical rock' comes to Columbia

BY AUBREY FOGLE
THE GAMECOCK

Captured! By Robots will bring its theatrical rock to Uncle Doctor's tonight for the Mystery Science Rock Show, which will also feature Mandible, Cursor and Marion.

Beginning the four-hour show will be Cursor and Marion, two hard-core South Carolina bands, followed by the rock-electronic sounds of Mandible, a band whose show is rooted in audience participation.

Captured! By Robots, on its seventh national tour, will headline

the show. The band represents the classic story of technology gone wrong. Its leader, JBOT, was a scientist who was shunned by his peers, giving him the idea to build two buddy robots to be his bandmates. The robots turned out to be evil, however, and, after overpowering the feeble scientist, they inserted a chip into his brain and started controlling him.

A reporter from the San Francisco Bay Guardian described a typical Captured! By Robots show: "(JBOT) stamped his feet and flailed about as if in horrible pain throughout every tune. One might even have

thought his frenzied motions had something to do with various switches and foot pedals controlling the robots' voices and instruments, but that would make the man some sort of techno-punk equivalent of Charlie Hunter." Other stage effects add to Captured! By Robots' entertaining presence — the band members' heads twist and their eyes shine when they speak. JBOT also sometimes wears an S&M mask.

The Mystery Science Rock Show will begin at Uncle Doctor's at 9 p.m. The cover is \$7.

Scarowinds returns to haunt visitors of amusement park

BY KRISTEN THOMAS
THE GAMECOCK

For the second year, Carowinds has transformed its amusement park into Scarowinds, one of the largest haunted attractions in the Carolinas. More than 50 acres of clowns and cartoon characters have been replaced by ghosts and goblins, and special, scary twists have been added to the rides.

Scarowinds will include five haunted attractions, 10 park rides and 96 actors. Scarowinds will be open every Friday and Saturday in October from 7 p.m. to midnight. The attractions will include:

The Asylum: A labyrinth of chain link and mirrors will guide you as you walk through a room filled with flashing lights, dense fog, chilling music and irregular, unfeeling walls. To spice it up a bit, there will be emotionally tortured victims that are trying to escape the mad scientists that dwell in the asylum.

Dungeon of Doom: With a devilish wink and foreboding laugh, a hooded figure ushers you into this dark gothic castle. You move inside, keeping your distance from the strange security guard. As you creep through the corridors, you enter one terrifying room after another. Doors within this dominion

of the undead open and shut randomly. Chains rattle as you descend deeper into this horrific haunted house.

Bloodbath Bayou: In an old steamboat, you ride through the swamp amidst an eerie fog and visit an ornate bayou cemetery, where a mausoleum taunts you. Alligators, snakes and rats are guaranteed to send chills down your spine. Decayed zombies creep around you as ghosts howl in the wind.

Circus of Horrors 3D: You wear 3D glasses as you enter, immediately encountering Madam Olga's Traveling Freak Show, where you are accosted by out-of-the-ordinary clowns, terrifying circus animals and Bozo's evil twin. For the full effect, hideous laughter and chilling organ music plays in the background.

Elvira's Superstition: Elvira, mistress of the dark, invites you along for the motion simulator ride of your afterlife. It's full scream ahead interactive entertainment, the likes of which no living being has ever seen.

General admission tickets are \$29.99. Special discounts are available at participating Wendy's Restaurants and Circle K convenience stores. For more information, call 1-800-888-4FUN or visit the Web site at www.carowinds.com.