

Monologues return with orgasmic enthusiasm

BY FRANKLIN K.R. CLINE
Reviewer

Much like the Prism dance, "The Vagina Monologues" have been a Truman staple since long before any of us were here, and they'll be around long after we've all graduated or dropped out. It's traditionally the culmination of the Women's Resource Center's V-Week, in which the WRC uses the ultimate greeting card holiday as a springboard for raising awareness about a wide variety of women's issues, both local and international. Even though each yearly production mostly is the same text in the same order, small differences always make the show worth seeing, especially because, like so many other good things, it only comes once a year.

For those of you who haven't seen "The Vagina Monologues" here or otherwise, allow me to provide a brief summary. In 1995, thespian Eve Ensler performed a series of interviews with women of all ages about their vaginas and turned their responses to questions like "If your vagina could talk, what would it say?" into heart wrenching, hilarious and poignant monologues. The cast size always varies a little bit, but it usually hovers at about 30 women, all of whom sit on stage before and after their time in

the spotlight. It's a reliably interesting and engaging show that is both the same and different every year.

For instance, anyone who's seen The Monologues easily can recount a handful of moments that stir up a wide

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range of emotions that linger in the mind: the smooth linguistic stream-of-consciousness deconstruction of the ultimate four-letter-word 'c***,' the gruesome tales of child molestation and — perhaps most memorable to the majority of viewers — the monologue titled "The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy," in which a lawyer-turned-sex worker elucidates the many, many types of moans that can be elicited from the many, many types of women around the world. This monologue stands out for so many reasons, including but certainly not limited to the sheer guts it must take to fake orgasm after orgasm in front of a crowded auditorium. It's a real crowd-pleaser and works incred-

ibly well to lighten the mood following more somber monologues about gang rapes and jarring facts about worldwide femicide. Sophomore Erin Gruenberg, this year's lucky actress, took full advantage of the rare opportunity to fake orgasms while wearing lingerie onstage in Baldwin Hall with an outstanding performance, which provided a fitting climax to the production.

Ultimately, this year's version of "The Vagina Monologues" was a fun and cheap way to spend a couple of hours on Friday night, which is how it always is. Truman has very few highly publicized annual activities that yield discussion about gender relations, so "The Vagina Monologues" perennial presence is a welcome one. Even though you might have seen it this year and the year before that and the year before that, just remember when it comes around next year, there will be a whole new cast with a whole new method of bringing these monologues to life.

"Incredibad" challenges social conventions through lyrics

BY JOHN HITZEL
Reviewer

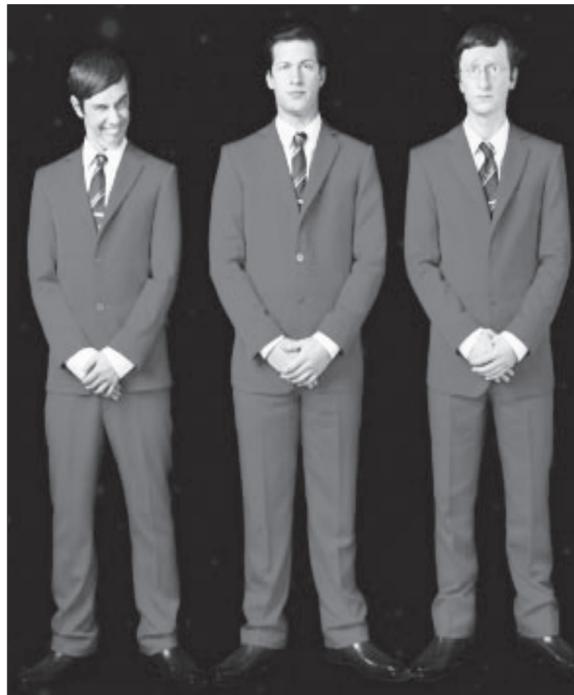
The Lonely Island, a comedy group consisting of Andy Samberg, Akiva Schaffer and Jorma Taccone, released their first album titled "Incredibad" Feb. 10. These are the guys who did "Hot Rod" and make the SNL digital shorts.

Oddly enough, their music is pretty inventive. The beat for "Santana DVX" — a song that answers the question "What if Carlos Santana had a champagne?" — is juicy. "Space Olympics" is as dramatic as it sounds and the title track blasts funk through a fuzzy bass and old-school beat. "Boombox" describes a boombox that gets society advancing and dancing, especially old white people, possibly against their will. Rap dominates as far as musical styles go, but the album also features reggae, slow R&B jams, europop, techno and hip-hop.

Samberg sharpens his satirical tooth and bites into things such as rap stars in videos being on boats with no explanation of how they got there, white people dancing, boiled goose, weird guys trying to be normal, being a boss, sports guys with no personality, female poise and more. Like many good rap albums, there are a couple of skits throughout the longer songs.

Lots of Samberg's viral video pieces from SNL made it onto this album. "Lazy Sunday" featuring Chris Parnell, and the more recent "I'm on a Boat" featuring T-Pain. Other celebrity appearances are Jack Black, Norah Jones, Julian Casablancas and Natalie Portman.

"Like a Boss" spirals into ridiculousness, depicting a "typical" day in Samberg's life. He sings about corporate business partners and birthdays, promotes synergy, hits on Deborah, gets rejected, calls a sex line, cries, eats a bagel, drinks a fifth of vodka, jumps out the window, puked on Deborah's desk, blacks out in the sewer,



Courtesy of www.thelonelyisland.com
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meets a giant fish, turns into a jet, bombs the Russians, flies into the sun, participates in a few more unprintable shenanigans and dies.

"Punch You in the Jeans" is about just that: attacking jeans.

"Natalie's Rap" puts Harvard graduate Natalie Portman in the role of gangsta rapper. In her rap, Natalie says she loves to drink and fight, tells people that she'll "put my foot down your throat til your [crap's] in my shoe." Natalie Portman is a hardcore babe.

The title track, "Incredibad" follows the boys as they lose their virginity in junior high to an alien who needs their DNA to save

the martian race from extinction due to a mutated virus. The alien grants them one wish in exchange for saving his species. "We wanna be the greatest fake MCs on Earth!" The grateful alien grants them their wish and gives them their name: "Incredibad."

The Lonely Island's comedy style circumvents normality, embraces the random and challenges social conventions. The alien in the title track sums it up: "What happened today was both incredible and bad." "Incredibad" encapsulates this lowbrow piece of high art.



Courtesy of www.glasvegas.net
College Music Roundup panders to the creative music by M. Ward, Lilly Allen and the self-titled album from rockers Glasvegas.

Unknowns' albums surprisingly strong

BY HARRY BURSON
Reviewer

M. Ward is not exactly a household name, but he's getting there.

After toiling in semi-obscurity as a well-respected Portland folkie, he finally received wide recognition as the guitarist/producer/masculine pronoun half of She & Him, the classicist pop vehicle for Zooey Deschanel's voice and songs. Now he's back with his seventh album, "Hold Time."

Thanks to his success with She & Him, Ward basically is guaranteed his largest audience yet for this new disc. Any fans worried he might pander to his new audience with some shiny, crossover smash, or worse, a serious, self-conscious statement of purpose need not worry — this is the same rambling man we've all come to know and love.

"Hold Time" has the loose, homemade pop feel of early McCartney records — frets buzz, slides scrape and the vocals sound like they were recorded in a closet. While keeping his feet mostly planted in the lo-fi Americana aesthetic, the song writing casts a wide net, from garage rock to Tin Pan Alley pop to traditional spirituals.

He helpfully starts the album with a track called "For Beginners," a sly nod to his growing audience before moving to the album's hardest-rocking cut "Never Had Nobody Like You" which just so happens to feature Zooey Deschanel.

Throughout the record, Ward makes several allusions to his Catholic upbringing and his thoughts on the afterlife ("Fisher of Men," "Blake's View," "Shangri-La"). He never gets maudlin, but the material contrasts with She & Him's airy love songs.

There are a few obvious missteps — his chilled out cover of "Rave On" and his interminable duet with Lucinda Williams on "Oh Lonesome Me" — but overall the album suffers from the tossed-off ramshackle aesthetic that Ward painstakingly cultivates. The album particularly is reminiscent of McCartney inasmuch as many of the songs seemed half-finished.

The album suffers as a whole from a lack of a sense of purpose or cohesion, as if he needed to assert his solo career after the runaway success of She & Him, but didn't have much to say. "Hold Time" is Ward in a holding pattern, biding his time until Deschanel's ready for "Volume 2."

Lily Allen released her sophomore album "It's Not Me, It's You" Feb. 10.

Allen is a superstar in the UK: a tabloid mainstay and the host of her own TV show. She was signed

solely because of the success of her MySpace page, and her first album, "Alright, Still."

On "It's Not Me, It's You," Allen teams up with producer Greg Kurstin of the Bird and the Bee who supported her on early tours. As the title suggests, the album is full of cheeky songs with Allen telling off unsatisfactory lovers, corrupt politicians and vacant models with her usual snark.

On the social commentary songs ("The Fear," "Everyone's at It") Allen occasionally falls into trite generalizations worth of "American Idiot," her only missteps on the record. Luckily, Kurstin keeps the production so perfect and buoyant that the lazy rhymes don't ruin the exhilarating hooks.

She is, of course, at her best when telling off lame love on tracks like "Not Fair" and "I Could Say," but her straightforward love songs are the heart of this album. On "Who'd Have Known" and "Chinese" Allen effortlessly paints one of the most beautiful, realistic portraits of what the simple, but essential, pleasures of a real relationship actually are.

There are no grand gestures or pledges of undying affection — Allen's too smart for that — just lazy days spent drinking wine and ordering takeout. These songs alone make "It's Not Me, It's You" a great album, which is not to mention the brilliant production and dry wit that permeates the record. This is as good as it gets.

Finally in this week's roundup we have the debut self-titled album from Scottish rockers Glasvegas.

This band has been making waves in the British press as one of the best new bands of the year and has earned endless comparisons to their countrymen, the Jesus and Mary Chain. While Glasvegas equally is liberal in their use of reverb, their lack of guitar noise and epic songs make U2 an equally influential musical touchstone.

On the disc, singer/songwriter James Allan spins simple melancholy tales with stories populated by social workers ("Geraldine"), deadbeat dads ("Daddy's Gone"), murderers ("Flowers & Football Tops") and winter depressives ("S.A.D. Light"). All over his band's cavernous waves of guitars and synths.

The lyrics often border on maudlin but mostly are saved by Allan's loveable, thick Scottish brogue. Generally they're satisfying, and you know that the band really is going for it, but you're still left wishing they would steal another page from the Jesus and Mary Chain and bring the noise, as it were. If only the dude from the Raveonettes would produce their next record. A boy can dream.

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