

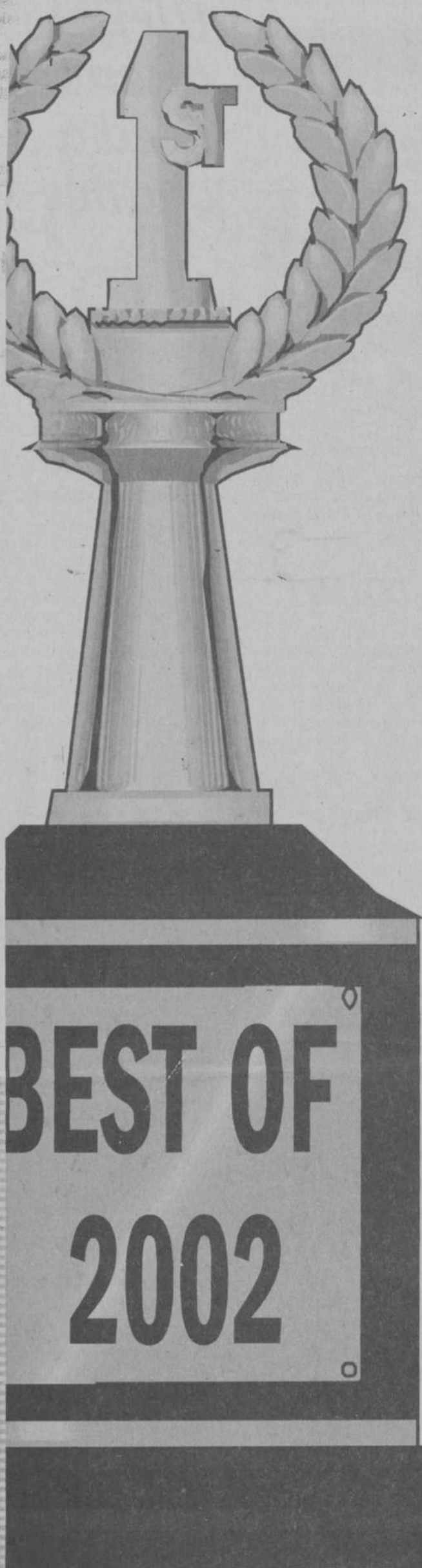
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THE MIX

MARY FRANCES KENNEDY FISHER:
"There is a mistaken idea, ancient but still with us, that an overdose of anything from fornication to hot chocolate will teach restraint by the very results of its abuse."



Best Best

As the year winds down, The Gamecock reviews the best in movies, music and video games.

MUSIC



"BLAZING ARROW"
Blackalicious

BY JUSTIN BAJAN
THE GAMECOCK

"Blazing Arrow" by Blackalicious is truly a landmark for modern hip-hop. The album is composed of 17 tracks that fused together the lyrical wizardry of Gift of Gab and the sonic mastery of producer Chief X-Cel. Songs such as "First in Flight," "Make You Feel That Way" and "Green Light: Now Begin" make you feel good, while songs like "Paragraph Calisthenics" and "Release" blow your mind. It's rare to find good hip-hop on a major label these days, but Blackalicious proved to be an intelligent, soulful exception.



"SEA CHANGE"
Beck

BY TUG BAKER
THE GAMECOCK

Beck's "Sea Change" is a singer-songwriter masterpiece, the likes of which have not been heard for many years. Beck has finally managed to take all the musical-genre hodgepodge he has produced over the years and melt it down to its purest form, a fusion based mainly on country-rock. While the music is what drives the record, the words are what make it a worthy contender for album of the year. The last time lyrics were this personal yet conveyed such universal feelings was on Nick Drake's "Pink Moon." Listeners can only hope Beck stays with us for much longer.



"SONGS FOR THE DEAF"
Queens of the Stone Age

BY CHARLES TOMLINSON
THE GAMECOCK

The newest incarnation of Queens of the Stone Age looks like a grunge supergroup from the '90s; Dave Grohl plays drums, and Screaming Trees' Mark Lanegan sings occasionally. It's important, despite the big names, that the musicians make striking music together - and that they do. Guitarist Josh Homme and bassist Nick Olivieri, who form the group's nucleus, make every song a memorable kick in the pants. "No One Knows" earned the band mainstream success, and Grohl pounds the drums like he hasn't done in years.



"ALL OF THE ABOVE"
J-Live

BY TITAN BARKSDALE
THE GAMECOCK

It was almost the middle of the year, and still no hip-hop album had been released that had "it." Many of them alienated too many potential listeners because of a lack of balance. But J-Live's "All of the Above" was quite the contrary. J-Live boasts an aggressive delivery and diverse subject matter that engage listeners. While many albums contain intricate production that suffocates artists' voices and messages, "All of the Above" heightens the mood J-Live creates with his words. "All of the Above" is a pure hip-hop album that has "it."

BEST OF
2002

Honorable Mentions

Music

Coldplay: "A Rush of Blood to the Head"

Movies

"Spider-Man"

Video Games

"Neverwinter Nights"

MOVIES



"PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE"
Starring Adam Sandler and Emily Watson

BY TUG BAKER
THE GAMECOCK

Most people can't talk about "Punch-Drunk Love" without mentioning the pure brilliance (or stupidity, depending on the viewer) of putting Adam Sandler in a romantic art film. While Sandler's performance is one of the most affecting in Hollywood this year, the real treat of the film is Paul Thomas Anderson's terrific screenplay and brilliant directing. It is rare to find a movie in which music, dialogue and visuals come together and completely relay the actor's feelings to audiences. When Sandler's character, Barry Egan, gets nervous, the audience can't help but feel his anxiety. Ironically, romance and violence for once go together in this, one of the most neurotically beautiful movies of all time.



"THE SWEETEST THING"
Starring Cameron Diaz and Christina Applegate

BY KRISTIN CHANDLER
THE GAMECOCK

"The Sweetest Thing," advertised as "a romantic comedy without the sugar," is a giddy, laugh-out-loud, dance-in-your-seat comedy. The movie follows fun-loving Christina (Cameron Diaz) as she dates her way through San Francisco's men. Clubbing with gal pals Courtney (Christina Applegate) and Jane (Selma Blair), Christina finally meets Peter (Thomas James), who she can't stop thinking about; unfortunately, she can't find him, either. While Jane encounters some trouble with her well-equipped boyfriend, Christina and Courtney set out to track Peter down, and they run into hilarious obstacles with a distinctly girly twist.



"SIGNS"
Starring Mel Gibson and

BY PAT CAULEY
THE GAMECOCK

Heading off the success of "The Sixth Sense" and "Unbreakable," M. Night Shyamalan was determined to make a film to scare and inspire. He achieved this in "Signs." The plot follows Graham Hess, a retired preacher played by Mel Gibson who lives on a farm with his children and younger brother Merrill, played by Joaquin Phoenix. Mysterious crop circles begin to appear on their farm and across the world. The key to "Signs" is found in its stylistic diversity. The movie is not merely a thriller - it also uses elements of humor and drama to relate the story. Although the ending is a little disappointing, "Signs" truly does deliver.

Alumnus tries to make a slash in Hollywood

USC graduate in media arts filmed around Columbia

BY PAT CAULEY
THE GAMECOCK

In 1992, Jeff Miller graduated from USC with a degree in media arts. Ever since, his life as a filmmaker has been a roller-coaster ride all the way to Hollywood. Miller started Millman Productions, which he operates now in California. But after working as a producer for the films "Hell Block 13" and "Freakshow," Miller decided it was time to make his own film. So Miller wrote, produced and directed the movie "Head Cheerleader, Dead Cheerleader," which features Airport High School's District Stadium and the exterior of Brookland-Cayce High School. Most of the film, however, takes place in the cheerleaders' homes; for that, houses in

West Columbia, Lexington, Cayce and Irmo were used.

The film's plot follows a cheerleading squad the night before a big football game. But a killer is on the loose, and he is stalking the vulnerable cheerleaders and anyone else who gets in his way.

The movie comprises a decent cast that features Tasha Biering; Bill Roberson, who appeared in "Forrest Gump"; and Debbie Rochon, who was brought in from New York to co-star. The film, which Miller described as a mix between "Scream" and "Clerks," has scares and laughs, and it keeps viewers guessing about the killer's identity until the climactic ending.

Music fans will find the soundtrack to be a killer as well. It features Hick'ry Hawkins and Sidemeat, Isabelle's Gift, Bone Machine and Tarwater.

"Head Cheerleader, Dead Cheerleader" is available at Amazon.com, DeadAlive.com, and specialty video shops around Columbia. Hollywood Video might also pick up the film. Miller, who now lives in

"Head Cheerleader, Dead Cheerleader" is about a killer who stalks a cheerleading squad before a big game.

California, said perseverance, talent and luck are the keys for aspiring filmmakers and actors. Miller tries hard daily to follow his own advice. He constantly networks, makes phone calls, sends faxes and otherwise tries to make contacts that could help him move ahead in the film industry.

"Plans for now include promoting the film, as well as working on some intriguing new projects," Miller said. Independent films often work as resumes for new filmmakers and actors, and that is what Miller wants his project to do.

For more information go to www.geocities.com/hollywood-isburning/hcdc.html or call 1-800-800-6665.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockmixeditor@hotmail.com

VIDEO GAMES

BY BEN ANGSTADT
THE GAMECOCK

'Resident Evil'

Whoever said an old dog couldn't learn new tricks? Capcom proved the adage wrong when it released a remake of the 1996 classic "Resident Evil," the first in a series of "Resident Evil" games exclusive to the Nintendo GameCube. You play as either Chris or Jill, operatives of the S.T.A.R.S. SWAT team, as they investigate strange goings-on in the Spenser Mansion. With new puzzles, new monsters and a redesigned mansion, this new "Resident Evil" is for series newcomers and veterans alike. It won't merely creep you out, like the original did - it'll just plain scare the hell out of you.

'Red Faction II'

In a futuristic world, an army of genetically enhanced soldiers who were once the military of the "Commonwealth" are now enemies of the state. Now, supersoldier-turned-superhero Alias must fight alongside the Red Faction to overthrow the oppressive regime under Gen. Sopot. This sequel brought back the same winning formula from the first "Red Faction," including fully destructible environments, and added a new squad-based combat system in which computer-controlled allies fight alongside players. Coupled with a greatly expanded multiplayer mode, "RFII" was one of the year's best first-person shooters.

'Super Mario Sunshine'

"It's-a me, Mario!" After six long years with no true sequel to "Super Mario 64," those few words were a breath of fresh air for platform-starved gamers and Nintendo fans. And "Super Mario Sunshine" didn't disappoint. When Mario's vacation is ruined by a look-alike with a penchant for graffiti, it's up to the plumber himself to clean things up. This time, he's got his new water pack, Fludd, which lets him spray water streams and hover through the air. With rock-solid, simple game play, "Sunshine" brought Nintendo's icon back to the spotlight, where he belongs.

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