

Indigo Girls experiment with new styles

Saliers speaks about the creation of *Shaming of the Sun* and life as a musician

By Jennifer Gough
Editorials Editor

What! \$27.50?!" Who would pay \$27.50 for an Indigo Girls concert?" Though the ignorant non-fans scoffed in disbelief at the small fortune (for a college student) that people shelled out for tickets, hundreds lined up in front of the Student Union office to ensure their spot at the Oct. 20 Indigo Girls show in Wait Chapel. Though the duo of Amy Ray and Emily Saliers have never had a song climb higher than number 52 on the Billboard charts (and even that, "Closer to Fine," was eight years ago), the Indigo Girls have for years kept a following of die-hard fans who swear by their poignant, honest lyrics and the raspy, strong alto of Ray intertwined with the sweet, lilting soprano of Saliers. And that's just fine with them. "We much prefer to remain a grassroots band; that's what we've always been — never had a hit single, never had a hit video, none of that stuff. It's fine with us," Saliers said in an interview Oct. 9. "And as far as our sound goes, I doubt if we ever could be mainstream. We don't make our records that way, we don't mix our sound that way. If it ever happens, it would probably be a fluke." But it's no fluke that so many adoring fans are chomping at the bit for Monday's concert. So why did the five-time Grammy-nominated Indigo Girls, who just four months ago gave their first headlining per-

formance at Madison Square Garden, agree to come here? "We'll play anywhere," said Saliers. "Playing Madison Square Garden was thrilling because it was so big, but you don't get as much intimacy in a venue like that. While I like playing all venues, I'd have to say my favorites are maybe two to three thousand people." Which is just about the size of Wait Chapel.

The Indigo Girls have been busy all year, especially with the release of their sixth full-length album, *Shaming of the Sun*. The album takes on a different tone from the previous, mostly acoustic, folk-sounding albums; this time it takes on overtones of a harder rock sound with a more amplified, uncharacteristic emphasis on electric guitar and various drums.

The band also throws in more eclecticism than usual, with Native American chants (by a group called Ulali), a variety of strange and unusual instruments and a few strange and unusual sound effects (like a police siren in "Shame on You" and some old guy uttering something incomprehensible in "Hey Kind Friend"). But classic Indigos still shine through, with their core acoustics, social commentary, profound lyrics and unequalled signature harmony.

"Probably some of (the music on *Shaming of the Sun*) is more accessible, like in a mainstream sort of way, but then you have stuff that's as eclectic as anything we've ever done, and not mainstream at all. So I think it's a mix," Saliers said. "I would say it's harder-edged overall. I like that about it."

Is this new sound the direction the Indigo Girls are heading? "We never know where we're heading actually. We just kind of get in the studio and do the songs, make it up as

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Indigo Girls

we go along," Saliers said. "We talked about doing a much more stripped-down, organic record for the next one. We'll see how we feel when we get there."

"We felt very free in the studio. We ended up using a lot more instruments (on *Shaming of the Sun*). Ulali came in and sang on three of the songs, added a really cool texture, and then we used drum loops for the first time on 'Shed Your Skin.' That's why the album went that direction — we were just in there experimenting."

Amid their musical experimentation, the Indigo Girls remain as politically active as ever, and, according to Saliers, their activism is as important to them as their musical career. "We've been playing for such a long time, since high school, so, you know, we've been politically active ever since we've been playing," she said. "I just feel very fortunate that we can use our music as a political tool a lot of times. We just

finished our Honor the Earth tour, which raised money for grassroots groups. It was really successful.

We got a lot of press, the fans filled out over 50,000 political action cards. I'm very grateful that Amy and I are able to do that, you know, not for our sakes, just to have that experience, to feel like we, along with other people, can make change. It's very inspiring."

Despite their fame and lofty social and political goals, one of the things that makes the Indigo Girls so appealing is that they are average people with personal lives and pets. Saliers says she has three cats. "Well, I have four cats, but one of them lives down the street, and a dog." Their names? The dog is Phoebe and the cats are Batman, Casey and Queeny. "And Jody lives down the street," she said, chuckling.

She also loves to read. "I'm reading a novel right now called *Independent People*. I like to play golf, I like to be outside in the garden, hang out with my friends and family, fix up the house, cook dinner," she said. "I like to cook things with sauces — fattening foods, that's what I like to cook."

And her music, the Indigo Girls' music, conveys that Saliers and Ray are real people. They may not be as popular as the Spice Girls, but they're probably a little more genuine. According to Saliers, she and Ray frequently get letters from fans who say that their music helped them through difficult times in their lives, or changed the way they thought about things.

"You know, I don't know exactly why it happens, but I know for a lot of our fans it's true," Saliers said. "I think it's just because the music is so honest, you know. Most people feel insecure and we write about

that, we write about fear and things we're afraid about, we write about love — most of the basic human experiences. There's just a real strong emotional tie and I guess it's cause the music is so emotional."

And even though the Indigo Girls write lyrics that make such universal emotional connections, according to Saliers, the process of writing is a very personal thing for her. "Song writing is a very vulnerable and personal experience. I never think about other people when I'm writing. I mean, I never think about how it's going to be

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Courtesy of Epic Records
The Indigo Girls, Amy Ray and Emily Saliers, will perform Oct. 20 in Wait Chapel. Tickets are still available.



Courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

Kidnapping, anyone?

Ewan McGregor and Cameron Diaz star in *A Life Less Ordinary* which opens this weekend. McGregor stars as a would-be kidnapper who runs into problems when his hostage takes over.

Carey hams it up in *Liar, Liar*

Creative storyline goes over the top with stereotyped characters

By Krista Neal
Contributing Reviewer

In the conveniently titled *Liar, Liar*, Jim Carey portrays attorney Fletcher Reede who finds himself in a predicament after he loses his ability to lie.

The film starts off with a charming scene with Reede's son (Justin Cooper), in which he tells his teacher that his dad's occupation is being a "liar" instead of a "lawyer."

Reede, as the viewer soon discovers, is in the bad habit of pushing his ex-wife (Maura Tierney) and child out of his life by continuously breaking promises and lying to them. Everything to Reede is either solved or made easier by simply lying. This routine of making promises and then breaking them causes his son to wish on his birthday that, for one day, his dad could not tell a lie.

This wish — which comes true — soon becomes a curse to Reede because of an important case he has coming up.

In the case, one mishap after another occurs and this wish is made even worse when it is used against him by a vindictive lawyer (Amanda Donohoe) who doesn't want Reede to be promoted to partner.

The film is humorous at the begin-

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ning, thanks to Carey's adding his own spin to the stereotypical view of attorneys, but it rapidly turns out to be sillier than Carey's other films. In fact, some scenes are so ridiculous that one actually becomes embarrassed for him.

It is interesting to observe, however, how difficult it could be to go through one single day without the ability to lie.

Also, there is, as expected, an abundance of clichés in the film. One of the firm's partners drives a convertible Mercedes, is irresistibly charming, divorced, wears \$4,000 suits, has a loyal elderly secretary, and so on, and so on.

On the other hand, there are many good points to this film. Reede learns to be a good father.

He realizes how much his lying has hurt his son and other people close to him.

Carey's character further learns, ultimately, how to be a lawyer using other skills besides lying. One also has to admit that it is nice to see an

obnoxious character get what he so sorely deserves.

So the film does make several good social commentaries about both the art of being a attorney and fatherhood.

The director, Tom Shadyac, makes good use of these finer points in ending the film. The ending is, thanks to Shadyac's directorial skills, not too sweet and artificial, as viewers may have come to expect from films similar to *Liar, Liar*.

A nice addition to the film are the outtakes which had to be edited for the actors' mistakes and shown at the end credits. These scenes, unfortunately, are more genuinely hilarious than some parts of the movie itself.

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It is disappointing to notice that the supporting characters are not really developed in the film and seem to be just hanging around. One would guess that's only expected when the film's main star is one of the highest-paid actors in the industry.

As with all of Jim Carey's movies, *Liar, Liar* does seem like just one long endorsement for Carey, as *Space Jam* was for Michael Jordan, with Carey actually making references to himself throughout the film.

All in all, *Liar, Liar* is a humorous film but definitely not enduring enough to watch two or more times. Once should be plenty enough.

Sandler captures crowd with stand-up and songs

By Andy Ferguson
Senior Reporter

Everyone remembers the lines that stretched through the doors of Benson. I remember asking to some of the troopers who had waited since 3 p.m. for tickets that didn't go on sale until 9 p.m., "What if he isn't funny?" The response was a resounding: "He will be." And sure enough, he was.

Adam Sandler, courtesy of Student Union, brought his goofy wit and charming personality to Brendle Recital Hall Oct. 13, winning over fans in two sold-out shows.

From the start of the first show until the end of the second, Sandler built a rapport with his audience — not that this was a difficult task.

Most of the audience was already warmed to him the minute he hit the stage. Still, Sandler's relaxed demeanor improved relations as he skipped along his

merry way, delivering about 30 minutes of stand-up material and then singing selections from each of his albums.

Sandler's stand-up proved to be a smart beginning of his act, as it bridged the gap between Adam Sandler, the star and Adam Sandler, the person. He described himself to the crowd as "a pretty good guy. I'm not a great guy and I'm not an a—hole. I'm a pretty good guy, which is the hardest to be ... I am the kind of guy who will eat the last fry on the plate, and then feel guilty about it ... I will see an old lady fall down and laugh, but then I will feel bad and help her up. I'm not mean enough to let her lay there, but I'll still get the laugh in."

The material was akin to his personality and definitely not for the faint of heart. There appears to be two sides to Sandler: the sensitive side that understands the insecurities of people, and the raunchy, low-brow side giddy at the idea of crossing social boundaries.

The same man who is sheepish in describing various

sexual acts belts out a song like "At a Medium Pace," which goes into explicit detail about other sexual activities.

Four-letter curse words were the centerpiece of Sandler's vocabulary, as he employed them whenever an opening arose. One of his newer songs, which will probably not be receiving the same air-play as "The Lonesome Kicker," featured the chorus, "I made a millionaire out of Mr. Frito-Lay / Who made a fat mother—er out of me."

The highlights of Sandler's routine were his staples. Songs like "What the Hell Happened to Me," and "The Chanukah Song," complete with new lyrics, were the big crowd-pleasers. The encore, "Red-hooded Sweatshirt," was another highlight of the evening. The audience sang the high-pitched chorus, all the while encouraged by Sandler who appeared genuinely excited at the response.

The raunchy aspects of Sandler's routine were for-

givable because of his endearing personality. Sandler was obviously at ease with the audience, creating an active dialogue with anyone in the crowd who wished to participate.

Very much the opposite of some comedians, who approach this dialogue as a challenge, Sandler engaged all responses, remaining humble in the adoration. He acknowledged the screams and the chants, always thanking the participants.

At one point a fan yelled, "Sandler rocks!" to which he responded, "I think so, too." Sandler at his best was witty and charming. He was not afraid to poke fun at himself, another endearing trait in his personality.

While too much emphasis was placed on the low-brow humor, it was an entertaining two-hour set notwithstanding.

The members of Student Union, who should be complimented on the success of both shows, would be well-advised to enlist Mr. Sandler again in the future.