

Rash

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The fourth is his son, Isaac, who loses his parents to an almost-literal Noah's flood.

The fifth and final narrator is the deputy sheriff, who casts a skeleton into the depths of a river forged by Carolina Power.

This is a novel you don't simply read, but feel, smell and see.

The graveyard scenes are lush with dark imagery, rendering coffins and corpses. The pages read as if painted with the dry-mouthed sensation of interminable drought.

Water seems to be less a symbol of life than of death; for example: "I didn't want to be on this water no more. ... I wouldn't be coming back here to fish or water-ski or swim."

Rash makes water terrifying, and this makes Rash a flight of steps higher than your typical Anne Rice.

The final scene where the deputy stares into the old town of Jocassee, now 200 feet under water, is almost Faulkner-esque in its

morbid wonder.

Colloquial dialogue is hard to pull off, much less colloquial prose. Once knee-deep in the novel, as you become immune to the double negatives, you grow to appreciate the evocative Southern metaphors. But Rash lays it on a little thick in some places. Lines like, "muscles wrapped around his arms like muscadine vines," work well, but would be even more provocative if rationed out.

Some pages seem decorated with regional metaphors.

It's especially tough to lure readers into a genre associated with so many stereotypes and prejudices.

It's also especially easy to turn off a reader with a character that might seem ignorant and uncultured on the surface. But Rash's characters breathe, think and regret.

Amy best represents the tone and theme of "One Foot in Eden." Plagued by the memory of her brother's death, Amy can't overcome the notion that God is punishing her for pushing her brother off the second floor of her family's barn.

But the reader has to wonder about her penitence. She contemplates sorcery and witchcraft in order to give her husband a child.

When that doesn't work she commits adultery — Amy stands with one foot in Eden and the other in some lower level of Dante's Inferno.

The most interesting thing about Amy is that she's the brainchild of Rash. He just barely pulls this off — it's hard to say whether Amy's first-person voice is convincingly female. But her emotions and motives are believable enough.

Rash has enjoyed a successful career, and this novel promises much more success to come.

Rash also authored three books of poetry, two collections of short stories and one children's book.

One hopes his first children's book shies away from the gloom and doom of his first novel. It's a little unsettling to imagine Ron Rash reading a fully illustrated version of "One Foot In Eden" to a class of first-graders.

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

CD REVIEW

Visionary DiFranco evolves, takes risks in latest release



"EVOLVE"
Ani DiFranco
★★★★ out of ★★★★★

BY ASHLEY VAUGHAN
THE GAMECOCK

Ani DiFranco has done it again. Just when it seemed that she had achieved the pinnacle of

perfection on her last release, DiFranco makes taking risks look easy on her latest LP, "Evolve."

The title says it all, signifying the process of constant growth that fuels DiFranco's music.

Starting off the album is "Promised Land," a daring but subdued track about discovery.

Trembling trumpet notes create a melancholy feel, while the addition of piano gives the DiFranco's nostalgic, introspective lyrics an almost surreal feel.

With its funky beats, "In the Way" is just as bold. While the song showcases DiFranco's spec-

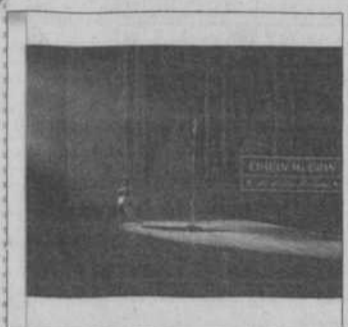
tacular voice, trumpets and additional vocals add a harmonious texture to DiFranco's signature guitar-picking. DiFranco's eclectic combination of instruments, including guitar, drums, accordion and even clarinet on "Icarus," challenges the listener's expectations and illustrates DiFranco's talent as a producer.

Soulful songs including "Phase" and "Second Intermission" sound like secret confessions and demonstrate DiFranco's deep understanding of human nature. The extremely

♦ DIFRANCO, SEE PAGE 10

CD REVIEW

Album captures Edwin's acoustic concert



"THE AUSTIN SESSIONS"
Edwin McCain
★★★★ out of ★★★★★

BY MEG MOORE
THE GAMECOCK

In the pop-rock world, there are two general groups of artists: those that have genuine musical talent and those that are genuinely talented at selling records. Occasionally, a performer will emerge that has the ability to do

both, even if it is for just a fleeting musical moment.

Hailing from Greenville, singer/songwriter Edwin McCain managed to score a major-mainstream hit with his love anthem, "I'll Be," which sweet-talked its way onto radio playlists in 1997. He set wedding bands a-singing with his follow-up hit "I Could Not Ask for More" as well. Yet when radio listeners turned to edgier tunes in the following years, McCain's brand of honest pop-rock became buried beneath rap-rock and bubblegum pop.

Yet, as evidenced by his Feb. 25 release, "The Austin Sessions," McCain has been anything but idle over the past few years.

Anyone who has seen one of McCain's live shows can attest to the fact that he is an almost incomparable performer, a true musician with an amazingly talented band that in many ways — from

its unassuming appearance to the saxophonist's sizzling solos — is reminiscent of Springsteen's E-Street-ers.

"The Austin Sessions" captures what is arguably the most compelling part of a McCain concert — the acoustic set.

McCain is a phenomenal vocalist, soulful and heartfelt; sans studio effects and over-production, McCain's honest songs bloom into lush ballads and sprawl into bar-room ramblings, as the case may be.

The album includes a few previously unreleased McCain originals, including the opening tune "Let It Slide," a song that chronicles McCain's bar-hopping adventures with a biker-esque buddy in Memphis. Acoustic versions of tunes previously featured on McCain albums take on new lives on his latest release as well.

"Ghosts of Jackson Square"

which explores the streets of New Orleans during Mardi Gras exudes a refurbished sincerity. McCain also includes a few cover songs on the 12-track album, the standout being "No Choice," a folk tune that fittingly depicts the tortured troubadour.

Overall, "The Austin Sessions" is a masterful 'unplugged' album from a tremendously talented singer/songwriter. Although McCain has yet to schedule any shows in South Carolina this spring, he will be playing in Charlotte April 5.

"The Austin Sessions" exemplifies the best of what Edwin McCain, one of mainstream music's most underrated songwriters, has to offer — honest stories, a candid delivery and a whole lot of Southern soul.

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

NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN

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www.newbrooklandtavern.com

Directions: Just across the Gervais St. Bridge - Left at Second Light

<p>Wed 3-19 9pm show Non-Stop Hip Hop Live! Freestyle Contest III featuring Mars ILL</p>	<p>Sat 3-22 9pm show Lake Trout</p> <p>Delicious Roni Zagoria</p>
<p>Thu 3-20 9pm show Crooked Fingers Eric Bachmann of Archers of Loaf</p> <p>Mason Jennings Andrew Francis</p>	<p>Sun 3-23 8pm show AISLERS SET Hella The Quails Winged DNA and the Lesser Light</p>
<p>Fri 3-21 CD release party! BOLT</p> <p>featuring the return of Perfect Sleeper Skillit / Perfect Sleeper side project Cuatro Mono Mandible</p>	<p>Mon 3-24 Week Two The Jam Room ACOUSTIC SHOWDOWN II</p> <p>Tue 3-25 9pm free show CAROLINA Homegrown Pop 39 Don't Tell Dick Magic Johnson Ride</p> <p>Wed 3-26 Of Montreal</p> <p>Thu 3-27 Red Elvises</p>

As an engineer in the U.S. Air Force, there's no telling what you'll work on. (Seriously, we can't tell you.)

United States Air Force applied technology is years ahead of what you'll touch in the private sector, and as a new engineer you'll likely be involved at the ground level of new and sometimes classified developments. You'll begin leading and managing within this highly respected group from day one. Find out what's waiting behind the scenes for you in the Air Force today. To request more information, call 1-800-423-USAF or log on to airforce.com.



U.S. AIR FORCE
CROSS INTO THE BLUE

Don't Stop Thinking about Tomorrow

Upcoming Events on Sustainable Futures

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Noted Filmmaker and author John DeGraft presents:

"Affluenza"

A Screening and discussion of his documentary film

Afflu-en-za n. 1. The bloated, sluggish and unfulfilled feeling that results from efforts to keep up with the Joneses. 2. An epidemic of stress, overwork, waste and indebtedness caused by dogged pursuit of the American Dream. 3. An unsustainable addiction to economic growth.

3:30 PM, Gambrell Hall 251

"Take Back Your Time"

DeGraft will discuss the epidemic of overwork, over scheduling and "time famine" that now threatens our health, families, communities and environment.

7:30 PM: Moore School of Business, Auditorium 002

Thursday, April 3, 2003

"The Inevitable End of Agriculture as We Know It"

Wes Jackson, Director
The Land Institute

7:30 PM: Gambrell Hall, Auditorium 153

Wes Jackson is the founder and director of the Land Institute, an experimental research and educational organization located in Salina, Kansas. He was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship in 1992. His books include: *Becoming Native to this Place*, *Alfalfa of Unhewn Stone*, and *New Roots for Agriculture*.

All events are free of charge and open to the public.

Sponsored by the USC School of the Environment, Sustainable Universities Initiative, and the South Carolina Honors College

