

ENTERTAINMENT

WHAT'S INSIDE

“The Twilight Saga: Eclipse” Page 7

The Chemical Brothers Page 8

“The Last Airbender” Page 8

“A little rudeness and disrespect can elevate a meaningless interaction to a battle of wills and add drama to an otherwise dull day.” - Calvin, “Calvin and Hobbes”

THE SANTA ANA ART WALK

By Audrey Kim

Stroking his coral phoenix pendant and silver hair, painter and musician Memphis Bobby pauses his discussion on epistemological thinking and communism in order to catch the attention of Jimmy Freeman, a man he regards as “the best R&B artist [he] has ever heard.” Freeman smiles approvingly at his friend’s introduction and proceeds to explain his 18 years of homelessness after brief stints with the Marceles and Whispers, while fiercely clutching his guitar and duffel bag.

“I need some help. I need to get the attention of the music industry but all my money goes to bus passes and my time goes to singing on the streets and finding concrete to sleep on,” says Freeman.

Less than 200 meters away from Memphis Bobby and Freeman is the “Individual Stories” exhibit featuring 19 artists from Slovakia in a cultural project about artistic global exchange at the Orange County Center for Contemporary Art.

In the Santa Ana art scene, people can easily weave in and out of these different exchanges and experiences between local artists and the larger international conversation about contemporary art. The city attracts a variety

of local and international artists but also engages

the communi-

ty to support

and partici-

partate with-

in

its emerging cultural hub.

The city hosts an art walk on the first Saturday of every month from 7 to 10 p.m. along the 2nd Street Promenade where artists, artisans and musicians gather to sell and display their work either in a gallery, exhibition or their own individual kiosk along four small blocks. Unlike the more historical Sawdust Art Festival in Laguna Beach, the Santa Ana Art Walk does not charge an admission fee nor is it as elaborate. However, it maintains an equivalent diversity in its audience and experience of artists.

The OCCCA exhibit is the second of three phases of this cultural exchange with Americans and Slovaks entitled “After Hours,” where a variety of artistic mediums will be displayed until July 31. The first phase featured American artists in OCCCA last March and the final phase will be the transplanted American work at Galeria Z in Bratislava, Slovakia in September.

“This is an experiment on community outreach and international exchange,” says OCCCA affiliate member and creator of this project Dalibor Polivka, “where we provide a different context and atmosphere for the art.”

“I know all of these Slovak artists and we wanted to reflect the Slovak art scene over three generations,” said curator Xenia Lettrichova.

The Consulate General of Slovak Republic in Los Angeles, Milan Kovac, attended the formal opening of OCCCA’s second international exhibit. “It is so exciting to share this experience of American and Slovak culture,” said Kovac.

The Santa Ana Art Walk fell on the Fourth of July weekend this month and illustrated the spirit of the holiday with its democratic approach to public art and an accessible, communal space where one can become inspired and appreciative of the talent and craftsmanship.

From handbags, jewelry, paintings and music, artists and artisans layered the 2nd Street Promenade’s gallery,

studio and restaurant-lined framework as the hip 20-something crowd toting DSLR cameras observed the same art as the grandparents who brought their ice cream-eating grandchildren. These dichotomies contribute to the cooperative, friendly atmosphere at the Santa Ana Art Walk and further emphasize the cultural and generational importance of art as a unifier.

A woman from an art gallery a couple blocks away rushed over to artist Dino Perez’s table and within two minutes, she purchased a small painting.

“I’m an artist too but I love being able to support other artists,” she said as she dashed back to the gallery. “That’s the reason why I come out to the Art Walk.”

Perez is a local artist whose vibrant paintings have been selling at the Art Walk since January of this year. He was born and raised in Santa Ana and is pleased to see that its Art Village is expanding and growing in popularity.

“The Art Walk and the Village itself is so diverse and everyone is so friendly. Sometimes the break-dancers will come and perform right there,” he says pointing toward the popular restaurant, Memphis. “I sell my art as cheap as I can because I believe that art is for the people.”

His artwork ranges from \$5 to \$150 while his girlfriend, Cassandra Wells, also prices her work at affordable prices, and sells her work alongside Perez. Even this micro instance demonstrates an inspired, collective collaboration between artists participating in the Art Walk.

Perez and Wells were stationed in front of the busy Grand Central Art Center where the opening for its second installation of “100 Artists See Satan” offered the public the chance to purchase the artists’ works as a gallery fundraiser.

“Grand Central Art Center is one of the main anchors of the Art Walk,” said Krystal Glasman, the

public relations chair and curatorial assistant.

The Grand Central Art Center is an effort between the city of Santa Ana and Cal State Fullerton to promote student and national artists in a creative space. The current exhibit features 100 different artists’ interpretation of Satan and will remain on display until Aug. 15.

“I’ve been coming to the Art Walk since I was a little kid with my artist parents,” said 21-year old Ivy Leighton. “There are always new artists and half of them are local. I love that there is such a variety—it’s just always rad.”

Memphis Bobby was in the middle of another discussion about why he paints “strong American male icons like Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash” as Freeman crooned to a small audience across the promenade. They give each other a smile and nod. They know they will see each other again Thursday night at The Gypsy Den for open mic as usual, and the two refocus on their music and painting.

Toward the end of the night, the smell of incense is just as strong as it was at dusk. But so is the Art Walk.

THE TRANSCENDENT 'PROJECT' GLOWS

HARMONIOUS: Herbie Hancock's newest collaboration with other artists rings true in his latest album.

By Gregory Yee
Staff Writer

Herbie Hancock continues to reach forward with his newest album "The Imagine Project" as he seeks to capture a world of music on one disc. In a career marked with many successes and constant innovation, this album marks a newer approach as he seeks to encompass the earth.

The album opens with Hancock's rendition of John Lennon's "Imagine," and features P!nk, Seal, Jeff Beck, India.Arie, Konono N°1 and Oumou Sangaré. It opens tenderly with Hancock showing his jazz chops in a prelude centered around open chords for the first 30 seconds before diving into the melody as P!nk and Seal come in.

The tempo quickens at two minutes as marimbas come in with a gently scintillating rhythm. India.Arie comes in on vocals while Beck's guitar, Hancock's piano and Alex Acuña's percussion provide a solid rhythmic backbone. At 3:45, Oumou Sangaré comes in, singing in the Wassoulou language to round out the distinct African feel of the piece.

Although it might seem that this mixing of different styles of music would create a cacophony of dissonant and irreconcilable sounds, every instrument and voice blends harmoniously while still retaining its integrity. In effect, Hancock creates a musical coexistence where pop is layered on jazz on Caribbean on Wassoulou tribal music, and each element compliments the others instead of jostling for dominance.

The album charges forward, carrying the incredible energy and feel from "Imagine." Its open, broad vision somehow manages to be just as introspective as it does cosmopolitan. This combination forms Hancock's genius. He's taken a compilation of pop songs from the past 40 years, and given them a cohesive world vision even though any individual song doesn't necessarily compliment the others.

Of all of the stellar arrangements on this album, the standout track is easily Hancock's rendition of John Lennon's "Tomorrow Never Knows" featuring Dave Matthews on vocals. The track keeps almost all of the elements found on the original recording of the song on The Beatles' album "Revolver" in place. This recording could fit perfectly alongside The Beatles', but Hancock adds his own subtle touch, seamlessly fusing a whole world of music into one song like nobody else could.

Herbie Hancock began his music career at a young age, studying piano at seven years old. He played the first movement of Mozart's "Fifth Piano Concerto" when he was eleven with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Hancock then rapidly emerged into the jazz spotlight after joining Miles Davis' "Second Great Quartet" in May 1963 along with Ron Carter, Tony Williams and Wayne Shorter. During his time

'ECLIPSE' SHIMMERS BRIGHTLY

SPARKLES: Improved acting and a faithful screenplay make 'Eclipse' a worthwhile trip to the theater.

By Melody Erhuy
Staff Writer

Once upon a time, a vampire, a werewolf and a human became caught in a twisted triangle filled with both love and hate. Sounds impossible? Tell that to Stephenie Meyer, author of the "Twilight" series.

The four-part film series released its third installment, "Eclipse," on June 30, once again bringing Meyer's vision to the big screen. The first movie adaptation? Bleh. The second movie? A bit better. And now the third movie? A much more solid improvement.

Robert Pattinson takes on the elusive role of Edward Cullen, a 103-year-old sexy and mysterious cold-blooded vampire who is in love with Bella Swan (Kristen Stewart), a regular human being. In the previous installments of the "Twilight" films, Pattinson's performance was dry and lacked the passion that his lines needed to be believable. With the third film in the series, however, his love for Bella is much more convincing.

Kristen Stewart also improved her acting in the same light. Stewart and Pattinson's previous lack of passion for one another nearly killed the first two movies, for the whole story revolves around their deep love at first sight. Luckily, both characters spiced up "Eclipse" with a better portrayal of their irrevocable desire for one another, making the film much more watchable.

As Bella's high school gradua-



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Edward and Bella, played respectively by Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart, make goo-goo eyes at each other.

tion approaches, her days are numbered as a human. She realizes throughout the film that her choice to become a vampire like Edward teems with unwanted consequences that can never be undone.

With the increase of missing humans in Seattle, evil vampire clans, along with the illustrious Victoria (Bryce Dallas Howard), Bella has to also deal with vampires who want to kill her before she can be transformed. Edward tries to convince his beloved to stay human, for he is fearful he will not be able to stop biting her to the point where he can kill her. The

plot turns awry with the presence of Jacob Black (Taylor Lautner), Bella's werewolf flame, who is also against her becoming a vampire because he is in love with her.

The relationships between Edward, Jacob and Bella are supposed to be the most intense scenes, but in many instances the situation is just plain awkward. When Edward drops Bella off with Jacob before he leaves for Seattle, he and Bella make out in front of the well-toned, shirtless Jacob. Immediately after, she runs to the werewolf and gives him a big hug as Edward watches.

'ECLIPSE' CONTINUES TO SUCK

ATROCITY: Hot bare-chested males cannot save this dry, angst-ridden picture from being shitty.

By Amanda Robbins
Staff Writer

Somewhere out there, Nosferatu and Dracula are sharing drinks over their troubles. What has brought these beloved and infamous vampire legends together? Stephenie Meyer, author of the wildly popular "Twilight" series. Meyer has done all she could to turn the vampire mythos into a laughingstock clearly seen in "Eclipse," the pre-teen exploiting cash cow directed by David Slade.

"Eclipse" is the third installment of the mind-numbingly dull story of the plainest of Mary Sues (Bella Swan, played by Kristen Stewart) as she struggles to choose between pedophilic necrophilia and bestiality. When we last saw Edward Cullen (Robert Pattinson) and Bella in "New Moon," he was sparkling somewhere in Italy as a part of a

suicide attempt and she was cliff-diving the pain of separation away. What a great picture of a healthy relationship!

Sometime after all this, "Eclipse" begins like a bad episode of CSI – a new character who is never introduced formally, the opening strains to a trendy post-rock score, atmosphere setting rain and an attack. The movie then segues to dopey heroine Bella reading "Romeo and Juliet" in a field while her beau, the ubiquitous Edward Cullen, makes out with the side of her face. Ah yes, it's going to be one of those movies. We are treated to a close-up of them sucking face no more than three minutes in.

Now, if the two opening scenes feel choppy, get used to it. "Eclipse" blunders from scene to scene, offering little to no explanation but plenty of teenage angst and sexual tension so thick you couldn't even cut it with a butcher knife.

Perhaps the only moment of real logic and clarity in the entire movie comes very early on from Charlie Swan, Bella's bedraggled father played by Billy Burke, one of the few actors worth their salt in this franchise. Dad wants his obsessive

daughter to "get some separation" from her stalker boyfriend. He even suspends her grounding on the condition that she "see[s] some of [her] other friends" – like Jacob Black (played by Twi-mom jailbait Taylor Lautner). Oh here we go.

"Eclipse" is full of poorly-written dialogue, longing stares, poorly framed close-ups, making out, angst and people being too close to other people's faces. Like, way too close. (Jake, I know she's with the biggest creeper on the planet, but you need to give her some personal space.) However, "Eclipse" isn't all bad. Taylor Lautner's abs are fantastic and he's half-naked in nearly every single shot of the movie, despite the weather. Also, Robert Pattinson keeps his shirt on in this one, which is both good and bad. On one hand, we are spared from makeup musculature. On the other, the sparkle quotient is unfortunately on the low side. Abs, or lack thereof, aside, the CGI wolf pack and painted landscapes are so bad they're laughable, and who doesn't love to laugh?

The plot meanders, feeling as though it reaches its climax when the haphazard trio is hiding out from the big vampire battle going

Many scenes, like this one, are poorly thought-out, thus causing the film to lose much of the original plot from the novel. Edward and Jacob have continued scrimmages throughout the film since they are natural-born enemies, yet Bella's inclusion in this rivalry falls flat. Her continued subtle interest in Jacob feels unnecessary as she has obviously chosen to stay with Edward, making situations between the three of them lose the tenseness needed to fuel their characters.

Although the movie is filled with tense and fervent narrative, director David Slade and screenplay writer Melissa Rosenberg add a few humorous one-liners to prevent the film from taking itself too seriously. With Edward's coyly stated "Doesn't [Jacob] have a shirt?" and Jacob's reply, "Well, I am hotter than you," the film plays around with many of the points of ridicule from the previous films.

Other than a few chuckles, the movie's screenplay is beautifully adapted from the novel. While a few speeches between Bella and Edward seemed contrived at times, the script closely follows the dialogue and plot of its source material, leaving diehard "Twilight" fans with several of their favorite scenes brought to the big screen.

No matter how poorly done the previous movies are, the "Twilight" saga was, is and will continue to be a success. The love story between Edward and Bella is still adored by thousands of teenagers and adults. With the improved performance of the characters and the impressive screenplay, "Eclipse" is sure to be a hit with more than just the standard fans.

OUR RATING:

★★★★☆ 4/5

OUR RATING:

★★☆☆☆ 2/5

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'FURTHER'

ETHEREAL: An astounding listen, The Chemical Brothers' most recent album is a must-own.

By Abhay Malik

The best music of any genre can and will attract even those who are not familiar with it. British electronic duo The Chemical Brothers' newest album, "Further," is a solid record by any standard. "Further" is a fantastic listen, and is the kind of record that would drive even the most skeptical person into an expedition to acquire the rest of The Chemical Brothers' discography.

The Chemical Brothers not only make great electronic music, but show remarkable songwriting and composition skills. The melodies and beats in the songs are top-notch and catchy and everything is well-executed. At the end of the day, listeners are able to understand the duo's emotions through their music, which is the best success marker. On top of this, the entire album is extremely well-connected and seamlessly fits together. Especially if you're already a fan of the electronic music genre, "Further" is a must-buy.

The album opens with "Snow," which begins with rhythmic electronic feedback and beeping, followed by harmonizing vocals which add the melody that is repeated throughout the song. With the slow progression of keys and "synths", the song develops into a trance-like

experience, which seamlessly fades into the next song.

"Escape Velocity" begins indistinguishably from "Snow," and eventually transforms into an epic synth-driven journey which does indeed make you feel like you're breaking earth's escape velocity and are headed somewhere grand. Being nearly 12 minutes long, the song has plenty of time and body to build up synths and beats that truly encapsulate the feeling.

The record then moves into "Another World." The song takes you into moments of ethereal chords and eventually mellows out into a quieter, almost eerie verse. The Chemical Brothers did an excellent job of conveying the emotions they intended through the song. As a result, "Another World" is another aptly-named song.

"Dissolve" fades in immediately after its predecessor and continues the album's ethereal immersion. The song drives you with electronic instruments until a breakdown with tasteful vocals occurs that add to the experience, and then it all builds up again.

Seamlessly transitioning from the previous song, "Horse Power" builds itself up into an upbeat, almost quirky track with catchy, hypnotic beats and melodies. True to its namesake, the song is marked by a robotic voice repeating the words "horse" and "power" throughout most of the song. One of the best parts of the song is the synth-solo breakdown in the middle, which adds more depth to the song.

The Chemical Brothers once again show their knack for naming



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With "Further," electronic duo Ed Simons and Tom Rowlands seek to place listeners in a spiritual state.

songs with "Swoon." Possibly one of the best on the album, the song is the perfect storm of electric melodies, vocal harmonies and jumpy bass lines to create an upbeat, ecstatic experience. The awesome combination of these elements during the first two minutes almost makes it a shame when the song moves on. But, judging from the rest of this record, these guys can't really do anything wrong.

After "Swoon" abruptly stops, "K+D+B" picks up. The song starts with an extremely catchy beat that is layered upon and builds the foundation of the track. The song uses

its fair share of synths and melodies, along with the line "higher, and higher..." to truly impart the uplifting, danceable feeling of the song.

"Wonders of the Deep" continues this uplifting spirit. The song builds up to a chorus of vocals elevating the atmosphere, with breaks between light guitar and synth interplay. Eventually, the song literally trickles down and out, ending the superb album.

"Further" is in every way a marvelous piece of work. Not only is every song well-crafted and carefully arranged, but the entire album

is actually a single piece that works together as one. The Chemical Brothers manage to construct the record in a cohesive way that makes you feel like you're being lifted up and taken for a ride. The songs are merely titles for the segments of the journey.

With such a display of sensational songwriting combined with great envisioning and execution, The Chemical Brothers' "Further" is simply amazing.

OUR RATING:

★★★★★ 5/5

'AIRBENDER' FAILS TO BEND MINDS

CATASTROPHE: M. Night Shyamalan's first 3-D film may as well mark the end of his career.

By Gavin Greene
Staff Writer

One of the most dexterous summer releases in recent memory, M. Night Shyamalan's "The Last Airbender" has been successfully riding several waves of hype for months before its July 1 release. Retro-fitted for 3-D and banking heavily on the strong fan base of the Nickelodeon animation of the same name, can the CGI-heavy adventure capture the elements of the Hollywood blockbuster?

The short answer is a most emphatic no, but it's the long answer that intrigues. It's a rare sight to see a film of any variety come so close to success, and yet at the same time fail on nearly every conceivable facet of production.

The story separates the world into

competing factions, each bearing the ability to control a singular element somehow related to their geography. The civil war that has been going on between them since days long past threatens to destroy the world, barring the intervention of a mystical being with the ability to control all the elements himself.

The simple plotline, in theory, opens up the film to a breezy narrative pace that allows for plenty of varied and large-scale action sequences. However, the "Last Airbender" anime fan base must be a frightening one indeed, for within such an open story expanse the screenwriters have tried to fit in as much of the mythos of the original television series as humanly possible.

It's a difficult enough task converting a 600-page book into a two-hour film. It's an impossible task to fit an entire 20-episode season into a 90-minute film. Without a hint of hyperbole, every single piece of dialogue contains at least a passing phrase of exposition. Coupled with the dangerously painful acting, the film's plot is most often dispensed in

wooden monologues of flat readings of rephrased character biographies.

Perhaps it is the casting choices in particular that are the final nail to the coffin to this film's spectacular failure. The hilarious controversy of character whitewashing aside, "The Last Airbender" appears to take itself far too seriously around the same time it just wants to shut up and look pretty. Especially in the choice of villains, Dev Patel ("Slumdog Millionaire") and Aasif Mandvi ("The Daily Show"...yes, that guy) ignore the expected bombast of such roles and instead attempt an awkward seriousness that only looks like an attempt at smoldering intensity that never even gets lukewarm. The rest of the cast feels so forgettable and are barely even worth a mention before...wait, what was I talking about?

Most curious in the lopsided dunce that is "The Last Airbender" is its effects. While shiny and pleasing when examined within their proper existence - that is to say, executable programs run in a half-screened digital editing program on an under-

paid animator's laptop - their actual execution in the film is haphazard and pitiful.

Fire never seems to leave a burn mark, and water flows more like partially coagulated vegetable oil. For a film about the manipulation of elements, such a display is unforgivable. Sure, the larger the effects get in scope, the more difficult such faults are to notice, and the film's final ten minutes do tickle the escapist part of the brain surprisingly well. Grandiose effects have been done better overall in parodies of such action fodder.

If meaningless technology is your game than there is no better (or worse, depending on your point of view) playing field than "The Last Airbender." It's a pity that 3D's first main usage in its resurgence was so well executed, as what has come after has amounted to a reminder of why the fad died out around the same time as the city of Berkeley.

3-D effects more often look like paper cutouts being run atop the original image rather than any depth enhancements or perspective blur-

ring. The film was obviously not intended for the technology, as implementing it so late in the development process has required a dimming of the overall contrast of the film itself, resulting in the final movie having an odd sort of darkened lack of focus to it, as if one is watching it through a slight squint.

"The Last Airbender" is more a joy to itemize and deduce for its faults than to watch for pure enjoyment. It's a fun, brain-tickling collection of poor planning and lazy ideas that never even amounts to an IMDb synopsis of the original anime. Its story is a cluttered mess of plot dysentery, its performances misguided at best and its effects a firing-worthy offense for everyone involved. Worse still is that all these blemishes were put under a microscope with literally the worst use of 3-D in a major motion picture since "Jaws 3-D." A beautiful train wreck, a lousy motion picture.

OUR RATING:

★☆☆☆☆ 0.5/5

IMAGINE | from page 7

with Davis' quartet, Hancock distinguished himself by weaving unconventional rhythms along with Carter and Williams and by utilizing unusual harmonic structures such as quartal harmonies.

In the decades since, Hancock's contributions to music have rippled out from where he started. His influence has extended as he explored more genres of music - funk, fusion, pop and now world. In his career, Hancock has recorded 46 studio albums and has received 12 Grammys (most recently two in 2008 for Best

Contemporary Jazz Album and for Album of the Year) and an Oscar in 1986 for Best Original Soundtrack for his work in the film "Round Midnight."

For "The Imagine Project," Hancock teams up with many of the biggest names in modern music. While this may seem relatively insignificant, it is truly extraordinary that he was able to take so many distinct personalities and give them cohesive vision.

The album ends with a track titled "The Song Goes On" featuring Chaka Khan, K.S. Chithra, Wayne Shorter and Anoushka Shankar, daughter of famed sitar player Ravi Shankar,

who taught George Harrison.

"The Song Goes On" opens with a brief fluttering blast from Shorter's saxophone and a winding interplay between Shankar's sitar and Hancock's piano. The track crescendos until the percussion comes in at 38 seconds. Chaka Khan comes in with vocals at 1:04, "I'm only one, I'm a minimum," she sings. This track features some of the best improvisational work on the album as each instrument and voice call and respond to each other with sharp jabs of sound held together by the pulsating rhythms of the tablas beating constantly in the background.

In its last minute, "The Imagine

Project" ends on one stringy note, fading eternally into the silence left by the sudden stop of the drums and percussion. As that note fades into silence, you can't help but think of music on a larger scale, far larger than the Top 40 crap we hear every

day on the radio, and ponder all the possibilities of the world.

OUR RATING:

★★★★★ 4.5/5

