**Knockaround Guys** directors create Western mob movie

By Art Seavey
Contributing Writer

The daring duo that ventured into underground poker halls for the script of *Knockaround Guys* makes their directorial debut Oct. 11 with the premiere of the film *Knockaround Guys*. Brian Koppelman and David Levien are seasoned veterans of the entertainment world, but are still relatively unfamiliar to audiences. In the coming months, that will surely change.

**Peachtree Playhouse scores big with Atlanta-based hit comedy**

By Joey Katzen
Staff Writer

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It’s surreal moments like this, in combination with one-liners and slapstick effects, that pack the evening’s festivities in this 13-month production run of *Peachtree Battle*. Written, directed, and produced by off-Broadway playwright John Gibson and Anthony Morris, this intimately-staged play introduces us to theVortex Bar and Grill, and the proprietor's encourage patrons to refuel. In the coming months, that will surely change.

**Ready for Halloween?**

Netherworld, one of the top haunted houses in the country, has opened its doors for the scaring season. Page 22

**Tech vs. Maryland**

Get an early start on next Thursday’s game by reading up on our next opponent. Page 31

**Entertainment**

Technique • Friday, October 11, 2002

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The idea for *Knockaround Guys* came from their childhood years in Long Island, New York. Levin explained that these "wiseguys," upon finding success, would move their family into the suburbs like most people do. "We saw these kids with these infamous last names, and we no- ticed that they were regarded with like, this mixture of fear and excite- ment," he said.

The pair was fascinated as they watched these sons of wiseguys grow up dealing with having their fathers sent to jail, and the trouble of find- ing jobs due to wary employers fright- ened by their last name.

"We saw...kids with these infamous last names [who] were regarded with...fear and excitement."  
David Levien  
Co-Director

"For us it seemed like a lot of people in their twenties...could re- late, like when you’re trying to fig- ure out your path in life and the kind of obstacles that you’re fac- ing," said Levin.

Barry Pepper plays the part of Matty Demaret, the son of Brook- lyn mob boss Benny Chains, played by Dennis Hopper. Matty wants nothing more than to settle into the background and become a sports agent. His connection to his father prevents him from doing so.

He would be a pariah in the fam- ily business except for one deciding mo- ment at age 13. Teddy Deserve, brought in by John Malkov- ich, tried to pres- sure a young Demaret into shooting a snitch. Matty lacks the guts to do so and is la- beled unfit for the business from then on.

The movie revisits Matty at a low point in his life. The only way he sees is out to convince his father that he is finally ready to take on a task. His father allows him to ar- range the transfer of a half-million- dollar loan from the other side of the country.

Demaret enlists the help of pilot Johnny Marbles, portrayed by Seth Green, to carry out the job. Marbles flies out west and on return stops in armpit Wibaux, Montana, to refuel.

His unusual demeanor draws the attention of the local sheriff with a powerful complex. The money goes missing, and Marbles is rightfully scared out of his mind. Demaret and his two closest friends fly out to help. They find that the task is not a simple grab and go.

The police get involved, who are not as law-abiding as one would think, the older uncle has to be called in, and the ending, well, is not what one would expect.

Vin Diesel carries a minor role in the film. He plays the part of the group's muscle perfectly and deliv- ers his "500th" monologue with validity. He has the chance with the script to come across as a deep person with conflicting emo- tions and desires, but fails to do so. Diesel is simply the weakest ac- tor in the film.

A n - drew Davoli, who plays Chris Scarpia, a friend of Demaret and a cousin to Marbles, brings style and edge to the film. He is a ladies man with unmitigable charisma. Davoli had a recurring role on *The Sopranos* as Dino, and has modeled for Dulce & Gabbana. He takes on a lead role in *Welcome to Collinwood* with George Clooney, due for re- lease the same day as *Knockaround Guys*.

The screen presence of John Malkovich raises the movie to another echelon. He appeared in *Round- ers*, also as a Teddy with an accent. One moment he repulses the audi- ence as he severs the tongue of a snitch, but then he quickly wins See Guys, page 22

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"For us it seemed like a lot of people in their twenties...could re- l...
Netherworld Haunted House ranks among the best in the nation

By Bryan Basamnonicz
Senior Staff Writer

So the story goes that a slightly deranged scientist at an asylum was working on a new experiment to extract the deepest fears from the minds of madmen into living reality. The scientist assumed that these demons from the darkest parts of the imagination would be easily disposed of once separated from their creators.

But of course there was no such luck, and a good thing too, because without these unseemly demons, Netherworld, one of the top ten haunted houses in the nation, would not be here in Atlanta.

With a staff/cast of over fifty, Netherworld has been haunting people throughout the Halloween season for the last six years. Netherworld opened on Friday the thirteenth of September and will be running until November 3. Now, with the big date looming less than a month away, Netherworld is open daily from 7p.m. until 11p.m., Sunday through Thursday, and from 7p.m. to midnight on Friday and Saturday.

Usually, even on its busiest days, the lines move relatively quickly. As opposed to several other haunted houses where an hour to two-hour wait is expected, Netherworld gets you into the house after about a twenty minute wait. The location for Netherworld could not have been better chosen. The Georgia Antique center offers not only a vast amount of free space to stage the operation, but also contributes a sultry, stagnant atmosphere—perfect conditions for demons and ghosts.

Netherworld offers a different theme each year. This year’s theme is the horrible mishaps of Dr. Randolph Vargas, a scientist and the founder of Inner Sanctum Inc. Inner Sanctum is a mental illness treatment foundation “dedicated to aggressively treating the most severe forms of mental illness.” The foundation’s bizarre practices have, on several occasions, nearly had them close down on account of public health regulations. Their experiments are so controversial that they have been limited to testing only animal subjects and indigent wards of the state.

With the good intentions of curing the mental illnesses of his patients, Vargas has devised a machine called the Preatorious Insinuator Mark 7 that “extracts a madman’s greatest fears and gives them flesh.” So that can’t be good.

The walk through takes you both through the asylum where Dr. Vargas’ patients have come to call home, and the house beyond where their now-living nightmares have settled in for residence.

This year, Netherworld is offering an additional walk through feature called “House of Creeps in 3D.” The “House of Creeps” impressively combines horrific 3D visual and audio artistry in combination with the standard workings of a Haunted House. Among the features this year are an actual alien autopsy, a Macro Virus exposition and something scary that has to do with clowns.

The price you pay for admission into Netherworld $13 for entry into the Inner Sanctum or $20 for admission into both the Inner Sanctum and the House of Creeps.

Visit www.fearworld.com/netherworld.htm for more information.
Battle

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succeeds without question. Its jokes are funny and its theme memorable. Beyond these features, it prides itself on being a vehicle for its writers. The writers of the play (who also happen to own the theater) plan to serve the space—they may stay as long as they’re able to sell tickets). They are not planning to declare a closing date when they relocate (meaning shows don’t have to disappear altogether). Occasionally, half-price tickets are available the day of the performance and a few weeks before the performance. The Atlanta Bach festival is available daily at the Perimeter. Check out the AtlanTIX website online!

Technique Crossword: Back to Basics

Across
1. Lanka
2. Country simpleton
3. Much, ___ About Nothing
4. N Amer. Country
5. Winter holiday on AOL IM
6. Idiotic
7. Help out
8. Niagra falls
9. Under or be suffix
10. Former NHLer Bobby
11. Appraise
12. Boiled O-bread
13. Sound byte
14. Hide-and-go-___
15. Nonsensical artist
16. Quen. reply
17. 48 Hours home
18. Cake level
19. Bombastic
20. South African
21. Jane Austin estate house
22. After, to Marie
23. Avoid
24. i.e. or n.b.
25. Backwoods feminist Hawkins, of dance fame
26. Imp
27. Rhyme scheme
28. File store option
29. Born
30. FDR Veep H.: ___ Wallace
31. Indian class
32.Obsolete Windows variety
33. Summoner
34. Human
35. Leave the throne
36. Assess a price proportionately
37. Attendance SNAFU
38. Pen cartridge contents
39. Quartz compound
40. Fountainhead framer
41. Corn unit
42. Statue of Liberty base
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99. Summoner
100. Human

Down
1. Nickelodeon goo
2. Chem I reaction
3. Helium or Neon
4. Statue of Liberty base
5. Certainly not a word
6. ___ a wrap
7. Idiotic
8. Eager
9. Under or be suffix
10. Former NHLer Bobby
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Solutions on page 23

Open another venue, the Ansley Park Playhouse, on Peachtree across from the Equifax building north of the High Museum. It will be showing another of the writers’ plays, The Limousine Ride, chronicling the conversations of four recent first ladies as they are forced to share a limousine.

Peachtree Battle currently runs through May 2003 at the Peachtree Playhouse, and The Limousine Ride opens Oct. 18 at the Ansley Park Playhouse. Tickets for each show, which run Thursday through Sunday nights, are $23.50. They are available at www.peachtreeplayhouse.com or by calling 404-875-1193. Occasionally, half-price tickets are available the day of the performance from the AtlantIX ticket booth at Underground Atlanta. For more information about ticket availability, check out the AtlantIX website online at www.atlantaperforms.com.
them back by showing compassion for a young Marty Demaret. The directors, Koppelman and Levien, met as teenagers in Kennedy Airport attending a school trip. They became instant friends. Over the years the two have practically become brothers. “We grew up watching all the same movies, and sharing an interest in books and music. About the only thing we didn’t share was the same girl,” said Koppelman. This special relationship aided them in writing, directing and producing Knockaround Guys. “For us, we had a really shared vision of the thing. We wrote it together and we knew what we were looking for,” said Levien. “And we really do have a shared language, so that we can look at each other and know,” added Koppelman. Prior to this production, they had solely worked as writers. The transition to directing was a relatively easy and welcome change. “It was hard in some ways, but it was natural because it’s just telling the story…You just have a whole different set of tools: you have the sound track, the music, the sound effects, you have the camera work, the way you wanna light a scene. Suddenly you just have all kinds of other things at your disposal other than the page to try to get the story across,” said Levien.

Exhaustive research has become the trademark of their productions. “We spent a lot of time with wiseguys we could find…We went to Montana and drove around for a week and felt what it was like to be outsiders.”

Diesel’s character rents out illegal video game machines, so the two directors went on collection runs with his real-life analogue. “He’s exactly like the Vin character, and also a guy who was very connected to organized crime, but was Jewish like Vin’s character and so can’t get ahead in that world,” said Koppelman.

Koppelman and Levien have a true passion for their work and a talent to convey their stories. Their upcoming projects include Interview with the Assassin, concerning the J.F.K. murder, which is due out November. They have also written a screenplay based on John Grisham’s The Runaway Jury, which has just started production. Knockaround Guys brings together exceptional talent in front of and behind the camera. Don’t expect to see it bring in any awards, but it should stand out in this slow fall season.
There are two kinds of people in the world. Okay, how many times has the Two Bits Man started with that observation? A lot. Nonetheless, there are two types who come to mind: healthy and unhealthy. This is a shocking revelation for you, I’m sure. Still, it’s a fact. There are the people who are self-seeking Saturday is spent in a recliner in front of the game with a cheesesteak, a pack of Reds and a six-pack. If this brings them happiness, then I have one thing to say: Kick ass!

Of course, there are the healthy people, who would rather be in Piedmont Park with a pair of inline skates, a bottle of Evan and their dog. If this brings them happiness, then I have one thing to say: Kick ass!

So, what makes this dichotomy worth bringing up in my column? The two groups have always fascinated me because they are constantly clashing. Why does it bother the jogger so much that dude number one enjoys his cheesesteak? That really frustrates me. It has become fashionable these days to scorn the out-of-shape. This provides strength in numbers, so they can feel self-righteous about the healthy can unionize and brag about the numbers. Of course, there are the healthy lions of organizations out there so the humble can get to experience a summer-sault, hence the helmet. Of course, I still think the gear looks stupid. 3) Learning to skate will completely shock your friends. For some reason, people act like this is the strangest thing that you could possibly do. Every friend I’ve told has looked at me, started laughing and said, “Two Bits Man, why?” Don’t believe me? Try this little experiment. First, tell half of your friends that you took up inline skating. Tell the other half that you’ve decided to become a Buddhist monk. My money says that the rollerblade friends will be markedly more shocked. Perhaps out of deference to my friends, I should have taken up a less shocking physical activity to stay in shape. Maybe spear throwing or NASCAR driving would suffice. For some of you who say that’s not a physical sport, then you should definitely talk to someone who will tell you differently. At any rate, I’m gonna stick with rollerblading for the duration. Until next week, this is your badly bruised Two Bits Man reminding you that if you’re a vegetarian, you’ll live longer, but if you’re not, you get the satisfaction of an- noying vegetarians.

Though I do like my carnage, I decided to start rollerblading last week. This brings forth many valuable lessons that I have learned about the sport:

1) Failing on your butt is not fun. I’ve read the popular self-help book Falling on Your Ass Can be Fun and Rewarding, but the title lies. I reiterate that failing on your butt is not fun. Through much empirical evidence, it has become im- mensely obvious that gravity is a fickle heartbreaker.

2) Safety gear is stupid looking vegetarians.