



THE MIX

THEY SAID IT

LOUIS PASTEUR: "In the fields of observation, chance favors only the prepared mind."

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Side project takes center STAGE

PHOTO BY JUSTIN CHAPPELL/THE GAMECOCK

Matt Pryor of The New Amsterdams performs at New Brookland Tavern on Monday night.

SHOW REVIEW

Get Up Kids front man Matt Pryor engages area fans with his emotive, laid-back brand of indie Americana

THE NEW AMSTERDAMS
New Brookland Tavern
★★★★ out of ☆☆☆☆

BY JUSTIN CHAPPELL
THE GAMECOCK

The New Amsterdams, with an indie Americana sound, entertained fans at New Brookland Tavern on Monday night with songs of longing and learning. The one-man band opened for Straylight Run.

The New Amsterdams, quickly becoming a well-established side project of Get Up Kids front man Matt Pryor, began the evening with a local favorite, "Stay On The Phone." A song from Pryor's second album, "Para Toda Vida," it portrays the difficulty of being an on-tour musician and the stress of not being around loved ones: "One waitress/ Outside of/ Phone booth, South Carolina/ Sits, keeps killing time ... Why am I here?/ Why aren't I home?/ As the line builds for the phone."

During a brief interview, Pryor said, "The majority of my songs are written either for, or about, my wife." And with such lines as "The end of the day/ I'm alone, and so are you," and "Still, I can't speak long/ The show has to go on/ At best I might question/ The focus of my attention," it is easy to see that his personal road life

fuses with his songwriting.

In "The Spoils Of The Spoiled," from "Worse for the Wear" — his third full-length release — Pryor touches on the maturation he has undergone as a songwriter: "But, I'm older now, and don't/ You know, I've figured/ Out the antidote." He also references an emerging realistic, hard-work approach to his music and life: "Our hopes and/ Plans are unfulfilled ... There's a proper place and time/ Though the bags under your eyes/ They don't lie."

Clad in a red, white and blue plaid shirt with double snap-shut breast pockets — like something from a country-Western store — and outfitted with an acoustic guitar and harmonica, Pryor had a disarming presence that established a sense of camaraderie with the crowd. Between songs, he told a quirky story about a past show and an incident with a thrown shoe.

The story did not really go anywhere, but it had the same appeal as a midnight fireside chat with friends. Fans shouted song requests, which he honored for the most part, but in just he would throw out witty quips like, "What is this, indie Rock Karaoke?"

Pryor said being front man in the Get Up Kids initially fueled the formation of The New Amsterdams: "I needed something for my own, something I could take sole ownership of." And while he is creating that one-man show, Pryor said The New Amsterdams also serves as an "outlet away from the Get Up Kids ... being away makes coming back that much better."

In addition to writing songs for his wife, Pryor said that some songs are written "for friends and my daughter." But he never admits to them that they are the subjects of his songs because "they would beat me up." Pausing to think for a moment, he added "Well, not my daughter — she is only 18 months old."

With a full-sounding acoustic guitar, brief harmonica accompaniments and exposed emotional singing, it's amazing The New Amsterdams is a one-man band.

As Pryor let the last note of his final song resonate through the crowd, he stepped back slowly and said with humble ownership, "Thanks. I'm The New Amsterdams."

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

PLAY REVIEW

'Menagerie' journeys South

"THE GLASS MENAGERIE"
Theatre USC
★★★★ out of ☆☆☆☆

BY GRAHAM CULBERTSON
THE GAMECOCK

Theatre USC, after an excellent production of Moliere's "Tartuffe," has chosen to put on a piece that hits closer to home—Tennessee Williams' "The Glass Menagerie." Regarded by many as the greatest playwright the South has ever produced, Williams found his breakthrough play in "The Glass Menagerie."

It is a story of the South in exile. The action takes place in St. Louis, but revolves around a mother, Amanda Wingfield, who cannot forget her roots in the Southern plantation system and her two children.

The play's central conflict stems from Wingfield's indelible attachment to memory. Her son, Tom, is disgusted with her refusal to let go of the past, as she keeps retelling the old stories of her days as a Southern belle.

Tom Wingfield is the younger of the two children, but he is the only family member who interacts with the real world. He is also the play's narrator and tells us in the prologue that we are witnessing a memory play.

Brian Schilb, as Tom, rises to the challenge as narrator and performer. Throughout the character's narration, Schilb dominates the theater with his powerful voice, demanding the audience's attention. However, when he interacts with the other characters on stage, Tom seems more restrained and less open.

Sarah Barker, as Amanda Wingfield, ultimately anchors this production with her powerful performance, one that leaves no doubt about Amanda's status as a fallen Southern matriarch. Obsessed with the idea of "gentleman callers" and desperate for her slightly handicapped daughter to either start working or get married, her greatest fear is that her daughter will become a spinster. Barker embraces the contradictions in Amanda's character as she bemoans her choice of a husband—a telephone man who fell in love with long distance and hasn't been seen since—even as she speaks of her love for him. The scenes in which she berates, mothers and genuinely listens to Tom all ring equally true.

Playing the daughter, Laura, Kay Allmand captures her character's slight limp and paralyzing shyness. Far more interesting, however, is Jim O'Connor (Steven Fenley), a friend and co-worker of

Tom's. Finally caving in to his mother's memories, Tom invites Jim to dinner as the long-awaited gentleman caller whom Amanda has always wanted for her daughter. Fenley, who is excellent as the villainous title character in "Tartuffe," gives an even better performance in "Menagerie." He refuses to play Jim with either the traveling-salesman smarminess or the boy-next-door earnestness that the role could exude. Instead, Fenley manages to effectively imbue his performance with elements of both.

In the end, the play still belongs to Tom and Amanda. By this point in their lives, the only thing they have in common is a shared affection for Laura—Tom works all day in the warehouse to support his family and goes out every night to get away from his mother. Both of the actors shift seamlessly from one aspect of their characters' personalities to the next, going from yelling at each other in one scene to being united in concern for Laura the next. Both Schilb and Barker, speaking with perfect Southern accents, not only bring Tennessee Williams' characters to life but make us genuinely care about them.

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

Ballet bites back

Reprising "Dracula: Ballet with a Bite" for the 10th-consecutive year, Columbia City Ballet combines Halloween with high art

BY CAITLIN COKER
THE GAMECOCK

Columbia City Ballet's production of "Dracula: Ballet with a Bite" returns to the Koger Center for the Arts this weekend. This 10th-anniversary production is a popular adaptation of Bram Stoker's "Dracula," the classic vampire thriller.

The story begins with Jonathan Harker, a British lawyer, traveling to Transylvania to settle real-estate dealings with Count Dracula. Harker takes the audience to a spooky world where music and lights fill the scenes with eerie suspense. Harker sleeps in the count's castle, only to be awakened by three seductive demon-maidens lusting for his blood.

Harker flees Dracula's castle and returns to England, but the count follows him. The drama escalates as Dracula transforms one of Harker's patients into a vampire and targets Harker's daughter

next. Not only is the subject matter alone unusual, but the manner in which William Starrett, artistic director of Columbia City Ballet, has created the adaptation is also delightfully eccentric.

Much of the costuming and choreography is untraditional, developing a visible, onstage contrast between the townspeople of England and the vampires of Transylvania. The demon-maidens wear bra-tops and sheer dresses as they writhe their torsos in a very un-balletic fashion—all en pointe.

"It's all classical ballet with an overlay of house music and house moves," said Sydney Miller, the general manager of Columbia City Ballet.

"Dracula" successfully invokes the suspense of any Halloween horror film. The score is spine-tingling, utilizing wolf howls and eerie heartbeats. The action centers on the macabre—for example, in one

scene a vampire chases Harker's daughter in a creepy, zombie-like manner, thirsting for her blood.

The show involves death, and consequently, there is blood everywhere. Children are encouraged to attend the shows, but parental discretion is advised.

The Columbia community is fortunate to have one of the only two professional ballet companies within South Carolina right in its backyard. On top of this, Columbia City Ballet is the only professional ballet company between Florida and Washington, D.C., that performs its own full-length, original ballet.

"It is a big deal that Columbia has a million-dollar ballet company in it," Miller said.

Company members range from university students to artists from all over the world. Katie Smoak, a fourth-year advertising student, and Allison Bergman, a first-year public relations student, are both company members.

In "Dracula," Peter Kozak, a principal dancer of the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, will be performing the role of Jonathan Harker. Kozak, a former Columbia City Ballet principal dancer, returns year after year to perform in the company's original productions.

With four performances scheduled, "Dracula: Ballet with a Bite" runs from Thursday through Saturday. Ticket prices range from \$7 to \$40 and can be purchased at the Coliseum Box Office and all Capital Ticket outlets, by phone at 251-2222 or at www.koger.sc.edu. For more information, call 799-7605.

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PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

Columbia City Ballet's "Dracula: Ballet with a Bite" will begin this weekend at the Koger Center for the Arts.



TOP 10

The 10 most-played new releases on WUSC for the week of Oct. 19-26.

1. "CUP OF SAND" Superchunk
2. "STREETCORE" Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros
3. "TRANSLANTICISM" Death Cab for Cutie
4. "CHUTES TOO NARROW" Shins
5. "BIKINI STYLE" Popular Shapes
6. "BEFORE EVERYTHING AND AFTER" MXPX
7. "DEAR CATASTROPHE WAITRESS" Belle and Sebastian
8. "CONTINENTAL STOMP" Hot Club of Cowtown
9. "IN KEEPING SECRETS OF SILENT EARTH:3" Coheed and Cambria
10. "TELL BALGEARY, BALGURY IS DEAD" Ted Leo and The Pharmacists

American market adapts British TV for new audience

BY ANTHONY BREZNICAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Americans have been watching British TV shows for years, even if they haven't realized it.

When British television is interested in an American show, it usually just buys and broadcasts the original. U.S. television, meanwhile, has a long history of translating British shows into Americanized versions — although the results have been mixed.

Lost in translation so far has been NBC's "Coupling," about six friends negotiating their love lives amid a sea of ex-lovers.

The original BBC series is critically acclaimed and preparing to start its fourth season, while a DVD collection of its second season went on

sale Tuesday in the United States. The original is also shown regularly on the cable channel BBC America.

But NBC's "Coupling" has met with tepid critical and fan reaction, and it temporarily has been pulled from the air — a sign of waning network confidence.

Even from the start, the show faced changes by crossing the Atlantic. Some of the spicier sex jokes were cut, and the half-hour episodes were shortened eight minutes to inject commercials.

"It's easier doing it over here," laughed U.K.-based producer Sue Vertue, who collaborates on the BBC's "Coupling" with writer-husband Steven Moffat. "We don't have the same ... I think 'interference'

♦ BRITISH TV, SEE PAGE 8

CD REVIEW

'Theft' makes honest emo debut



"THE FIRE THEFT"
The Fire Theft
★★★★ out of ☆☆☆☆

BY CHARLES TOMLINSON
THE GAMECOCK

Even after Sunny Day Real Estate's two breakups, the band's members can't seem to stay away from one another. But unfortunately, you can't seem to get them all in one place anymore.

The Fire Theft reunites three-fourths of Sunny Day Real Estate's original lineup: singer and guitarist Jeremy Enigk, drummer William Goldsmith and bassist Nate Mendel.

Obviously, because of the musicians involved, the album begs for a comparison with Sunny Day's material. Many times, Enigk's melodies and phrasings don't stray too far from the Sunny Day formula. The album most resembles Sunny Day's final album, "The Rising Tide," an album that had a few shining moments but was generally bland.

The Fire Theft's debut, however, is much stronger because,

♦ THE FIRE THEFT, SEE PAGE 8