

# Scarlet Scoop

The Return of Erica's CD and Book Club

By: Erica Farley

CD – Scissor Sisters by the Scissor Sisters

Ever have that urge to just get up and dance? To just go wild amid a throng of others just as enthused with the music as you are? No? Okay, then you can just stop reading here. But if you've ever felt this way, then I highly recommend the self-titled album by the New York dance club legends the Scissor Sisters. This album is nothing but pure energy and decadence. Described as, "A genre and gender-defying mix of rock, pop, and dance inspired by burlesque, drag queens, and glam rock..." the Scissor Sisters consist of singers Jake Shears and Ana Matronic, keyboardist/bassist BabyDaddy, guitarists Del Marquis and Derek G and drummer Paddy Boom. The band is a hit in dance clubs throughout New York City and a smash hit in the UK, mostly because of their cover version of Pink Floyd's "Comfortably Numb" which is featured on this album.

This album is comprised of nothing but amazing songs so it's hard to pick out just a few. "Laura" is a funky, perky, musical style anthem to all the girls the Jake Shears once loved or had a one night stand with, I'm really not sure which it is. But regardless of the song's subject matter, it is a great, sexy song to just dance and have fun to. Another superb dance song is "Filthy/Gorgeous", a spunky, spry story of being what you want and not listening to anyone else's opinion of it. And there is one line in this song that describes me perfectly, "I'm a classy honey kissy huggy lovey dovey ghetto princess." .... No? All right moving on then. And finally there is the tearjerker of, "Mary", one of the few songs on this album that does not inspire you to get up and dance. It is about devotion, and being a steadfast, stalwart to the one you love. As the bridge of the song goes, "'Cause I'd give everything I have/forget all the things that bring me joy/You could have one day of pure and simple happiness/Until that moment comes/I'll be here where I've always been/I'm gonna be your friend/Until the day I die..."

A true eclectic mix of happiness and tears, the Scissor Sisters self titled album is a poignant, beautiful picture of life, love and of course, dancing.

Book – Neurotically Yours, the graphic novel by Jonathan Ian Mathers

What happens when you combine a rabid, talking squirrel; a depressed, poetic goth girl and a plethora of characters including a demon of the afterlife named Deadie and a crazed roommate? Throw in a little bit of hatred for society and some squirrel humor and you get Neurotically Yours, the cult hit by Jonathan Ian Mathers that spawned an online animated version of the comic and a boat load of merchandise.

Our main characters are Germaine, the depressed goth girl and her pet squirrel Foamy. The graphic novel chronicles Germaine's observances of life with the occasional comment from Foamy, which is generally something about how squirrels are far superior to humans. But Foamy isn't evil, just give him a bagel and he's content. Germaine enjoys threatening to pummel her perky, happy, cheerleader-like roommate who is really the antithesis of everything Germaine is. Deadie enters the story when Germaine falls off a cliff after bemoaning the atrocities of life. She goes onto an after life existence in which the dead can do whatever they want. Deadie listens to Germaine as she continues to after bemoan the atrocities of life in the after life.

The book often contains fake ads including, "How to Identify a Goth-Chick", "Vampire Truths Revealed", "Deadie's List of Stuff to do in the Great Beyond", and ads for dolls of each of the characters.

Mathers is a true comic genius who is in the ranks with Alan Moore and Daniel Clowes.... probably two people you've never heard of but should have. Graphic novels aren't just comic books, they're much more than that. No matter how stupid they seem, everyone should read at least one graphic novel in their life and Neurotically Yours is a good one to start with.

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Im and Ina's Book, CD, and Movie Review

By: Christina Vializ and Kim Kaufman

The Beginning of the End

By: Julia Dennis

Book: *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*

By: Douglas Adams

Two friends travel the universe with only the Hitchhiker's Guide and bath towels escaping death time and time again. Adams has created a hilarious science fiction novel that will keep any Monty Python-lover content. This book has been made into a great hit of a movie and has gotten four and a half out of five stars in customer reviews. This is a fast-paced, witty, and fun book that we highly recommend. Thumbs up!

CD: *Crossfade* ~ Released April 13, 2004 Sony Records

Ever since their smash hit *Cold* became popular, they've been on the up and up. These four guys from South Carolina wrote, recorded and produced their album on their own. They're asking fans to design a new band logo and as well as the album's cover artwork for greater impact on their debut album. They began touring the beginning of this year and have potential to be great with their dead-on vocals and catchy lyrics. Thumbs up!

Movie: *The Interpreter* Rated PG-13 Released on April 22, 2005

Starring: Nicole Kidman, Sean Penn, Catherine Keener

Genre: Drama/Thriller

Kidman, an interpreter at the UN, happens to be there after-hours and hears an assassination plot in no more than a whisper. She lets the Secret Service know as she was trained to do, and they assign Penn to protect her. The problem is, Kidman has a dark past that she doesn't completely share with anyone, which may lead you to believe *she* is the assassin. Released on April 22, this political thriller was well put together and the acting really helps it through the scenes that drag on. It was actually shot inside the United Nations, but only on the weekends. The promotional phrase is: "The truth needs no translation."

When we were six we looked upon the twelve year old children with the respect and reverence of elders with infinite wisdom. When we finally reached the age of twelve we turned our minds to the insight and aptitude we would possess at sixteen. At sixteen the sole obstacle impeding our immeasurable endowment was that we had to first reach the age of eighteen to at last claim the prize that it seemed all of these older children had. When you enter high school as a freshman you see the seniors as almighty elders, each possessing all of the knowledge the world has to offer and each being more adult than you yourself couldn't wait to be. The reality is that it is no different than when you were six, twelve or sixteen. When you yourself become the revered age it ceases to be so old and so you look to future insurmountable ages hoping that when you reach them you can finally be an adult.

Reality, however again strikes. No one age can dictate to you when you can finally stop learning. The same holds true with six, sixteen, twenty-six, and even ninety-six. Every person is unremittingly learning, learning that no matter what age you are theoretically an adult, that adulthood is just a fantasy and there is no path you can take in life that will make you feel like you are as old as your elders were.

Subsequently I must implore you, don't live life with the velocity and muddled hastiness that seems to come with today's times. If you keep on rushing up to the next tier of life, incessantly searching for that infinite wisdom age, you will accomplish nothing but having lived far too hurriedly.



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## Senior Send off

By: Robbie Severns

Belvidere High School, to some a prison that locked you in for four years, to others a great place where people meet and make life long friends. I am a junior, the next year's senior, and I am scared. I am scared of the classes, the responsibility, and above all else knowing that I am to leave high school. This article isn't written for me, it is written to the seniors. When I came to this school my sophomore year I was alone, I had no idea how to get around and I had no friends. Until I met a select group on individuals and they changed all that. Since then my life has changed completely, they showed me it was all right to except being in a new school and they have become the best friends I have ever had in my life. Now they are leaving, going on to bigger and better things in life, they have places to go and destinies to fulfill, whether it is becoming the greatest musician to walk the earth or a writer that will pump out more hits then Stephen King and Dr.Suess combined (and they know they will they just wont admit it). There are so many more students with bright futures, whether it is a teacher, a principle, astronaut, scuba diver, or president. I know that I will miss all of my friends almost too much to bear, but knowing they are off becoming the adult they were meant to be makes everything okay. High school was merely the starting line; these graduating men and women are taking the first step on the long road of life, and I am honored to have known every last one of them

This article is not about Band.

By: Helen Smith

Surprised? I bet you are. No, for my final article for The Scarlet Scoop I chose something completely different to write about: Monty Python's Spamalot.

I know it is kind of late to be writing about a show that opened in March, but I thought since it was recently nominated for fourteen Tony awards it would be an appropriate topic. Another reason could just be because I am obsessed with Monty Python, but that is beside the point. Spamalot, directed by Mike Nichols, is a show comprised of pretty much all of the scenes and songs from the Python's 1975 movie Monty Python and the Holy Grail. Some additions include a new actress, Sara Ramirez, playing that, Watery tart, the Lady of the Lake, as well as tributes to other Broadway shows like Man of La Mancha and The Boy From Oz. Overall Spamalot sticks to the Holy Grail plot. The main difference is instead of the knights going on their quest for the Holy Grail they are traveling to the enchanted land called Broadway. The taunting Frenchman, the bring out your dead scene, the killer rabbit...they're all there. The original Pythons-John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones and Michael Palin-have been replaced by six new members for Spamalot: Tim Curry (The Rocky Horror Picture Show) as King Arthur, Hank Azaria (The Simpsons) as Sir Lancelot, David Hyde Pierce (Frazier) as Sir Robin, Steve Rosen as Sir Bedevere, Christopher Sieber as Sir Galahad and Michael McGrath as Patsy. Of course they each also play a number of different characters, including the Knights Who Say Ni, Tim the Enchanter, the Black Knight, and that poor old historian. Monty Python was first seen on British television when the series Monty Python's Flying Circus debuted in 1969. The group consisted of five young Brits (Cleese, Chapman, Idle, Jones and Palin) and one American (Gilliam). Together they changed the face of sketch comedy while singing about lumberjacks, Spam and whatever other absurdities they could come up with. Now with the successful opening of Spamalot, we see that they are still just as popular even if one doesn't know the capital of Assyria.

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Butt Out

By Christina Vializ and Kim Kaufman

You've heard it before, "Quit smoking!" I can see the look on your face. "We're all going to die at some point anyway," you say nonchalantly. While that may be true, smoking will only lead you to your death sooner and in a more painful way. Take a look at a few wonderful conditions you as a smoker can and will develop. It is a known fact that smoking causes lung cancer, but there are many other forms of cancer that it can cause. Bladder cancer, cancer of the esophagus, kidney cancer, cancer of the pancreas, and cervical cancer are among the other variations that affect smokers.

114,000 people in the UK alone die from smoking each year.

Of these deaths, about 42,800 are from smoking-related cancers, 30,600 from cardiovascular disease and 29,100 die slowly from emphysema and other chronic lung diseases. Of the 300 people who die every day in the UK as a result of smoking, many are comparatively young smokers.

Cardiovascular disease is the main cause of death due to smoking. Hardening of the arteries is a process when cholesterol and other fats stick to the arteries, leaving them narrow, blocked or rigid. When the arteries narrow blood clots are likely to form. Blood clots in the heart and brain are the most common causes of sudden death.

One cigarette contains more than 4000 chemical compounds and at least 400 toxic substances. Heating a cigarette increases the potency of these toxins. Research proves that smoking reduces life expectancy by seven to eight years. Each cigarette takes eleven minutes off of your life! Just think about that every time you light up.

Hopefully now that you've read just a handful of the numerous health risks that are directly linked to smoking you have decided that quitting might not be such a bad idea.

If and when you quit, your overall health will start to improve, though your body will never be as healthy as a non-smoker. Quitting, as you may already know, isn't easy, since smoking is addictive. Here are a few options that you may consider to help you in your decision to quit:

1. Nicotine replacement treatment (NRT) in the form of gum, skin patches or nasal spray.
2. Zyban (bupropion) is a medicine that's licensed to help smoking cessation.
3. Behavior modification programs.
4. Alternative therapies such as acupuncture and hypnosis.



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What's Up at the Cinema?

By: Robbie Severns and Julia Dennis

“It happens every time, they all become blueberries”-Willy Wonka, Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.

There are very few movies in this reviewer's lifetime that he would pay to see again. This fact exists because I don't have the money, and no movies are made in our time that bears the need to watch again. “Sin City” however is definitely such a movie. “Sin City” is based off of the comic by Frank Miller also named “Sin City” that follows the dark paths of multiple characters as the coexist in this vast city. This film brings many new and exciting filming methods to the table. The entire film except for small details (a shoe, a car, or the eyes of a character) are shot in black and white. The dark way in which this film was shot gives it an edge, the characters and the plot comes alive on the screen. The best part of this film however was the old school feel, it was like watching an old detective movie, the monologue constantly flowing or the smokey bar rooms where men in trench coats sat sipping drinks and muttering to themselves. This movie oozes originality and greatness. This movie is recommended to anyone who can enjoy a great peace of film.

I have been a fan of Japanese animation as long as I can remember. Ever since I was a kid the only thing I wanted to do was sit in my room and watch the characters fight, or laugh, or save people. Since then my tastes have evolved, I have seen many classic movies made by some of the most famous anime directors of all time but one of the greatest if not the best would have to be “Grave of the Fireflies”. This story follows the characters Setsuko and Seita, a brother and sister surviving in Japan during World War II. Times are tough and this movie tugs on your heart harder than anything has before. It brought this reviewer closer to tears than any movie ever has before.

You connect with these characters on a level unsurpassed by anime in the past. You think that somewhere you met someone just like them and it really irks you when they suffer. There is no extreme violence, gore, or sex in this movie, its just incredibly sad. I recommend this to any person who likes anime and those who enjoy a good drama.

For this particular issue of our review column I have chosen to review a very controversial movie. A movie that is mostly perceived with greatness, “Donnie Darko.” “Donnie Darko” follows the story of a young man whose name is Donnie Darko. He is plagued by nightmarish visions of a man in a bunny suit who tells him to do seemingly terrible things, including informing him of the end of the world. Despite all of this confusion he initiates a relationship with Gretchen, a new girl whose mother had been brutally wounded by her father. This film had all the makings of a new psychological masterpiece, but it was not. The characters were well developed, the basic plot was creative but the film itself was very messy. Knots left untied leave it's viewers unsettled, and feeling like something good had been taken away from them with the viewing of this film. There were simply too many inconsistencies for this film to be deemed worthy for viewing. Many faithful “Donnie Darko” fans may argue that I might be too shallow, or narrow minded to perceive it's true magnitude. This however is a particular condescending statement; in reaction to this comment I accuse those people as just the same. Overlooking a films fallacy because of its dark incentives in turn makes a person insular and subsequently not a commendable resource when one is deciding whether or not to watch this film. I myself say, watch it, but be wary of the loopholes and inconsistencies, for they are what drag this film down, and not the basic plot.