

Formal: The most (least) wonderful time of the year

Don't let your formal experience be ruined by a dud nor a stud

Most people assume that the year is composed of four seasons: spring, summer, fall and winter. Others would argue that there are five seasons. Clearly, you can't exclude hunting season! We are, of course, in the South.

Here at Wake Forest, our seasons may not be very clearly defined, but they are definitely apparent — even hunting season!

You know, the month of August when the upper-classmen steal as many

freshman look books as possible in order to begin stalking their prey.

I propose that in addition to the spring, summer, fall, winter and hunting seasons, we add another season to our annual calendar. Formal season.

Yes ladies and gentlemen, it's that time of year again. A time of sorority formals, fraternity mountain weekends and all the stress that comes with them.

Formal season is a time full of the same rules I discussed in previous ramblings. You can't just ask someone to one of these functions anymore. First you have to make sure that the person you're going to ask is available.

You send out spies to find out if the guy or girl is free before you ask, that way your chances of rejection are lessened. Without taking these precautions you risk the piteous looks and responses of, "Oh, I'd love to, except I'm already going to so-and-so's mountain weekend. I'm sorry!" Maybe you'll get a pat on the arm if you're lucky.

That's not even the worst situation. What do you do if you're currently hooking up with someone, but you don't want to take him or her to your formal? Do you invite your hook-up out of guilt or do you take the person you really want to take?

Some of you are lucky in that

the person who you're hooking up with and the person you're taking to formal are one in the same. Others of you are going to find yourselves in quite a predicament when formal season is over!

You also have to take into consideration the baby-sitting factor. Does your date have friends in your organization? The chances of this happening increase if you take a blind date, someone you hardly know, or the hot guy who looks good in class, but has the personality of a wet towel.

Formal season is not exclusive to members of the Greek population. It irritates everyone. There is nothing more annoying than to listen to women complain about having to ask someone to formal; it's even worse when you overhear guys sitting around talking about their dates.

They always talk about it with a smirk on their faces, too. It starts with the, "Hey man, who are you taking to mountain weekend?" and ends with a name and conspiratorial wink. That kind of behavior is going to repulse everyone, not just the Greeks.

Then again, it is extremely frustrating to listen to girls incessantly talk about who they're taking or how they can't find anyone to take, only to realize that this particular female has been given plenty of good suggestions, but has been too picky to settle on one. The whole formal season is absolutely ridiculous!

I feel that I have focused too much on the Greek population this week and for this, I apologize. I just feel that this is an issue that affects the "sexual climate" on the entire campus.

But of course, I cannot tell a lie. Formals are a great time and are always filled with great stories. They also give you something to look back on during the worst season of the Wake Forest school year: the hell of examinations.

"Sex and the Campus" is a regular column exploring the sexual climate at the university. The column is written by senior under a pseudonym in order to maintain her sexual anonymity.

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Sex and the campus

by brandy jones

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Berkeley delivers chill, refreshing sound

By Hayley Sanders
Old Gold and Black Reviewer

Longing to find some natural and warmly expressive acoustic music that would inspire the soul, I stumbled across native New Yorker and acoustic modern urban pop-folk artist extraordinaire David Berkeley and his recently released debut album *The Confluence*.

Berkeley "spent five formative years in the hallowed halls of Harvard where he learned alliteration," according to his Web site www.davidberkeley.com, and met the love of his life. He studied literature and philosophy, and then decided to move West to work as a white-water rafting guide.

He spent five summers on the rivers of Idaho and Montana, and the title of his album is named after the confluence of the

The Confluence: Ideal for listening to during a sleepy autumn afternoon, while sipping some vanilla hot tea and lighting a few candles ...

Salmon and Snake Rivers, just southeast of the intersection of Oregon, Idaho and Washington. Currently, Berkeley plays various gigs around New York City and will launch a national tour in mid-December.

The Confluence offers 11 tracks varying in style, with some featuring intricate guitar-picking and softly spoken lyrics of the subtle and sobering experiences of life, infused with regret, as seen in "Miss Maybe." Others showcase emotional floods of passionate and dramatic despair, as seen in "Drowning," which addresses the tragedy of Sept. 11.

When listening to his work on cdbaby.com, I encountered an astonishingly tender and wistful voice, which seemed to sing out during life's bluest and most beautiful moments of melancholy, love and reflection, complemented by arrangements complete with the mandolin, piano, trombone and cello. Editors at the Web site cdbaby.com comment on the sensual, soothing and intimate sound of Berkeley, writing, "This new collection of songs, *The Confluence*, is a lay-

ered wash of natural sounds, warm like a tumbler half-full of bourbon, smooth as the silk square in your coat pocket." Further, they tag Berkeley as the "new darling of the folk world."

While Berkeley released *The Confluence* in December 2001, the entertainment media has just now caught word of this treasure of a musician, and on Oct. 22, Robin Aigner of *Rolling Stone* noted that, "he's a double fantasy of Nick Drake and Donovan, the kind of guy who 'gives you daisies everyday' ('Breeze') and tells a young love 'you are like the moon/I watch you as you glow' ('Moon Song')."

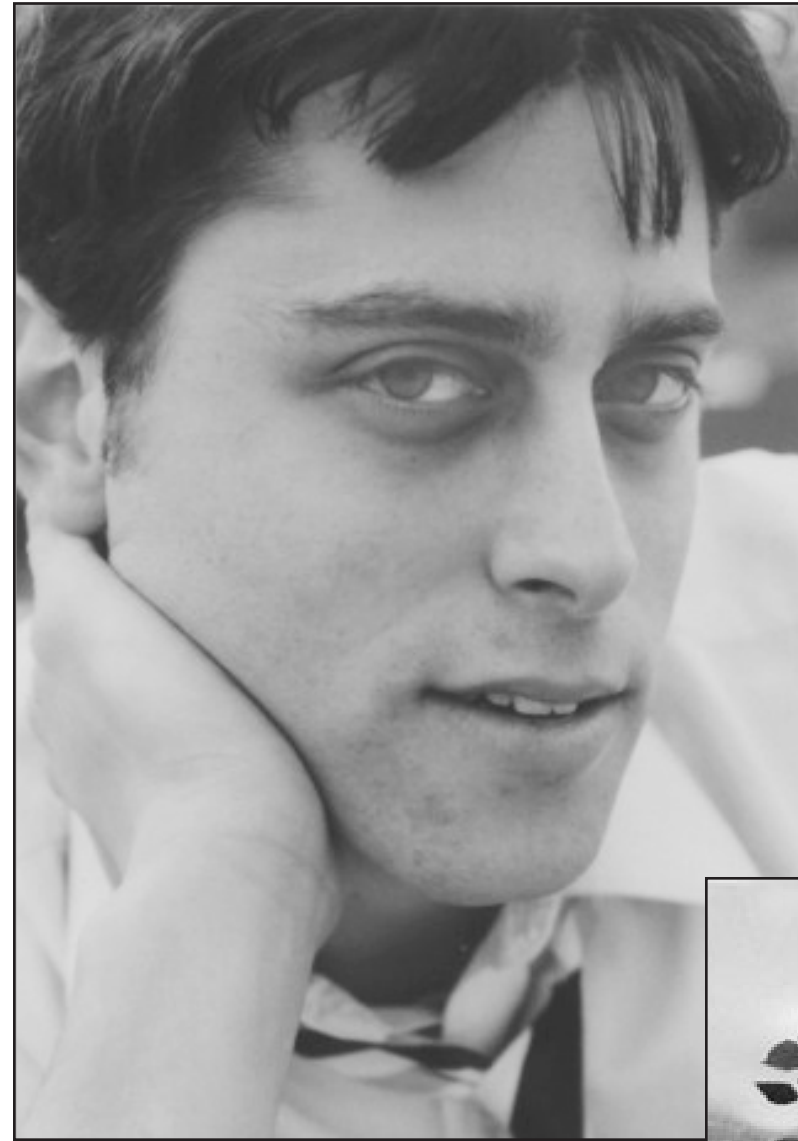
Indeed, Berkeley's dreamy ballad "Moon Song," which discusses the story about two lovers includes such unabashedly sentimental and romantic lyrics as, "You see, the boy would be her nightingale if she would be his muse." Yet while these words might cause some to scoff and roll their eyes, the refreshing aspect to Berkeley's music lies in his simplistic and honest approach to the subjects about which he writes.

A case in point, the song "Trouble For A Fool" explores personal isolation of the sentient individual pitted against the cold world, when he writes, "It's a windy night. There's nothing nice about it, nothing nice about the blowing wind./Someone must have blown the constellations apart — our conversations blowing backward from the start./It's a hard night. There's nothing nice about it, nothing warm about the blowing wind."

Other notable tracks include "Breeze," which examines personal despondency because of a lost love. He writes, "I want to take you to the stream and go where it wanders. Waters whisper out my name./Skip your sorrows like a stone over my shoulder. Lay your head upon my side." Yet, the object of his desire walks out of his life and coolly passes by, like a brisk gust of wind.

Also worthy of notice, the richly produced opener "Straw Man," features such lyrics to swoon and then sigh to as he sings about the adoration he feels for a love, followed by an intense internal fear of ultimate loneliness when he writes, "She makes the world around me seem lavender and wintergreen when we're side by side ... Still a quiet, lonely day on America's highway, and I am almost home. Pick up the phone. Say that living life alone ain't how the story ends."

Ideal for listening to during a sleepy autumn afternoon, while sipping some vanilla hot tea and lighting a few candles, *The Confluence* may be sampled and purchased through www.cdbaby.com.



Graphics courtesy of www.cdbaby.com



ABOVE: David Berkeley's latest album, *The Confluence* (RIGHT), is an acoustic mix of folk and pop influenced by classic artists and modern musical motivations. *Rolling Stone* magazine called Berkeley a "double fantasy of Nick Drake and Donovan" because of his easy-going sound.

TOOL: The sound and the spectacle

By Kryz Mroczkowski
Editorials Editor

The line began forming at 11 a.m. Nov. 2, and it continued to grow until 7:30 that night. The most fanatical followers were willing to sacrifice an entire day and battle the bitter cold that came after sundown just to get a few feet closer to the phenomenon known as Tool.

Since the concert was general admission, seats and floor space were first come, first serve. Therefore, when I arrived shortly after 6 p.m., the line stretched clear across the massive parking lot of Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum. However, I was still able to get good seats since the majority of those waiting chose spots on the floor.

The Coliseum quickly filled to near capacity with a flood of black shirts and stocking caps with TOOL emblazoned across them (because even the metal heads need to keep warm).

As the lights went down, the intensity of the anxious crowd rose, and the opening act was met with a ripe and ready pack of headbangers.

Meshuggah, a Swedish industrial/grind-core metal band, worked the crowd into a frenzy with their hard-hitting riffs and daunting stage presence.

After a 45-minute dose of mosh pits pounding to the double bass, Meshuggah left the stage, giving the mob a chance to rest before the main course was presented.

Around 9 p.m., the speakers began to hum with an electronic sounding track that accompanied the lightning bolts that seemed to jump across the roof of the coliseum.

The two giant screens that hung down on both sides of the stage danced with psychedelic images of the eye that adorns the cover of Tool's most recent album, *Lateralus*, which this tour was promoting.

Finally, after letting anticipation build for what seemed to be close to an hour (but in reality was probably closer

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to 10 minutes), the band took the stage. As they opened with "Sober", the screens began to show a warped journey of claymation (which guitarist Adam Jones does on the side) and animation that would last through the rest of the concert, mixing their videos with their stage act and their album jackets.

Maynard James Keenan, the lead singer, faced away from the audience for the entire duration of the show, yet somehow commanded complete attention with his hauntingly beautiful voice and eccentric movements.

Luckily for the audience, Tool played some of their more epic songs, including "Triad," an incredible instrumental where two members of Meshuggah joined them onstage to add extra percussion, keyboards and flair, "Third Eye" and

"Parabol/Parabola," during which two enormous molecule-like spheres floated above the stage and mesmerized the masses.

Keenan only spoke to the crowd three times, adding to his mysterious stage presence.

But when he did speak to the audience, he had the crowd repeat his adopted creed, which was:

"Think for yourself. Know what you're doing. Ques-

tion authority." To emphasize the irony, he fed them the line, "and I will not repeat after others."

After nearly two hours of audile and visual amazement, Tool finished their set with the title track off of *Lateralus*, and Keenan bid the crowd farewell, saying he hoped that they had provided some inspiration for the audience.

Although I cannot speak for the others, I was left in total awe. The sheer magnitude of the visual component of the show was unlike any I have ever seen. It was like Pink Floyd's *The Wall* infused with Stephen King's darkest nightmare.

Unlike typical concerts, this show appealed to more than one sense. While the Siren-like vocals of Keenan, along with the unique, progressive heaviness of the music, tantalized the ears, the eyes and mind were drawn into a world of indescribable oddities that make *Alice in Wonderland* seem normal.

If you have a chance to see Tool play live, do what you can to go. I hope to see them again on this tour, because no matter how many times you see this show, you cannot take all of it in.



LEFT: Tool played for a wild crowd at LJVM Coliseum Nov. 2 to promote their most recent album, *Lateralus*. RIGHT: Lead singer Maynard James Keenan is renowned for his bizarre stage presence. This concert was just as much a visual spectacle as it was a musical performance.



Photos courtesy of www.rollingstone.com