

Deathtrap

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tures her role and performs it well.

Jeremy W. Gingrich, in his first big role on stage, plays the smart and slightly goofy Clifford, handling the physical aspects of the role with ease and grace.

Houston McMillon, who stars

as Bruhl's attorney Porter Milgrim, enunciates the role well, his character is much less memorable than Carol Glass' Helga, a psychic, whose delightful dialogue contains most of the laughs.

While the play has its problems, the lighting by Barry Sparks and the set design by Walter O'Rourke and Randy Strange are exquisite. There

were some direction issues with timing, but overall the performance went well.

The play just doesn't seem as timely as it could have 20 years ago, however, and that is where "Deathtrap" fails to trap this youthful reviewer.

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Thomas Reed

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stacles of Columbia's music scene. "There's no major music venue near the university anymore now that Elbow Room shut down. As far as the club scene goes there aren't as many stepping stones as there used to be."

"It's tough when bands like Hootie blew up and Edwin McCain and all that. It's had a domino effect on the whole music scene. The backlash hits you. Everybody's going to turn their nose up at anything that's radio friendly. All of the local music around here is real artsy or jammy. We just play rock songs, man," Baker explained.

But the band shows no signs of giving up. Thomas Reed Band is here to stay because it's not just about success; it's about friendship, the fans, and most importantly, feel good music.

"We're in it for the long haul, Nathan Reed said.

David Reed holds on tightly to his dream.

"I'm going to make the world see things my way eventually," he said.

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CD REVIEW

Common triumphs with atypical album



"ELECTRIC CIRCUS"

Common

HHHHH out of IIII

BY JUSTIN BAJAN
THE GAMECOCK

During his 11 years as an emcee, Common has accrued a fairly impressive list of achievements. He collaborated with such reputable acts as De La Soul, The Roots, Lauryn Hill, Erykah Badu and D'Angelo. He's battled Ice Cube and even won a Grammy.

In over a decade he's gone from a brash, high-pitched young buck

from Chicago to a deep, introspective and soulful world-traveler.

Common's newest album, "Electric Circus," is his fifth and most atypical venture to date.

It feels decidedly retro: the cover; song titles such as "Soul Power," "The Hustle," "Between Me, You and Liberation"; and production featuring funky keys and Hendrix-like guitar riffs. But its approach is anything but old.

For instance, who in hip-hop would work with Stereolab, Zap Mama and Sonny from P.O.D.; sing a song with his dad; talk about marriage; and admit and change prejudiced views on one album?

Common proves that it can sound good to grow up, that it's more hip to rap about love than hate, that it's possible to mix brash raps with soothing poetry.

On "Soul Power," Common raps over a BPM-pushing beat by Jay Dee, reminding his skeptics that he's ferocious as ever. He raps corrosive lines like "Still in the bidness of smacking rappers; that's wack/you had a dope track/I guess opposites attract."

Common makes his put-down personal, blasting Ja-Rule by spitting "you made a hit, and came upon a few dollars/I'd rather listen to silence than you holler" and then insinuates that Ja-Rule is a copycat of the legendary 2Pac: "You borrowed your persona/from the late that made 'Dear Mama.'"

Standard hip-hop fans will consider "New Wave" alienating. It features Common with Sadier from Stereolab. The track is a completely synthesized romp, mixing the melodious chorus supplied by Sadier and the swift rhymes of Common.

"Electric Circus" is the culmination of Common's artistic development: It shows a mature man who is secure with his emotions and sensitivity and the beauty that is extracted from music when an artist really lets go. This album truly a triumph for Common.

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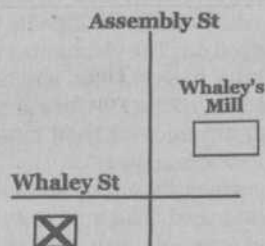
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