

Coffee shop offers more

BY DYLAN HERX
Reviewer

I've never really considered myself a coffee connoisseur. In fact, I often opt for cold drinks over hot. Luckily, Washington Street Java Co. has both, plus other delightful treats to cozy up next to a cup of joe.

I've rarely been to Java Co. I've had a meal plan since I was a wee freshman, so Sodexo's answer to the coffee culture, Jazzman's, was enough for me to test the waters of coffeedom every now and then to confirm that I didn't fit in. I don't know a lot about roasting techniques or the difference between a frappuccino and a macchiato. Nor do I own a Blackberry or stay current on the indie music scene. Regardless, Java Co. doesn't necessarily make the inept coffee drinker feel out of place. Having said that, there undoubtedly is a subculture thriving at Java Co., but it fits right into the college life — which means good business.

Although I've hardly ever been a patron of the coffee shop on Washington Street, I definitely have put in my

time. As part of a food writing class offered by the English department, I was given the assignment to immerse myself in a food-related story. With my partner in culinary arts, Phil Schaefer, I landed in Java Co.'s kitchen early one spring morning cooking bagels with Jan, Java Co.'s owner and part-time cook. I'll refrain from any details lest Java Co. has any cooking secrets I shouldn't divulge. That behind-the-scenes foray, though, enlightened me to the fact that the majority of Java Co.'s food items are made from scratch every morning. And it shows.

Java Co.'s menu extends beyond coffee drinks and cookies. Sandwiches, wraps, hummus and other treats are available and definitely fit the coffee-shop vibe. As far as recommendations are concerned, I've found that Java Co. has some of the best bread pudding I've ever had. Additionally, each day usually means a different variety, so although some days may yield plain cinnamon, choices such as apple, blueberry or strawberry are commonly available. If it's a baked good from



Krista Goodman/Index

Washington Street Java Co. provides the perfect study environment, with outlets for laptops, a laidback atmosphere and plenty of coffee and food to maintain an attention span.

Java Co., though, chances are it's scrumptious. From scones to muffins, cookies to cakes, Java Co. has new items everyday. If you're looking to eat lunch or dinner, the main choices are a turkey wrap, basic sandwiches, soups or quiche. I tried the wrap, which wouldn't necessarily be exceptional without the veggie cream cheese that keeps it from falling into mediocrity. When it comes to any of the entrees, presentation is a key factor. I ordered my wrap to go and walked out of the shop with a cardboard box filled with my main course, a bag of

Baked Lays and some carrot sticks. It really helps facilitate the modern, health-conscious side of the restaurant.

When it comes to atmosphere, Java Co. already has established a proven reputation with Truman students. The coffee shop is a great place to meet friends for a bite to eat and good conversation and comes complete with all a customer could need to procrastinate. Both the back study room and the front of the shop have board games for a little friendly competition. Java Co. also has a healthy selection of magazines to read, so most demographics

are sure to find something they like. Java Co. also succeeds at being hip. From the couches to the artwork surrounding the room, the coffee shop is a nice, quiet place to go to work on homework or to escape it. The employees of Java Co. often are Truman students, but I don't want to make Java Co. sound like it only is for the campus. Its off-campus location actually is one of its best features, allowing a place where fellow coffee lovers can sit and enjoy Kirksville's finest blends.

If you're new to the whole "coffee is liquid gold" mentality of some coffee fanatics,

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don't let Java Co. scare you. It's a good place to be adopted into the culture, but if coffee isn't your thing, try a Chai shake or something baked instead. You don't have to worry about Java Co. being elitist, unless you count the sign at the register directing customers to end their cell phone calls before ordering — which I think is beautiful. If you go, though, bring a friend and settle in over a game of Yahtzee. Then just soak it in and pat yourself on the back for not going to Starbucks.

'Forgetting Sarah Marshall' forgets to appeal

BY FRANKLIN K.R. CLINE
Reviewer

The latest film in producer Judd Apatow's trend of romantic comedies for men, "Forgetting Sarah Marshall," is unfortunately, well, forgettable.

It's not a bad film, not by a long shot: Jason Segel does a phenomenal job as Peter Bretter, a frustrated artist whose life revolves around TV star Sarah Marshall (the gorgeous Kristen Bell). Of course, five minutes into the film she dumps him, and it is soon revealed that she's been sleeping with the narcissistic British musician Aldous Snow, hilariously played by Russell Brand. Peter decides to escape to Hawaii to clear his head, but guess who's also at the resort? Yep, Sarah and Aldous are having a sensual getaway at the very same

resort. Luckily for Peter, there's a hot, sympathetic hotel clerk (Mila Kunis) who has been heartbroken herself. It's a simple, classic set-up for wackiness, and the film certainly delivers that in spades: full-frontal nudity, "Dracula" turned into a puppet musical farce and a surprisingly high (pun intended) number of weed jokes. There are your typical Apatow-produced cameos: Paul Rudd and Jonah Hill swoop in to steal a few scenes as a burned-out surf instructor and a celebrity-obsessed budding musician and waiter, respectively. Those two cameos add a lot of texture to an otherwise basic formula, and although their subplots

never really go anywhere, they're amusing for what they are.

And that's a criticism that could be made of the entire film: Nothing ever really goes anywhere. The plot is threadbare, and the movie is really nothing more than a series of excuses to put its characters into funny, awkward positions — a formula that works well, but does not lend itself to any sort of lasting impact after the house lights have come up, with the exception of a plot device involving Sarah

Marshall which eerily echoes Kristen Bell's real life, and the absolutely hilarious Brand.

About halfway through the film, Marshall's sweet television gig is

cancelled, leaving her afraid that she will become yesterday's news, a forgotten has-been in today's ever-changing pop culture mentality. Her monologue about her fears and hopes resembles Bell's real-life struggle when her flagship show, the brilliant "Veronica Mars," was suddenly canceled by the WB after the failure of numerous, mostly "Gilmore Girls"-related attempts to increase viewership. Perhaps this is just because I have a massive crush on Bell, but I thought that the character was made much more real by her connection to, well, reality.

The other really great aspect of this film is Brand's portrayal of Aldous Snow, who swaggers around the screen with an undeniably magnetic machismo and comes across like the demon child of Mick Jagger

and Keith Richards, a perfect product of the Glimmer Twins but sober. He's most definitely the highlight of the film.

All in all, "Forgetting Sarah Marshall" is not something you'll rush out and tell your friends to see (unless your friend wants to see Jason Segel in all his naked glory — twice), but it's something you'll leave the theater laughing over, only to return to your copies of "Knocked Up" or "40-Year-Old Virgin" for laughs with substance and well-developed characters. Oh, and don't jump up and leave as the credits start to roll — about a minute into them, there's a hilarious send-up of trite shows like "CSI" starring Bell and Jason Bateman of "Arrested Development" fame — one of the better jokes in the film, and a funny, if easy, way to end a pleasant, if easy, movie.

Gnarls Barkley CD keeps it funky

BY JOHN HITZEL
for the Index

Gnarls Barkley's "The Odd Couple" dropped from Atlantic Records onto shelves Tuesday, April 8.

It preserves the duo's gospel/old-school funk style, infused with groove and spiced with Cee-Lo's distinctively soulful, moving vocal prowess that saturated their first single, "St. Elsewhere." The CD starts slow and reflective, then moves into more intense pieces where Danger Mouse takes center stage, like "Going On" and "Run (I'm a Natural Disaster)." It has sublime moments where Cee-Lo zones in and Danger Mouse demonstrates his proficiency at the art of the flourish, like on "Surprise," the mechanized waltz "No Time Soon," and "She Knows." "The Odd Couple" finishes clean with "Neighbors" and "A Little Better."

Two years passed between the release of "St. Elsewhere" in 2006

and "The Odd Couple," whereas Cee-Lo and Danger Mouse are reported to have worked on "St. Elsewhere" for five years before its release. The shorter production time shows on "The Odd Couple."

This album isn't as edgy or aggressive as their debut album. The aggro-beats of "Transformer" and "Go-Go Gadget Gospel" are nowhere to be found. The spastic switching of tempos between songs that occurred on the first disc is also gone. There's more of an easy transition between tracks on this one.

Danger Mouse's beats are still genre-blending, a cut above the mass-produced drum-machine drivel that saturates music today, but it's hard not to notice the greater degree of rhythmic similarity here. Also, the songs are longer, showing a bit more focus in his production abilities. The result might not be better than "St. Elsewhere" but definitely on par.

Danger Mouse's keyboard/organ use sometimes reminds me

of The Doors' Ray Manzarek. At other times he sounds like he would be at home in the James Brown Band or Funkadelic. Throughout the album he caresses his organ and sits reverently atop his rotary speaker, the device that gave keyboards their spacey, fade-in/fade-out effect back before studio computers could autonomously produce it. Another Danger Mouse favorite on this album is the old-school hip-hop high-pitched sound.

The sheer eclecticism of the album is mind-bending. The placement of certain instruments brings to mind later Beatles albums like "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" and "Abbey Road" — strange, yet never obtrusive or too weird, instead inducing an awe for the producer and a feeling of "Oh, that's perfect there."

With the initial listen I was a bit apprehensive, but after the third listen, the album grew on me vastly.

The tape reel rolls again

as "Charity Case" kicks it off with a baseline that acts as the melody, a xylophone line, haunting keyboard drones and Cee-Lo behind a snake-charmer flute line, all melting into a hazy opium-den gestalt.

Then all but the chimes drop out and Cee-Lo whispers "Give it away now." The joke passes as the lyrics change into a story about redemption and healing through helping others.

This sets the tone for the album, which is filled with stories about hope, juiced full of groove and inventive soundscapes supported by exotic instrumentations.

The greatest part about this album is that you can blast it at a party, but it's also full of subtle surprises that you won't catch on the first listen. That speaks well for those involved in its creation, especially for a sophomore set. Don't ignore or quickly discard this album. Do yourself a favor and listen to "The Odd Couple" with headphones to fully appreciate the depth of its layering.

Easter eggs for your ears

Slap on your headphones and try to pick out these sounds in "The Odd Couple":

- Snake-charmer's flute
- Lasers/blasters firing
- Radar blip
- Flapping tape reel
- Shotgun reloading
- Bird calls
- Gears jamming
- Tuba
- Cough
- Acoustic guitar
- Woodblock
- Donald Duck voice
- White noise/vinyl fuzz



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