

JUST IMAGINE

A pair of CS grad students entered the regional competition of Microsoft's Imagine Cup and won. Page 7

OH-SO SWEET

Women's tennis has reached the NCAA Sweet 16 tournament after winning the ACC tourney. Page 16

Guide stays faithful to spirit of Adams



Photo courtesy Buena Vista Pictures

Arthur Dent (Freeman) and Ford Prefect (Mos Def) hitch a ride on an alien ship just prior to the destruction of Earth.

By Andrew Guyton
Contributing Writer

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy is everywhere. Google will tell you The Answer To Life, The Universe, and Everything; you might even see someone celebrating Towel Day (May 25). The whimsical yet amazing world and comedic wizardry of Douglas Adams has finally come to the silver screen, after a lengthy wait and a lot of hard work.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy tells a story of an ordinary man, Arthur Dent, (Martin Freeman) whose house is about to be demolished to make way for a bypass. Not only that, it so happens that Earth is also about to be demolished, much for a similar reason. Arthur is rescued by his good friend Ford Prefect (Mos Def) just before Earth is destroyed—and soon finds himself on a ship in a Vogon constructor fleet.

It turns out that Arthur's friend Ford is not from Guildford after all (which would explain the accent), but from a planet somewhere in the vicinity of Betelgeuse. Ford is also a writer for the *Guide*, giving it prominence in the series. This launches an adventure that is very random, or perhaps simply very improbable.

"Imagine for a second that dolphins are more intelligent than humans and have been trying to warn us of Earth's impending destruction... now turn it into a musical."

However, the screenplay (co-written by Adams) manages to take many interesting and funny elements and combine them into an enjoyable work.

Die-hard fans will find many elements that satisfy, and newcomers to Adams' style won't be left in the cold. Similarly, the visual effects team creates stunning environments (think *Earth II*) without letting the visual effects become the story, as in some big-budget movies we can probably think of.

The "aliens" are also masterfully

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Chastain gets some Latin flavor

Guitar legend Carlos Santana and Latin music's it-group Los Lonely Boys will be playing two shows at Chastain Park Amphitheatre this weekend. The first show is tonight at 7 p.m. and the second is tomorrow night at 7:30 p.m. Tickets range from \$39.18 to \$98.58.

Masq hosts Dishwalla, others

No, it's not a new way to clean your plates and forks. Rock band Dishwalla, who gave us songs like "Counting Blue Cars" and "Somewhere in the Middle" will be hitting up the Heaven portion of the Masquerade with "special guests" on Wednesday, June 8 at 8 p.m. Tickets cost \$10.

Laughter to ring at Symphony Hall

Thursday, June 9, everyone's favorite "all-American" stand-up comic Margaret Cho will be performing at Symphony Hall Atlanta. Cho's unique brand of comedy has garnered her much acclaim. The show starts at 8 p.m. and tickets cost \$29.50 for the cheap seats or \$45 for a spot a little closer to the front.

Atlanta has new music festival

Just when you thought there wasn't room for another summer concert festival, along comes VIBE Musicfest. The inaugural festival will feature nighttime performances by Lauryn Hill, Mary J. Blige, Ludacris, 112 and many others. By day, VIBE Musicfest is a sort of expo weekend, including celebrity panelists, fashion shows and seminars held by the likes of Magic Johnson and Rev. Al Sharpton. The festival takes place during the weekend of June 10-12, with expo events taking place at the Georgia World Congress Center and concerts at the Georgia Dome.

Don't worry, you didn't miss it

Everyone's favorite summer concert festival, Music Midtown, experienced a date change from years past. Instead of taking place during what is usually the weekend after spring finals, the festival is now scheduled for the weekend of June 10-12. Some performers of note include Coheed and Cambria, the Black-Eyed Peas, Interpol and the White Stripes, but \$75 will get you admission for the whole weekend and a choice of over 100 performers of almost every imaginable popular genre.

Dave Matthews Band takes new stance in familiar territory

By Matt Dulin
The Daily Cougar (U. Houston)

(U-WIRE) —Once you hit the title track of Dave Matthews Band's *Stand Up*, you know it's going to be one good album.

Shortly after you hear Dave wax romantic over a "Dreamgirl" and then recollect the good old days in "Old Dirt Hill," it hits

you, and here's the kicker: it only gets better.

Even "American Baby," the single released for radio, improves with the "American Baby Intro," laying the song in a wartime context.

Yes, the band ventures into familiar territory, dabbling in politics, spirituality and sex, among other themes, but Matthews manages to keep a fresh perspective to match the band's fresh sound.

While *Everyday* and *Busted Stuff* were shaky and inconsistent in a quest for a different sound, *Stand Up* is confident, even boisterous. If fans' faith was shaken

with the uninspired electric riffs of "I Did It," they are redeemed by DMB's latest jams.

The album takes the strongest parts of their last two efforts and makes the next logical leap. The band doesn't sound like it did 10 years ago, for sure, and never will. If anything, it sounds better—more finely tuned, more cohesive, more collaborative.

Fans who take *Stand Up* to be one more faltering step are gravely mistaken.

In producing *Stand Up*, Mark Batson (who has worked with 50 Cent and Eminem) encouraged each band member to explore his own strengths, even if it meant picking up a different instrument. You'll hear piano pieces from Matthews or electric guitar from bassist Stefan Lessard.

In a one-on-one session with Batson, violinist Boyd Tinsley plucked the notes that would

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Episode III puts Vader in his place



Photo courtesy Lucasfilm

By Sam Tanzer
The Stanford Daily (Stanford)

(U-WIRE) —For anyone who's spent the last 10 years in a sensory deprivation chamber, we'll provide a little background.

28 years ago, George Lucas released a movie called *Star Wars*. The movie was filled with unforgettable symbols—the lightsaber, the Jedi and the rasping Darth Vader quickly became part of a brand-new cultural iconography.

The franchise gave Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher and Alec Guinness career-defining roles. It provided an utterly seductive opposition between good and evil. It collapsed the distinction between nerd and anti-nerd by creating a science fiction world so irresistible that it's impossible not to buy into it.

John Williams' score is irrevocably imprinted on the minds of a generation. So when George Lucas announced that he was making

three more *Star Wars* movies, the world quivered collectively in anticipation.

Unfortunately, there was a slight problem with the prequels—they weren't very good. From the impossibly hard-to-follow plot of *Attack of Clones* to the tired dialogue and cartoonish action, the first two movies were nothing if not a letdown.

Fortunately, *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith* is better than the first two. Unfortunately, it's nowhere near the level of *The Empire Strikes Back*, which, incidentally, Lucas did not direct.

The film opens by zooming in from an idyllic ship and planet-escape to a fast-paced battle scene that features Anakin (Hayden Christensen) and Obi-Wan (Ewan McGregor) taking on the wheezing robotic General Grievous.

And then comes about 45 minutes of ass-bad dialogue that saps the

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costumed, thanks to the Jim Henson creature shop. We can thank them for the Vogons being what they are today. The music is also well-done and compliments the lovable quiriness of the film; they even remastered the theme from the original BBC series.

The opener was a bit of a surprise for me, but it was well-made; it also demonstrates how random the movie is. Imagine for a second that dolphins are more intelligent than humans and have been trying to warn us of Earth's impending destruction.

Okay, now turn it into a musical. It doesn't get much more random than that, kids. That serves as an excellent starting point into what is a very complex series. I was laughing, grinning and happy throughout

the movie.

The film's ending left the story open for the adaptation of the other books in Adams' five-book trilogy, but given the difficulties that occurred with making just this one, I don't see it happening. However, if a sequel were to be made, I would be more than delighted.

Don't panic when you read a flurry of negative reviews about *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, and see it for yourself. It's more popular and informative than the *Encyclopedia Galactica*. It's got more practical advice than your parents ever gave you.

If somebody makes a plush Marvin, the maniac-depressed robot, one will reside on my desk. He'll find it absolutely horrible there. Be sure to get a copy of the DVD when it comes out, and always know where your towel is.

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become "American Baby."

Batson's approach was likely a big part of *Stand Up*'s success. The result is a fresh, engaging sound that will lure listeners deeper into the album.

Many songs lean heavily on percussion, which Carter Beauford delivers expertly, eradicating any shred of doubt in the band's ability to jam. Leroi Moore's saxophone is a bit understated, but he gets his own solo to close up "American Baby."

Stand Up is full of the hallmarks of a genuine DMB product: longer songs, head-boppin' jams, lyrical blending and good music.

Verdict: Just in case you were worrying, *Stand Up* is evidence the Dave Matthews Band still knows how to rock.

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momentum right out of the movie like some sort of momentum-sucking insect.

When we finally do get moving again, the payoff is well worth it. Palpatine (Ian McDiarmid) makes a visually stunning transformation from Chancellor to Emperor, the Jedi temple faces an imperial onslaught, and Mace Windu (Samuel L. Jackson) gets his biggest role yet.

Look for some spectacular action scenes with Yoda. There's nothing cooler than a little green guy with a lightsaber. The film's final sequences are as pulse-raising as any in the series, given that Lucas intersperses Yoda's climactic battle that takes place in the Senate chamber itself (symbolism, anyone?) with the obligatory showdown between

Anakin and Obi-Wan.

But even at its best, the action is too heavily reliant on glittering special effects—taking down AT-AT's with tow cables in *The Empire Strikes Back* is more compelling than anything the prequels have to offer.

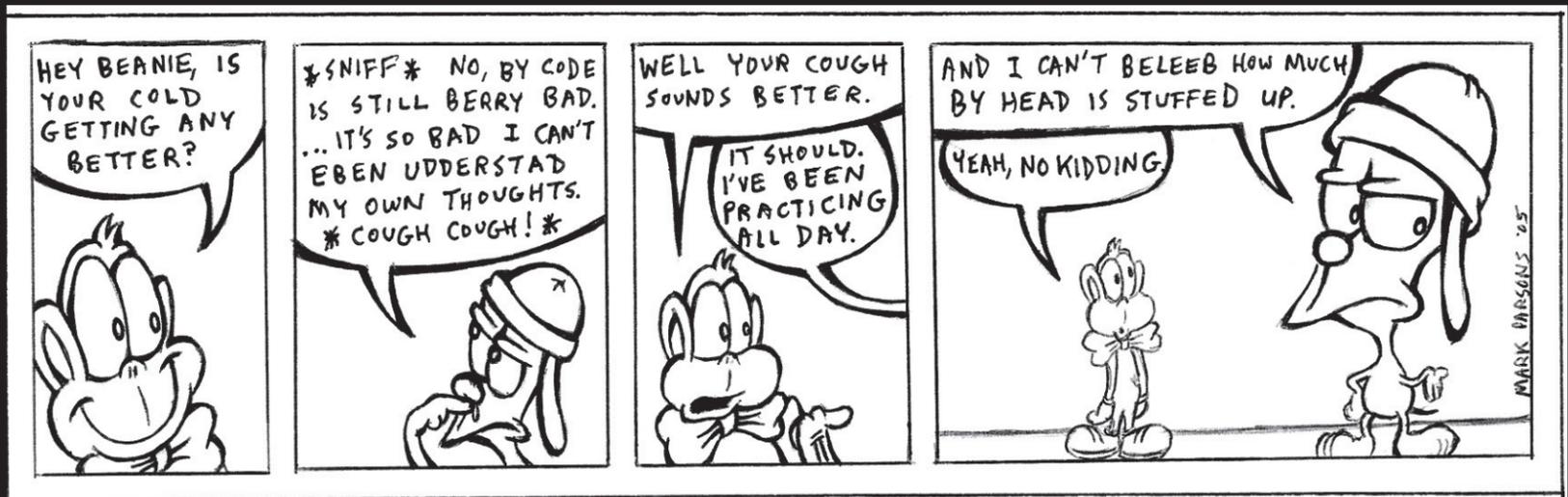
But what holds *Episode III* back from greatness is the script. The dialogue is rife with trite love vows, absurd absolutes and too-explicit ideological extremities.

All in all, *Revenge of the Sith* is pretty mediocre, but that doesn't mean I didn't enjoy the hell out of it. And it doesn't mean I don't welcome the excuse to re-watch the original trilogy.

But as the *Star Wars* saga comes to end, the most lasting effect of *Episode III* may be merely to confirm the status of the originals as cinematically untouchable.

CHIMP SHRIMP AND FRIENDS

Original Comic Strip



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