

# Hot Lava's 'Dinosaur' rocks stone age, preludes new disc

"The Way of the Dinosaur"

Hot Lava Monster

★★★★ out of ☆☆☆☆

Chad Henderson  
THE GAMECOCK

Have you ever been making Pizza Rolls and the music was rocking so hard that they exploded, leaving a trail of burning pepperoni carnage all over your face?

No, of course you haven't. At 8 p.m. Saturday, Hot Lava Monster will melt people's brains in Columbia when they take the stage at Headliners. Currently, the band is recording its next album in Atlanta.

In 2004, Hot Lava Monster released its sophomore effort, "The Way of the Dinosaur." This six-song EP rocks relentlessly and shows no mercy as this extremely tight local group shows its hook-writing know-how. Listening to this album is like taking a jet back to the 1970s and '80s and landing in an arena rock show surrounded by groupies and long-haired rockers. Listen and you'll understand the imagery. This band has it all: solid drums, unique guitar riffs and soaring vocals that leap out of the speaker and grab you by the ears saying, "Listen to me!" The band gets a unique sound for every song without losing its unique brand of rock that takes lessons from such legends as Led Zeppelin and Boston.

Hot Lava Monster's guitar work and overall energy is similar to The Darkness, save for the fact



Special to THE GAMECOCK

Local band Hot Lava Monster will hit up Headliners this weekend, causing Pizza Rolls to explode across the state.

that lead singer Patrick Baxley doesn't shriek when he sings. Instead he stays in the mid-range and only heads up the vocal stairway to heaven to punctuate the melody in all the right spots. Baxley's vocal stylings are more like the lead singer of Lifehouse. You know, that band that sang "Hanging by a Moment"? Well, they obviously were hanging on by something weak, because the band disappeared after that song.

Hot Lava Monster writes honest music that takes a moment in time and blows it up into a rock song that makes that moment eternal. All of the better songwriters strive to do this because it helps people connect with their music more. How many times have you been emotional and turned on N'Sync's "Space Cowboy" and exclaimed, "I know just how you feel!"?

Baxley, the band's main

songwriter, said, "We just try to capture simple, honest truth's when they come along. There's something very therapeutic about taking a snapshot of a horrible memory and turning it into an anthem we can celebrate." Baxley's theory is certainly evident in such songs as "Highway," where he talks about problems with his lady. However, the tune has a melody that is easy to sing along with. The energy of this song certainly makes you feel like getting in a car and speeding down the highway.

"Ocean" is another song that stands out on this album. It's written in a swung style beat that gives it a certain waltz feel. It talks about the way a mate can add insult to injury when things are tough. If you live long enough, you start to realize that with great love

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'VENDETTA' • CONTINUED FROM 5

the Academy can remember her an entire year from now, it wouldn't be surprising to see her receive an Oscar nomination for "V for Vendetta."

She has great comedic ability, but as she's shown in "Closer" and now in "V for Vendetta," she exhibits a wide acting range and can handle dramatic roles easily. When she's being tortured, viewers can't help but feel sorry for her. Viewers can see the change Evey undergoes.

Hugo Weaving as V is funny and moving while also quite Matrix-esque as a fighter. As his story unfolds and his "vendetta"

is explained, V also reveals his brutal vengeance for those who have wronged him.

When Britain became a totalitarian state, the chancellor initiated experimental programs which tortured the participating patients. V was one of the patients and suffered brutal burns over his entire body. Thus he stays masked and caped throughout the film. Even Evey never sees his face. His story will disturb viewers and sway them to cheer him on.

"V for Vendetta" gives a chilling forecast for the world's affairs, but its solvent for the international ills lies with V and possibly

Evey, if she can learn to trust a man whose face she never sees. The film isn't set that far in the future. Unsurprisingly, the British-set film casts a grim shadow over the United States' future.

The thriller succeeds in offering excitement, but it also reels viewers in with its well-told story. The pace keeps the film interesting and provides tender moments as well. "V for Vendetta" and Portman deserve recognition for their powerfully entertaining film and uniquely thought-provoking look at the future of the world.

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PIERCINGS • CONTINUED FROM 5

and photographs. Above all the obvious creativity, the sheer and spotless condition of the shop is what garners the most attention.

During the week, Body Rites averages six to 10 piercings a day and around 10 to 12 on weekends. While they accept walk-ins in addition to general appointments, Shannon McKenzie said she likes the convenience associated with customers making appointments. She said that it makes for faster service and gives the customer more time to think about their piercing.

Like any other establishment, Body Rites has its regulars, but they are not necessarily all piercing addicts. "There are plenty of times when people or friends come in just to say hello," McKenzie said.

Being a piercing studio, weird requests come with the territory. Customers have been known to ask for things they have seen on

body piercing Web sites. But according to McKenzie, customers don't realize that some of those were just done for the purpose of the photograph.

Normally, they don't usually get anything too crazy. The most typical piercing requests include those in the navel, nostril and helix or cartilage areas. "I guess people think genital piercings are kind of weird, but we actually do a lot of those," McKenzie said. The staff at Body Rites love their customers and always stick to the rules that have set them apart from other studios. They are sticklers when it comes to checking and bringing a parent along for those who are underage. If an ID has been tampered with in any way, they will not accept it as valid. Instances like these have occurred in the past, but, as McKenzie said, "it's not terrible."

Body Rites is looking into expanding its name to cover tattooing as well, but McKenzie said she wants

to keep the two mediums separate from each other in terms of the professionals they use. "Normally, you'll have a great tattooist and they go, 'Oh yeah, I could pierce somebody,' or a piercer saying they can do tattoos, but then that's where the quality gets iffy," she said. DHEC begins taking applications for new tattooing studios on March 24, which she hopes will open up the market and bring in a whole new realm of potential customers.

McKenzie said the business at Body Rites has to do with the area, the economy and the fact that people normally use extra money to pay for their piercings, something like a gift for themselves. As for why people like to get pierced, McKenzie said it's a personal thing.

"I think it has a lot to do with individuality," she said. Body Rites has put nearly a decade of business under its belt and it's clear

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## Solutions

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