

## Indie Rock 'n Roll brings good alternatives to mainstream



**CHRIS MARTIN**  
staff writer

I was sitting on a park bench the other day, next to Local Yokel, discussing the agony and ecstasy of the music business.

"I find myself drawn to the freedom and emotion of indie rock," I said.

"Uh, izzat bangin' around from up them boys in Indianer?" Yokel asked, and resumed struggling with the sunflower-seed husk wedged between his upper-right incisors.

"No sir," I said, "it's short for independent rock. Music free from corporate control.

Garage bands, punks, poets and nuts writing, recording and distributing their own unique sounds."

"Say, I'm not familiar with indie rock," he said, eyebrows arched like an a-frame roof. "How can I learn about indie rock's special brand of autonomous manship and do-it-yourself ethic?"

"Mister," I said, "you sure picked the right park bench."

If you think modern rock radio is the home of cutting-edge music, then you're merely a pawn in the indie game. Like the punk-rock renaissance of '77, the '90s are the golden age of independent music. It used to take three chords to make a record. Thousands of indie bands now don't even know that many. But they do know something to say, and it's worth the journey to explore their world.

So what becomes indie rock most? Is it merely unpopularity? Sloppy musicianship? Tape hiss? No. It's a thing called "indie cred," short for credibility, the commodity and holy grail of indie rock. Like brain cells, you are born with a set amount of indie cred, which, when abused, will diminish to never be regained again. A good example of losing one's indie cred comes from Pat Smear.

Step one: Pat helps found LA proto-punk band The Germs. Indie cred high.

Step two: Pat becomes second guitarist for Nirvana during their first tour. Cred steady, but faltering.

Step three: Pat joins Foo Fighters. Cred quickly fading.

Step four: Pat becomes regular on MTV's "House of Cards." Cred who?

Making the leap from commercial to indie rock is certainly one of faith. Since indie rock has no regulation, be warned that for every Guided by Voices there are 40 Eve's Plumbs. Consider the following list a "Cliffs Notes" guide to indie rock.

**• Indie Pop**

If you like: the Beatles, the Beach Boys.

You might enjoy: Apples in Stereo, Neutral Milk Hotel, Beulah, Cardinal, Elf Power, Marbles, Baby Bird, the Lilys, High Llamas, Heavenly, Orange Cake Mix.

Pop is back and it's fizzier than ever. And when shopping for indie pop, there's only one label to look for - Elephant 6, home of the sweetest sugar and saltiest tears.

**• Indie Rawk**

If you like: the Who, the Ramones, Nirvana, the Kinks.

Try out: Guided by Voices, Pavement, Modest Mouse, Billy Childish, Sleather-Kinney, Ilyah Kuryahkin, Lenola, Polvo, the Wedding Present.

Do not be frightened by the lack of production value - look for the heart. Most indie bands follow the lo-fi ethic, recording songs on whatever equipment is handy, including Walkmans, answering machines or Edison wax rolls.

**• Emo**

Should you enjoy: Paul Simon, Mazzy Star, Bob Dylan.

Perhaps you would like: Elliot Smith, Sebadoh, Beth Orton, Tobin Sprout, East River Pipe, Barbara Manning, Cat Power, Yo La Tengo, Dump, Belle and Sebastain.

Emo, short for emotional, often takes two, three or 30 listens before the power of the song snags your heart. These backwoods rivers run deep.

**• Indie Saves**

Say you listen to: Jars of Clay, old U2, DC Talk.

Check out: Starflyer 59, Soul Junk, and the wonderfully bizarre Danielson Family.

All Christians. All indie. All ready to rock you with the rock of ages. Moses felt God in a whisper, these bands feel God in the feedback.

**• No Depression**

If you have albums by: Johnny Cash, Waylon, Willie and the Boys.

Try these: Silver Jews, Will Oldham, Smog, Uncle Tupelo, Palace, Edith Frost, Grifters, Gillian Welch.

It's about time someone put emotion back into country music. If candy-coated neo-Nashville makes your skin crawl, take a walk off the beaten path with these bands.

**• Wow and Flutter**

If you groove to: Duran Duran, Pet Shop Boys, Bjork.

Then perhaps try: Magnetic Fields, the 6ths, Future Bible Heroes, Stereolab, Squarepusher, Tortoise, Turn On.

Not all electronica is bad. Stephin Merritt of the Magnetic Fields makes it organic. These bands can't leave a good sound alone.

PLEASE SEE **ROCK** ON PAGE 5.

# Reel CRITIQUE



**JAMES FRANCIS**  
aggiefLife editor

It seems these days, since the film *Contact* was released, the movement to have science-fiction films exude intelligence

has become a unique ingredient for filmmakers to implement into their projects.

In that respect, it would seem *Sphere* is this year's *Contact*. While both films are similar in premise, that being the first contact with alien life, the overall theme of *Sphere* puts it more in the thriller genre than that of drama.

In the film, Sharon Stone (as the biochemist, Beth Halpern), Samuel L. Jackson (as the mathematician, Harry Adams), Dustin Hoffman (as the psychologist, Dr. Norman Goodman) and Liev Schreiber (as the astrophysicist, Dr. Ted Fielding) are thrown together as a crack team of specialists, summoned by the government, to investigate an alien spacecraft located 1,000 feet beneath the Pacific Ocean.

Stationed aboard an underwater facility the government constructed for the team, the specialists are soon able to enter the spacecraft, where they find a mystical sphere.

Not knowing the sphere's function and not fully comprehending how the spacecraft got to be at the bottom of the ocean without a single scratch on it, the team soon loses contact with the surface. Before long, nightmarish incidents begin to take place, and they only can be explained as physical manifestations of dreams and fears each team member possesses.

In the end, trust becomes the issue and the film delivers a poignant theme about the role mankind plays in the "big picture" of time, space and beyond.

As headliners of the film, Stone, Hoffman and Jackson deliver what audiences should expect - powerful performances 'til the end.

But in their backgrounds, Schreiber and Peter Coyote,

*Sphere*

Starring Dustin Hoffman, Sharon Stone, Samuel L. Jackson and Liev Schreiber

Directed by Barry Levinson

Rated R

Playing at Hollywood 16

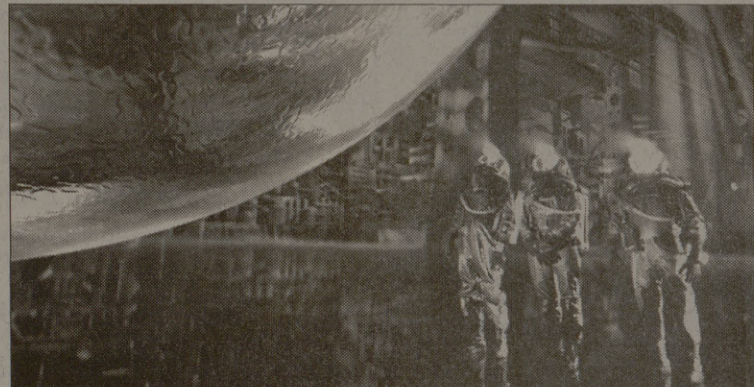
Critique: A-

who portrays the team leader sent by a secret government agency, hold their own, offering the film a diverse range of character portrayals.

Also in the film, recording artist and actress Queen Latifah takes on the role of Fletcher, one of two station workers for the underground Habitat that the team members reside on.

Although many people might be skeptical about a Michael Crichton bestseller being turned into a film these days, *Sphere* erases any doubt that sometimes a work of literature can be transformed into a thought-provoking film.

As director, Barry Levinson has given audiences a film that will engage the mind, keep the heart at a constant hummingbird rate of speed and stay in memory even after the lights come up.



SAMUEL L. JACKSON, SHARON STONE AND DUSTIN HOFFMAN STAND IN BEWILDERMENT WHEN THEY DISCOVER THE SPHERE.

# Spring Business Career Fair '98!!

February 16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>

Below are the companies attending the Career Fair and the days their booths will be set up: (booths will be in Wehner Bldg., West Campus)

### Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup>

- Aerotek, Inc.
- Alltel
- Andersen Consulting
- Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention
- ARCO Information Technology
- Baker & Botts, LLP
- Bear Creek Corporation
- Becker CPA Review
- C.H. Robinson Co.
- Career Center
- Cintas Corporation
- Consolidated Stores Corporation
- The Container Store
- Continental Airlines
- Coopers & Lybrand LLP
- Dealer Solutions
- Deloitte & Touche LLP
- Duke Energy Corporation
- Enron Corporation
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- Ernst & Young
- FootAction USA
- Halliburton/B&R
- Hastings Entertainment
- HEB
- Hewitt Associates
- IKON Office Solutions
- IMG Financial Group
- Kids "R" Us/Babies "R" Us
- Koch Industries, Inc.
- KPMG Peat Marwick LLP
- Kroger Corporation
- Mervyn's California
- Neiman Marcus
- Northwestern Mutual Life
- Office Depot
- OLDE Discount Corporation
- Price Waterhouse LLP
- Price Waterhouse Management Consulting
- Rexton Interactive
- Royce Homes
- Sears, Roebuck and Co.
- Sewell Motor Company
- Sherwin-Williams
- Smith & Associates
- Stage Stores, Inc.
- State Farm Insurance
- Toys 'R' Us
- Wal-Mart
- Walgreens

### Wednesday the 18<sup>th</sup>

- Aerotek, Inc.
- Alltel
- Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention
- The Associates
- Baker & Botts LLP
- BDO Seidman LLP
- Beazer Homes, Texas
- Bridgestone/Firestone
- C.H. Robinson Co.
- Career Center
- CarMax, The Auto Superstore
- Cintas Corporation
- Consolidate Graphics
- Consolidated Stores Corporation
- Eddie Bauer, Inc.
- EDS
- Edward Jones
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
- Foley's
- General Mills, Inc.
- Grant Thornton LLP
- Great-West Employee Benefits
- Halliburton/B&R
- Hastings Entertainment
- Houston Chronicle
- IKON Office Solutions
- InfoTech Solutions Group
- International Paper
- JC Penney Co.
- JDA Software Group
- John Deere Company
- Kids "R" Us/Babies "R" Us
- KPMG Peat Marwick LLP
- Kroger Co.
- Kurt Salmon Associates
- Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse
- Mervyn's California
- National Instruments
- NationsBank
- Northwestern Mutual Life
- OLDE Discount Corporation
- Platinum Technology
- Sears Tire Group
- Smith and Associates
- Toys 'R' Us
- TTI, Inc.
- Var-Tec Telecom, Inc.
- Wal-Mart
- Walgreens
- White Petrov McHone

### Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup>

- Aerotek, Inc.
- AIM Management Group, Inc.
- Albertson's
- Arthur Andersen LLP
- Ashland Chemical Company
- BANC ONE Corporate Audit
- Blockbuster Entertainment
- Career Center
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Chevron
- Circuit City Stores, Inc.
- Compaq Computer Corporation
- CompuServe Network Services
- Conoco, Inc.
- Conviser Duffy CPA Review
- Dell Computer Company
- Delta Dallas Staffing
- DHL Worldwide Express
- EDS
- EQUIS
- Expo Group
- Federal Reserve Bank
- Ferguson Enterprises, Inc.
- Fidelity Investments
- Frito-Lay
- Grant Thornton LLP
- The Home Depot
- IKON Office Solutions
- JDA Software Group
- JPI
- Keane, Inc.
- MassMutual - The Wilson Agency
- Melrose Apartments/Integroup Property Management
- National Instruments
- Norwest Financial
- Payless Shoe Source
- Pier 1 Imports
- Prudential Preferred Financial Services
- Ryan & Company PC
- Smith & Associates
- Southwestern Bell
- The Summit Group, Inc.
- Tactica Technology Group
- Target
- TeleCheck International
- United States Gypsum Co.
- USAA
- Veeder-Root
- Walgreens
- Wells-Fargo Bank

★ Dress in business attire when speaking with companies at their booths ★ Prepare and bring resumes. Resume Help? Contact the Career Center: 845-5139.  
Any other questions?? Try the BSC Website: <http://wehner.tamu.edu/BSC>