



**THEY SAID IT**  
"We must get beyond textbooks, go out into the bypaths ... and tell the world the glories of our journey."

**JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN**  
AUTHOR AND PROFESSOR

## CD REVIEW

### British darlings fall flat



"KASABIAN"  
KASABIAN  
★ out of ☆☆☆☆☆

By **PATRICK AUGUSTINE**  
THE GAMECOCK

It's hard not to do well in the UK when NME, the Isles' leading music publication, goes out of its way seemingly every month to convince people that you're the next thing since Oasis to start a new British invasion of the American Billboard charts.

Despite wrapping itself proudly in the seamy side of being lads in the industrial midlands of England, Kasabian has managed to ride a wave of critical praise to platinum record sales in its home nation, and a (barely) top-40 radio appearance here on the other side of the Atlantic. But if anything is clear from its debut album, it's that the British press is suffering from the Stockholm syndrome — Kasabian is well-known for its brash and abusive responses to interviewers' queries, inflating their hype by bashing American music as "scuzzy garage rock." Even their name is a roundabout fist in the air to the establishment that has created them, as Kasabian is the last name of Charles Manson's pregnant getaway driver.

Musically, Kasabian grew out of '90s British hardcore and the raves where trance and drum 'n' bass got their start as the refuge of disaffected teens who felt they had no stock in the pop prevalent on the airwaves, eventually flourishing into an entire underground culture. While incorporating electronica flourishes and production into their lineup of keyboards, drums and a dual guitar attack, their self-titled debut falls into the trap of being nothing more than a derivative of previous work, something Kasabian claims to avoid. Locking themselves away in an abandoned textile mill on a farm, Kasabian synthesized the last 30 years of rock 'n' roll in a way that contributes nothing more

◆ Please see **KASABIAN**, page 10

# Days OF infamy



PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

Featured guest lecturer John Hope Franklin is the James B. Duke Professor Emeritus of History and former legal history professor at the Duke University School of Law.

## ■ *Legendary historian to share war reflections*

By **SHANA TILL**  
THE GAMECOCK

**A**LIVING MEMORIAL TO the legacy of one of South Carolina's key African-American figures will commence Thursday night in the form of the Robert Smalls Lecture Series. The event, presented by the African-American Studies program, will feature guest lecturer John Hope Franklin.

Cleveland Sellers, director of the African-American Studies program, said the Robert Smalls Lecture Series brings some of the most renowned scholars to USC to share their work. "Over the years, we have had some of the most outstanding scholars come to USC as lecturers," Sellers said. "The group has been diverse — all major intellectuals and scholars in their respective fields."

The Robert Smalls Lecture Series, in its eighth year, is named after the Civil War hero who later became a U.S. Congressman. A representative of South Carolina during the Reconstruction era, Smalls' contributions to political, economic and educational reform led the S.C. governor to declare Feb. 22, 1976, Robert Smalls Day.

Franklin will continue the lecture series' traditions with his presentation, "Days of Infamy: Personal Reflections on World War II." Considered one of the greatest historians of blacks in American society, Franklin uses his scholarly work to foster political and social change. His writing collections have shed light on previously lesser known areas of American history. Franklin is the James B. Duke Professor Emeritus of History and former legal history professor at the Duke University School of Law. He received his Ph.D. and A.M. degrees from Harvard University.

One of his first published works, "From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans," is regarded as a supreme and definitive discussion of the topic. Since its first edition in 1947, it has been through seven additional editions and translated into Indian, Japanese, German, French, Portuguese and

Chinese. Franklin also served on the team that developed the 1954 Supreme Court decision to end legal segregation in public schools. Before his position at Duke, he taught at Cambridge University as the Pitt Professor of American History and Institutions in 1962. In the same year, Franklin was appointed to the Fulbright Board of Foreign Scholarships, of which he was chair from 1966-69.

More recently, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1995. The same year, Franklin donated his professional and personal papers to the John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African-American Documentation at Duke. In 1997, he was appointed chair of the President's Initiative on Race. Throughout his career, Franklin has delivered State Department and U.S. Information Service lectures in more than 30 nations.

"Dr. Franklin represents a kind of icon in the field of history, and certainly in the field of African-American history," Sellers said.

Sellers also emphasized that the Robert Smalls Lecture Series is not just for USC students, faculty and staff. He said he hopes the series will reach out to the entire Columbia community.

"We select speakers that would appeal to both USC and the Columbia community," Sellers said. "The program encourages all those who are interested in moving our communities and societies forward to take this unique opportunity to learn from such a great African-American historian."

The presentation will begin 7 p.m. Thursday in the Belk Auditorium in Moore Business School. A reception will follow.

The Robert Smalls Lecture Series is co-sponsored by the African-American Professors Program, the USC College of Arts and Sciences, the USC Department of Education, the Institute of Families in Society, USC's Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, Office of the USC President and USC's Women's Studies Department.

For more information, visit the African-American Studies Web site, <http://www.cas.sc.edu/afra/2005.html>.

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## MOVIE REVIEW

### 'Robots' impresses with inventive animated world, bores with storyline

"ROBOTS"  
★★★ out of ☆☆☆☆☆

By **JENNIFER FREEMAN**  
THE GAMECOCK

Animated comedies and comic book movies are the new hot ticket in Hollywood. With animated films, the formula is to think up a storyline involving an underdog character and his wacky friends defeating a Big Bad Guy as they perform slap-stick comedy, overcome obstacles and end up on an uplifting note to inspire all the little kids in the audience sitting next to their parents who are laughing at the jokes that only someone over the age of 13 could get. They all follow this formula to some degree, but some do it better than others. "Robots" is one of the better ones.

Some of Hollywood's elite loaned their vocal talent to 20th Century Fox and Blue Sky Studios, the makers of "Ice Age." Ewan McGregor is appropriately scrappy as Rodney Copperbottom, the young inventor who wants a shot to

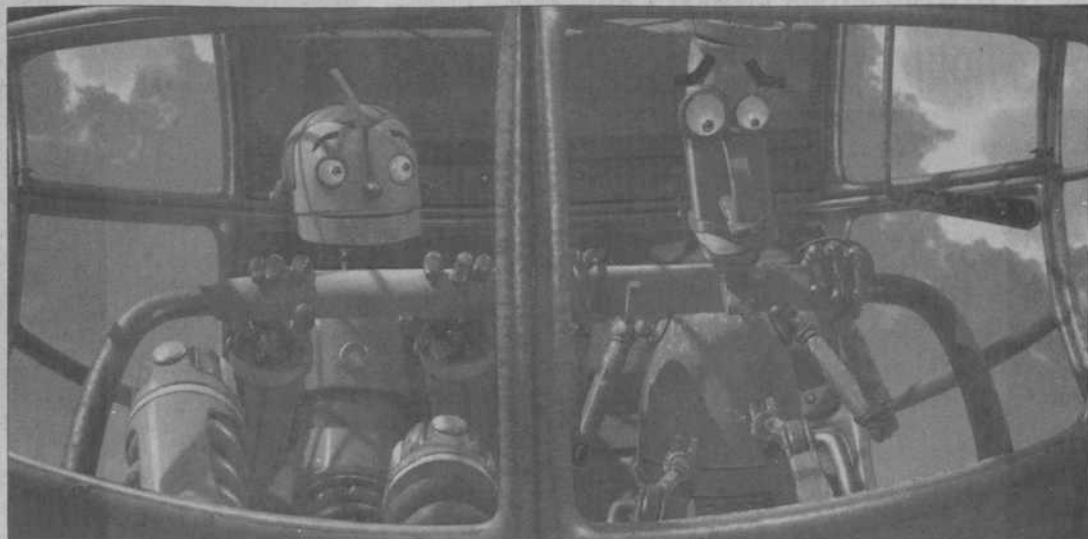


PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

Robots Rodney Copperbottom (voiced by Ewan McGregor), left, and Fender (Robin Williams) take a wild ride on Robot City's subway system, inspired by artist Rube Goldberg's Erector Set designs.

show his invention to "the greatest robot in the world" — the curiously hermitic Bigweld, voiced by Mel Brooks making his animated feature debut. Rodney and Bigweld are joined by an assorted cast of colorful robots given life by Halle Berry, Greg Kinnear, Amanda Bynes, Drew Carey, Jennifer

Coolidge and the always hilarious-in-animation Robin Williams.

Williams stands out in the crowd, using the talent that was originally revealed as the Blue Genie of the Lamp in Disney's "Aladdin." As always, his zany character steals the show, but the red robot Fender tends to

overshadow the story with his one-liners and physical comedy gags.

Shining brighter than the vocal talent is Blue Sky Studios' amazing animation work. Following in the CGI footsteps of predecessors like "Toy Story," this film is a perfect example of how the art form has evolved. At one point in the movie,

a 50-gallon drum full of ball bearings spills, and viewers can follow perfectly each tiny metal sphere's pathway.

More importantly than the minute details, the entire world flows together so perfectly it seems like it really must exist and the animators just copied it. The scenery of Rivet City and Robot City has a 1950s futuristic quality. The subway system is an intricate combination of tunnels, slingshots and other apparatuses that would make Rube Goldberg proud and any former Erector Set owner jealous.

In a news release, director Chris Wedge said, "It (is a) totally created world. Meaning, of course, we realized that we would have to invent everything. It's not a movie set in the ice age, or about insects or fish. There were no reference points we could draw from."

More so than the Academy Award-winning actors voicing the robots, the film's allure is in the elaborate scenery and the care taken in crafting this alternate world. Everything in these mechanical cities are robots with personalities. Rodney's own father

is a dishwasher in a local diner. Instead of washing the grease and oil-encrusted dishes (what did you think robots ate — pancakes?) in a sink, he loads them into his chest cavity, as he has been fitted with dishwashing parts. Even the fire hydrant, voiced by Jay Leno, has a distinct personality, warning the robo-dog, "Don't even think about it."

This animated film has a good story, interesting characters and visually stunning animation. Nothing stands out in the movie as being displeasing, but it definitely doesn't have the magical quality that makes a classic like "The Little Mermaid," "Aladdin" or even the more recent "Shrek" and "Finding Nemo." "Robots" is an enjoyable children's movie that parents won't mind sitting through. If you can get to an IMAX theater, the experience is supposed to be amazing with the new animation technology, but if you were planning on going to Dutch Square to see this movie, save your money and wait for it on DVD.

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