

Bush shows little improvement on *Razorblade Suitcase*

By MATT HARRINGTON
CONTRIBUTING REVIEWER

When I heard that Bush had released a new album, *Razorblade Suitcase*, I was immediately curious. I had originally been a fan of Bush's debut album, *Sixteen Stone*, until I really listened to it for musical content and found that it was incredibly repetitive and simple.

I had also been disillusioned by the way lead singer Gavin Rossdale had handled Bush's fame based on such singles as "Glycerine" and "Comedown."

When I saw Bush perform in the summer of 1995, before they were really big and before they kicked off their large-scale tour with two other groups, No Doubt and Goo Goo Dolls, I could already sense a "rock star mentality" about Rossdale.

While singing his songs, whenever he would get to a verse about love, he'd look up into the crowd and reach toward a girl as if he were singing directly to her, sending her 12 year old mind into ecstasy.

Yet despite my dislike for Rossdale's antics as frontman, there was too much temptation to see what changes, if any, the band would make on this second album. When I found that the album was produced by the legendary Steve Albini (of Nirvana and Pixies fame), I was forced to buy the album.

I found that the changes were few and far between. Aside from some wonderful guitar work by lead guitarist Nigel Pulsford, the music of *Razorblade Suitcase* is

extremely similar to *Sixteen Stone*. In fact, the beginning of the song "A Tendency to Start Fires" sounds strangely similar to the introduction to "Little Things." There are numerous other similarities between songs on this album and those on *Sixteen Stone*.

There's even parallels within the album, as segments of "Distant Voices" are repetitive of parts of

I found that the changes were few and far between. Aside from some wonderful guitar work by lead guitarist Nigel Pulsford, the music of *Razorblade Suitcase* is extremely similar to *Sixteen Stone*.

"Greedy Fly."

The rest of the instrumentation is average at best. Rossdale's singing is monotone and relatively dull, bassist Dave Parsons is good, but not spectacular, and drummer Robin Goodridge is most likely in the band only because he looks a lot like Rossdale.

However, Albini adds some credibility to this made-for-MTV band. By introducing his ability to make feedback and pauses a valid part of music, Albini gives some much needed life to Bush's music. His presence is most

notable in the first two tracks, "Personal Holloway" and "Greedy Fly." However, not even Albini's feedback can save most of the songs on this album.

Although the feedback adds a nice touch, it is infused into the wrong places. For example, six of the thirteen songs on this album could be classified as ballads, and four of them have feedback worked into them in one way or another.

Though the feedback adds a distinctive sound to a ballad, it really serves no purpose because there is no basic guitar base on which to build the feedback around.

Maybe Albini should have focused on the lyrics as well as the production. It becomes painfully obvious that Gavin Rossdale may be a good frontman for the band because of his teenage heartthrob looks, but he cannot write to save his life. His lyrics either do not make any sense ("Do you feel the way you hate/Do you hate the way you feel") or are ridiculously simple and happy-hearted ("Somewhere, sometime all things will be fine"). Perhaps it is time other members of the band start helping out in the songwriting, as this is the second album in a row that all songs have been written by Rossdale.

Overall, the album shows limited improvement and an ability to change tempo, but no improvements have been made in songwriting or lyrics.

Aside from a few gems early in the album, the best thing I can say about this album is there probably will not be many songs that hit the radio or MTV, although these days, you never know.



Bush
Razorblade Suitcase
Interscope Records

Patient

From Page B5

deliver decent performances, but the importance of their roles demands more. We never get beyond the surface with these two characters, and never learn why they think or act the way they do. Why is Count Almasy so distant? Why is Katherine so unsatisfied with her life? These questions are never answered, and as a result we never get to really connect with either one of them.

Ironically, it is a relationship on the periphery of this epic story that is

more compelling. This is romance between Hana (Binoche) and Kip (Naveen Andrews), a Sikh bomb disposal expert, is far less melodramatic, but seems far more sincere. Binoche (who starred in the French film *Bleu*) delivers the film's best performance as a woman who, because she has seen countless patients and friends die in the war, believes that it is her love that causes death. Through Kip, who faces death each day while defusing mines, she realizes otherwise. Perhaps the most satisfying moment in the film is when Hana comes to this realization and is not only able to find love, but is able to find peace with herself.

If there is a best bet for an *English Patient* win at the Academy Awards,

it would have to be for its cinematography. The film is visually stunning, from the attractiveness of the cast itself to the Italian monastery where Almasy reveals his past. Even more beautiful, however, are the shots of the Sahara Desert and its infinite dunes. Predictions become less clear when speculating about a best picture win.

For, as pretty as the film is, and as great as the cast is, the main focus of the film is on two characters who we really do not know. We hear them profess their love for each other, but we are not able to feel it. And when the inevitable conclusion occurs that is meant to evoke our emotions for Katherine and Almasy, we are not able to find them.

CALENDAR

To have your event listed, send mail to P.O. Box 7569, e-mail arts@ogb.wfu.edu or fax us at 759-4561.

ON CAMPUS

Exhibits

Treasures from the Museum of Anthropology. The exhibit features works of art from Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Americas.
When: Through March 1
Where: Museum of Anthropology
Cost and info: Free. Ext. 5282

Movies

Die Hard. A non-stop action thriller starring Bruce Willis pits a police officer fighting a group of terrorists who have taken hostages at an office building where Willis's ex-wife is at. **When:** 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. Fri. and Sat. 7 p.m. Sun.
Where: Pugh
Cost: \$2

It's My Party. A star-packed movie commemorating AIDS Awareness Week.
When: 8 p.m. Today
Where: Pugh
Cost: Free

Saturday Night Fever. 70's disco flick starring John Travolta as a guy working a dead end job by day and ruling the club scene by night. Travolta dances his way to the top with help from a soundtrack done by the Bee Gees.
When: 8 p.m. Sat.
Where: Tribble A3
Cost: Free.

Music

Secrest Series: Paul Hiller's Theatre of Voices. An a capella group, directed by Hiller, performs a variety of holiday pieces

as well as other songs from the Spanish Renaissance.
When: 8 p.m. Fri.
Where: Wait Chapel
Cost and info: \$10. Ext. 5295

George Winston: The recording pianist will perform his contemporary pieces for the Winston-Salem audience. Tickets are on sale now. Students are needed as ushers.
When: Jan. 31
Where: Wait Chapel.
Info: Ext. 5697

Wake Forest Choirs Holiday Concert: The Choral Union, the Collegium Vocal Ensemble and the Concert Choir will perform together as well as separate in commemoration of the holiday season. Program features Handel's "Messiah."
When: Today
Where: Brendle Recital Hall
Cost and info: Free. Ext. 5026

ELSEWHERE

Clubs

This Week's Spotlight: Sponge. The alternative band takes the stage to perform their tribute to Molly Ringwald, "Molly", plus "Ruth Ruth" and "Red Five."
When: Fri.
Where: Ziggy's
Info: 748-1064

Cat's Cradle. Today: Doxy's Kitchen with Mishap. \$5. Fri.: Ekoostik Hookah with hipbone. \$5. Sat.: Southern Culture on the Skids with Neil Diamond All-Stars and Shark Quest. 10 p.m. \$6. Sun.: Medeski, Martin and Wood. 9 p.m. \$12. Tues.: Jon Spencer Blues Explosion with ATARI Teenage Riot. \$10 p.m.

Where: 300 E. Main St., Carrboro
Info: (919) 967-9053

Lizard and Snake Cafe. Fri.: Gravity's Pull. Sat.: Rebecca Gates of the Spinanes. Sun.: Godrays with Rodeoboy.
Where: 110 N. Columbia St., Chapel Hill
Info: (919) 929-2828

Ziggy's. Today: Backsliders with Mercury Dime. Fri.: Sponge. Sat.: Darlahood with Knocked Down Smilin. Tues.: Nil Lara. Wed.: All Mighty Senators with Blackrayn.
Where: 433 Baity Street
Info: 748-1064

Theatre

Nutcracker Ballet. The Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony along with the North Carolina School of the Arts present Tchaikovsky's ballet for the Holiday season.

When: 7:30 p.m. Dec. Sat. - Mon., 13-16. 2 p.m. Sat. and Sun., 14 & 15
Where: Stevens Center, 405 W. 4th St.
Info: 723-7919

Exhibits

A Thousand Years of Czech Culture. The collection of over 200 historic artifacts and works of art capture the politics, religion, and folk customs of the Czech Republic.
When: Through March 16, 1997
Where: The Gallery at Old Salem
Info: 721-7300

Pictured in My Mind. Works from the Gitter/Yelen collection will be on display along with Winston-Salem artist Sue Moore's work.
When: Through Jan. 5
Where: Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, 750 Marguerite Drive
Info: 725-1904



Courtesy of 20th Century Fox

In theaters now

Winona Ryder stars in the newly released version of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*.

Non Sequitur by Wiley

12-3 VILEY



©1996 Washington Post Writers Group

E-mail: Wileytoon@aol.com
www.washingtonpost.com/wiley

Would you like
to cover the
Secrest Artist Series?
Anyone can do it!
Call Ext. 5280.