

Cody's whiny voice, lyrics destroy album

By Lisa Gamertsfelder
THE BATTALION

With a mellow sound and a voice comparable to Tom Petty's, Phil Cody strums his way through a collection of songs on his latest album, *The Sons of Intemperance Offering*.

Cody's deep lyrics leave you straining to find out exactly what he is singing about.

The first song, "House of Lust," has a catchy, pencil-tapping melody that forces you to hum. The lyrics, if you can find the patience to decipher them, actually tell a great story.

As the album progresses, though, the general style of



each song begins to sound the same, and Cody's whiny voice becomes annoying.

Cody plays acoustic guitar, while his band plays a little bit of everything else. The added touches of the mandolin, banjo and accordion make for an interesting combination of sound.

Though Cody rarely ever holds

onto a note for more than a few seconds, the talking-singing style of his vocals makes for good listening.

The lyrics, all written by Cody, reflect his growing up in Cleveland, Ohio, between the richest neighborhood and one of the poorest. His variance in songs and occasional soft, twangy pitch project a feeling of a man who has been through a lot. His lyrics contain references to his family, blues clubs and drugs.

Overall, each song has its own significance, but the tendency of the songs to run together is apparent and unavoidable.

Bringing Down the Horse deviates from normal pop-rock music

By Jeffrey Cranor
THE BATTALION

Each song on the The Wallflowers new release, *Bringing Down the Horse*, has a rhythm and melody which is reminiscent of the band's previous work.

The album, despite this, is actually quite enjoyable. Since the group's style is more suited to an audience that doesn't want to hear modern, synthesized pop and catchy Top-40 ditties, the songs have good flow to give the album its cool, jazz and blues mood.

Jakob Dylan, lead vocalist and guitarist, composes lyrics that are impressive compared to most bands on the market. Dylan croons of hope, love, societal betterment and most basic song topics but subtler than most singers.

In "Invisible City," the best on the album, Dylan sings that "The imitation of good faith is how you stumble upon hate."

This exemplifies the band's attention to the popular political issue of preaching hate through religious beliefs.

It is not to say that Dylan's prose ranks up there with that of Natalie Merchant or the embittered Alanis Morissette, but he soars high above the lyrics of The Presidents of the United States of America.

The group recently brought in a new drummer, Mario Calire, after its original drum-

mer left to play in Merchant's band. Michael Ward, a guitarist, is also a new addition to The Wallflowers, and Rami Jaffe plays piano and keyboards.

One problem the band faces is that none of its songs have the potential for longstanding Top-40 recognition.

The group toured with 10,000 Maniacs, the Spin Doctors, Cracker and Toad the Wet Sprocket but does not have the commercial

appeal that these bands have.

The Wallflowers' commitment to its noncommercialized blues and rock combination, will prevent the album from emerging into a mainstream market.

Groups like Dave Matthews Band and Blues Traveler play similar musical styles, but their prominence is created by two or three marketable songs that will remain in the Top 40 and bring the albums to the top ten.

This group has discovered a sound that suits its talents and has created quality music. But until it distinguishes its songs from each other and succumbs to the need for an outstanding song it will be stuck touring and not headlining.



ALBUM REVIEW
The Wallflowers
Bringing Down the Horse
Interscope Records
*** 1/2 (out of five)



The Wallflowers

Diverse, unique lyrics key for Sincola

By April Towery
THE BATTALION

Sincola has learned it takes more than green hair, body piercing and chain wallets to succeed as a punk band.

Sincola, an Austin-based college band, has proved its true talent with the release of *Crash Landing in Teen Heaven*. Its refreshing punk

sound is led by female vocalist Rebecca Cannon.

Although commonly considered a better live band, Sincola is able to effectively capture its unique punk

sound. Cannon, known for her charisma and dynamism on stage, brings plenty of energy to the album.

She is backed by guitarists Kris Patterson and Wendell Stivers, bassist Chepo Pena and drummer Terri Lords.

The album's sound is upbeat and funky allowing the individual talent of the band members to surface.

The diverse songs are all written by Sincola and range in topics

from vengeful women in "Happy M.F.," to lashing out against the Unabomber in "Let-terbomb."

Sincola is able to do different things with their music, whereas the songs of most punk bands have the problem of monotonous verse and chorus combination.

Sincola uses unexpected breaks in its songs to remind listeners it is not mainstream punk. The female vocals add a different sound because the lyrics can be soft and pretty,

but loud and abrasive, to illustrate three women scorned can deliver a powerful message through lyrics.

The album is well-produced, with an unusual approach to rhythm and harmonics. The guitars sound somewhat Pixies-influenced, and the bass flows with more of a California-punk style.

The album is entertaining because it is not "textbook punk," the same style used by every other band that calls itself punk. The sound is upbeat, but not to the level of house-cleaning music.

Although the first song, "Rundown," is one of its best, Sincola probably remains a better live band.



ALBUM REVIEW
Sincola
Crash Landing in Teen Heaven
Caroline Records
*** (out of five)



Sincola

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