

Ginger hopeful takes 'Gilligan' role seriously

By Daniel Fienberg
KRT CAMPUS

From coconut radios to pesky cosmonauts to coconut phones to a surprising victory at the Cannes Film Festival, very little that happened on "Gilligan's Island" was ever mistaken for reality.

Leave it to "The Bachelor" mad scientist Mike Fleiss to turn the beloved Sherwood Schwartz chestnut into deliriously exploitative unscripted television. Featuring real people cast for their resemblance to popular culture's daffiest group of castaways, "The Real Gilligan's Island" premieres Tuesday on TBS.

Searching for the perfect lovely lady to stand in for glamorous actress Ginger, Fleiss turned to Rachel Hunter. Even though your typical swimsuit-modeling legend has better things to do than spend three weeks on a deserted island playing an elimination game for the kinds of prizes she could just buy on a whim, Hunter worked with Fleiss on ABC's

beauty show debacle "Are You Hot?" and jumped at the chance to collaborate again.

"I love working with Mike," Hunter gushes. "If there's anyone you're going to work with in reality, it's Mike. He pushes the envelope and knows reality inside and out. I've always just enjoyed his projects."

It didn't hurt that Hunter vividly remembers rushing home in the afternoons to watch episodes of "Gilligan's Island," which played regularly on one of the two stations her childhood home in New Zealand received.

"I just loved Gilligan, he was such a goofbag," she laughed. "I loved how even though it was deserted, all these colorful characters were always on the show — the crazy millionaires, the aloofness of Ginger always wafting about in her evening gown, Mary Ann just running around so happy about everything and cooking a pie and completely out of her mind. She should have been on Prozac the entire time. And

the Professor! He was so asexual, wasn't he?"

Although Hunter insists, as reality show contestants always seem to do, that she would relive the "Gilligan's" experience again in a heartbeat, she had many reservations about the limited food supply made available to the castaways as they competed in challenges based on incidents from the series.

"We were given certain things, but I couldn't eat," Hunter said. "It was like eating cardboard. You'll probably see a more voluptuous Rachel at the beginning and a more scrawny Rachel at the end."

"The Real Gilligan's Island" begins with two groups of castaways, from which a final group of seven — one for each character on the sitcom — will be chosen. Hunter's Ginger counterpart is former "Baywatch" star Nicole Eggert.

Hunter promises that she was always herself when the cameras were rolling and that she never felt any pressure to

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■ KRAUSS

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"He goes with me everywhere, and that's awesome," she says of Sam. "I thought 'Oh my God, how lucky I am that I can do that.'"

Hearing Krauss speak is a bit like seeing a picture of a favorite radio personality for the first time and finding that the face doesn't fit the voice. In Krauss' case, her speaking voice doesn't mesh with her angelic singing voice. She has a slight Midwest accent, which appears when she says something like "Oh geez."

She grew up a fan of classic rock bands like AC/DC and Aerosmith in Champaign, Ill., about 140 miles south of Chicago, and began playing violin at her mother's suggestion.

"My mom and dad wanted to put my brother and I in everything — art classes, sports. One of the things we were going to do is take an instrument for five years, and she chose the violin for me because my brother had the piano already. They

bought me a book, and I listened to records. I made a tape of whatever song I wanted to learn and would play it like 35 times."

She soon was winning ribbons and trophies at bluegrass fiddle contests. She began performing in a bluegrass group when she was only 12, and by 16 released her first album, "Too Late to Cry."

As well as anyone, Union Station has managed to stay true to its bluegrass roots while appealing to country and even pop listeners. They've recorded the traditional "Down to the River to Pray" and Ralph Stanley's "Heaven's Bright Shore" as well as Bad Company's "Oh, Atlanta" and the Allman Brothers' "Midnight Rider."

In the process they've sold 7 million albums — an extraordinary number for a bluegrass band.

"They've turned a lot of people on to the music and caused a lot of people to want to go out and learn how to play," said Dan Hays, executive director of the International Bluegrass Music Association.

■ FRIDAY

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watching thousands of shoppers from a third-story overlook.

Karen Burk, a spokeswoman at Wal-Mart Stores, said it was too early to comment on business and traffic around the country. She said there "was a huge rush" at 6 a.m., however.

The world's largest retailer drew throngs of shoppers with such deals as a \$139 flat-screen 20-inch TV/DVD combination; \$4.77 fondu sets; and \$25 children's bikes, she said.

At the Cabela's in Wheeling, W. Va., elk-skin slippers on sale for \$19.95 sold out within a half-hour. Another hot ticket item at the outfitter was a meat grinder half off of its usual \$100 price tag, said John Castillo, the store's marketing manager.

"There definitely seems to be more buying than a year ago," said Tracy Mullin, president of the Washington-based National Retail Federation, who checked out three malls in Virginia on Friday.

Stores are hoping that the shoppers will keep coming throughout the next month.

Already, hot items were selling out. At a Wal-Mart store in Alpharetta, Ga., just north of Atlanta, a supply of discounted personal video players from toy maker Hasbro Inc. sold out in just 12 minutes.

That is why many shoppers mapped out a strategy to get the most coveted bargains — in the wee hours of the morning.

"The deals are better this early in the morning," said Karen Dawkins, who was at a Toys R Us store in Columbia and was almost done with her buying shortly after 6 a.m. "I have my mother at Circuit City and my sister at Target."

Crystal Rhoades of Wake Forest, N.C., stood in front of a Hudson Bell department store in Raleigh, N.C.

The National Retail Federation projects that total sales, after restaurant and auto sales are excluded, will increase 4.5 percent for the November-December period. That would be less than the 5.1 percent gain of a year earlier.

The holiday shopping season got off to a slow start in Lafayette, La., where vandals apparently glued at least 200 locks on dozens of the town's biggest stores. That sent store managers on a frantic search for locksmiths and forced hundreds of would-be shoppers to wait outside.

Garan Wilson, one of the locksmiths to the rescue, made his way at 5 a.m. to Lafayette's Old Navy, pushing through about 500 shoppers to reach the lock.

"I found about a half a tube of glue stuck inside," he said.

In Portland, Ore., activists stood outside local malls urging frantic shoppers to take part in a 24-hour moratorium on consumer spending. They called it "Buy Nothing Day," hoping to throw a wrench into what they say is society's blind habit of consumerism.



From the WUSC DESK

DOGS DIE IN HOT CARS

Please Describe Yourself



Dogs Die in Hot Cars 'Please Describe Yourself' (V2)

Let's be honest, the early '80s was one mighty chic era. The remnants of punk dispersed and birthed what seemed like a hundred valid musical movements. Lately, many bands have started to mine an early '80s aesthetic, and Member's Only jackets have been flying off vintage store shelves like they're going out of style. British bands have been the leading purveyors in the throwback sweepstakes; groups like Franz Ferdinand, the Futureheads and Bloc Party have taken the sounds of post-punk and new wave and made them into something entirely their own. Glasgow's Dogs Die in Hot Cars follow suit nicely with an album brimming with the influence of XTC and the Talking Heads. This band has a definite playful streak; they claim that their name stems from a helium-induced hysteria. Indeed, all eleven songs on their debut full-length are as light and warm as a red balloon drifting on a warm April day. The acrobatics of dual vocalists Craig Macintosh and Gary Smith suggest the absurd image of Robert Smith and David Byrne hopped up on pixie stix. Their bouncy harmonies are best experienced on the song "Godhopping." Unlike their mooney-er, detached Brit-rock peers, Dogs Die in Hot Cars gleefully express a certain wide-eyed wonder. That feeling carries over to the album's artwork. A peek inside the CD booklet will reveal vivid modern art, most notably a picture of the band's heads imposed on nude, less-than-attractive bodies. These Glaswegians have every right to embrace the typical British "next big thing" posture, but instead what we get is a band completely unconcerned with image and pretense. Because of this fact, "Please Describe Yourself" is one of the most complete and promising debut albums of the year.

RED EYED LEGENDS

Mutual Insignificance



Red-Eyed Legends 'Mutual Insignificance' (File 13)

Expectations are a tricky thing. Consistency and inconsistency are both potential bear traps for artistic credibility. For more than 10 years now, Chris Thomson has been walking that specific tightrope between progression and stagnation. Starting out with D.C.-based dissonant post-hardcore band Circus Lupus and continuing through the mid-'90s with the equally obnoxious and genius bands the Monorchid and Skull Kontrol, Thomson has been working with the same material, molding it a bit different every time. "Mutual Insignificance" is the second EP from his latest band, the Red-Eyed Legends. This recording finds the band filling out its sound with the addition of Kiki Yablon on farfisa organ. It's that garage rock-n-roll staple that makes this album so special; that ever-present hum is highly infectious and provides a much-needed new element to the typical guitar/bass/drums set-up. Thomson is as vitriolic as ever, spouting off about nothing and everything at the same time. For the uninitiated his voice is definitely unnerving, a nasal and bratty whine that will ultimately decide whether or not you can get into this band. But for those who get it, Thomson's vocal antics are as punk as it comes. The five tracks on this EP are full of sweat and exertion and are as confrontational as they are catchy. With Red-Eyed Legends, Chris Thomson and Co. have given birth to a scaly, neon-yellow, fire-breathing reptile of rock-n-roll.

By JORDAN REDMOND
WUSC Music Director

New Music

for the week of November 29



"Breakaway" Kelly Clarkson



"Street's Disciple" Nas



"Head for the Door" Exies



"Urban Legend" T.I.



"Collision Course (w/DVD)" Jay-Z. Linkin Park



"Old Friends Live on Stage" Simon & Garfunkel

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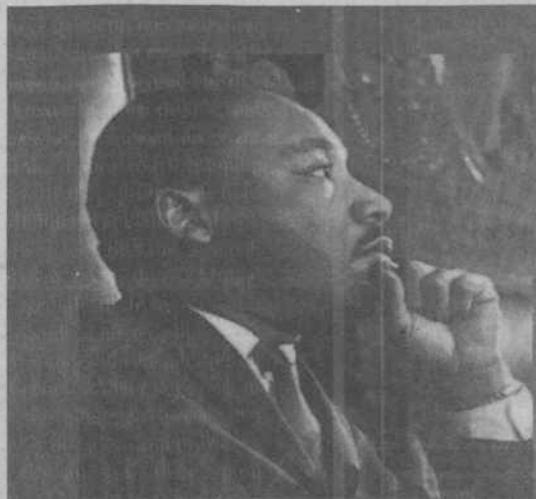
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