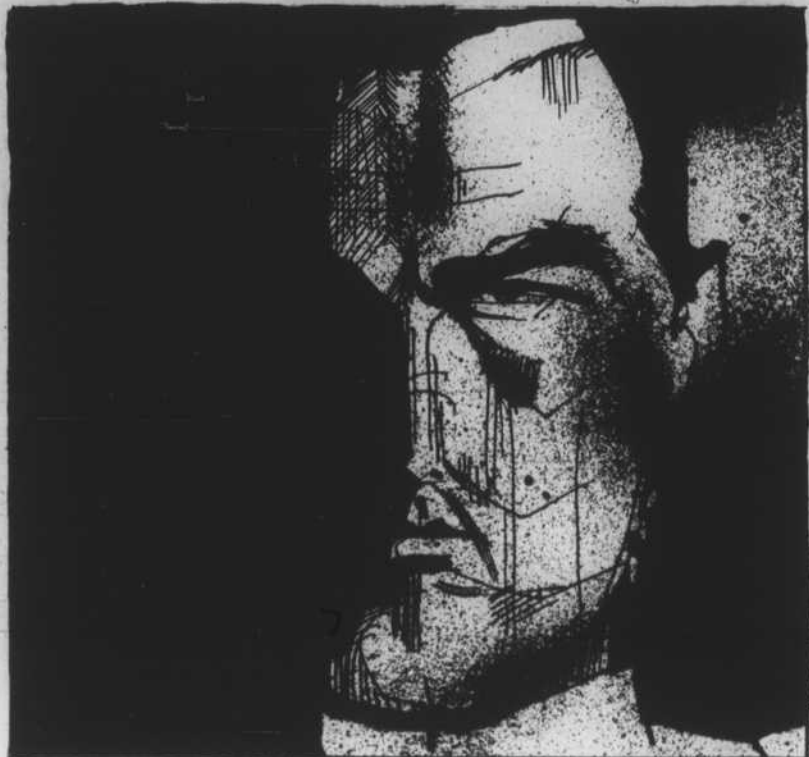


## Seagal action flick has few bright spots



David Badders/DN



### "Under Siege"



By Gerry Beltz  
Staff Reporter

Some people thought Steven Seagal couldn't do it, but others had faith in him, and it paid off.

He finally starred in a movie that didn't have three words in the title.

All kidding aside, "Under Siege" (Cinema Twin and East Park 3), for all intents and purposes, also could have been titled "Die Hard 3: At Sea."

The soon-to-be decommissioned USS Missouri is taken over in a combined strategy between the corrupt Commander Krill (Gary Busey, playing yet another big-mouthed jerk),

and Strannix (Tommy Lee Jones), who happens to be the tactical genius of the two.

They (and their army of cohorts) kill the captain, imprison the crew, and set out to off-load and sell the on-board nuclear missiles.

Ryback (Seagal) is the cook. (Actually, he's a cook who JUST HAPPENS to be a highly decorated ex-Navy SEAL who JUST HAPPENS to be specially trained in firearms, martial arts and explosives.)

Ryback manages to escape the "group imprisonment" because he is locked up in a meat locker for demonstrating what constitutes as "striking an officer" (and subsequently gives Busey one big honkin' scar).

Of course he escapes and sets out to wreak havoc upon the ship by knocking down the bad guys with his bare hands, knives and machine guns (all armed with one standard Hollywood never-emptying clip), accompanied by his sidekick Jordan Tate (Erika Eleniak, the requisite, R-rated flesh).

Seagal is decent in his portrayal of Ryback, but this character has just as

much, if not less, depth than the characters of his earlier films.

Busey's character, at the start, has similarities to the detective he played in "Point Break," but eventually deteriorates into something very predictable.

Jones is the best part of this movie. He makes Strannix into a babbling psychopath who brings a few bright and humorous spots to the film.

From the "Isn't That...?" department, Colm Meaney (Chief O'Brien from television's "Star Trek: The Next Generation") and Michael Des Barres (from television's "New WKRP In Cincinnati" and Murdoc on "MacGyver") both have brief parts as two of the terrorists.

The movie could have made it up to three reels if Seagal had broken into a sweat or actually had to replace his gun clip.

A must-see for the quintessential Seagal fans, "Under Siege" has a few good parts, but still may manage to evoke a yawn or two from the average action-loving moviegoer.

## Delicious comedy delights audience

### theater

By Stacey McKenzie  
Senior Reporter

"Tartuffe," a French word for truffles, is a delectable theatrical dish — right down to the bottom.

The satirical comedy, written by Moliere in 1664, was put on brilliantly Saturday night by the 13-member cast at Howell Theatre in the Temple Building.

The plot swirls around the creamy center — Tartuffe, played marvelously by Craig Holbrook.

Tartuffe is moved by the ways of the Lord. He serves as the spiritual

counselor to Orgon, played by Michael Solomonson.

But Tartuffe is an imposter and a hypocrite out to acquire Orgon's wealth and wife.

"I may be pious, but I'm still a man," Tartuffe says to Orgon's wife, Elmire, played by Sharon Bigelow.

Most everybody — the maid, the wife, the kids and the brother-in-law — knows Tartuffe is a fraud.

But Orgon is oblivious. He's completely duped by Tartuffe's vigor for religion.

Musical interludes with the actors' humorous pitter-patter going on in the low-lights give the audience a breather from the ongoing rhythmic and rhyming dialogue.

Solomonson was splendid as Orgon. His rows with the maid, Flipote, played by Schann Kucera, were full of funny goodies.

"I can't think why we keep that monster on," he says of Flipote.

Flipote flits about between the pillars and over the chessboard-style floor, trying to save Orgon's daughter, Mariane, from being betrothed by her father to Tartuffe.

Mariane, played by Jennifer Walker, is in love with Valere. She feigns suicide if she can't marry Valere.

Flipote tries to save her, taunting

Orgon with every word she can muster.

Orgon, who screws up his face in frustration, says, "It's maddening, I've got to hit her."

Directed by Alex Gelman, an assistant professor of theater, Tartuffe deserves extra commendation for the little things: the smoking oven, Flipote's adept shuffling of props, Orgon's nervous finger-ticking and Tartuffe's playful sandwich and apple munching.

There are more opportunities to check this smoothie out.

"Tartuffe" plays at 8 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday at Howell.

## New album by Failure proves to be just that

### Reviews



Failure  
"Comfort"  
Slash Records

Failure, which formed in June 1990, originated in Los Angeles, but the sound on its CD, "Comfort," is distinctly Seattle-influenced.

Ever since Nirvana rose to popularity last spring with its loose-edged approach to rock, a whole generation of similar MTV rock bands have appeared.

This could be a good thing — all music takes its inspiration from somewhere.

The 10-track CD is a distinctly unoriginal offering for disenchanted youth to slam-dive to.

Unfortunately, Failure fails to do anything different from what has already been done before.

Failure is a three-piece band that would benefit from the addition of another guitar. It seems as if the band's members are trying to give themselves a fuller sound by blurring parts of their songs together.

The band demonstrates a dislike for clarity. Song after song, the fuzzy Nirvana-type guitar leads turn into droning power-chord sequences, with the drums and bass pounding out rhythms in the background.

Over this the singer makes almost unintelligible noises. All that is left by Failure is to merge it all together — leading to a further loss of clarity.

A second guitar would also provide a background during solo breaks, which sound weak despite the compe-



Courtesy of Slash Records

Failure is from left, Ken Andrews, Robert Gauss and Greg Edwards.

tent playing of singer-guitarist and front man, Ken Andrews.

The bands' lyrics also fail to be different. Song titles include: "Submission," "Macacque," "Pro-catastrophe" and "Salt Wound."

Dominance and pseudo-violence are key themes, as in the introduction

to "Pro-catastrophe."

"I do believe it's coming/Don't dread its approach/The only problem I might have/is that I hope to see it/ Could start with an invasion/... I want to see some blood."

With the current level of popularity of this type of lyric and this style of rock music, Failure may yet find itself

a market. However, "Comfort" is unlikely to be the CD that makes its name.

The band desperately needs to find something that is distinctly its own and not merely a variation on everyone else.

-Matthew Grant

## Unique vocals, driving guitars save unoriginal debut release

### Reviews



"New Miserable Experience"  
Gin Blossoms  
A&M Records

On their debut effort titled "New Miserable Experience," newcomers the Gin Blossoms have attempted a straight-ahead rock sound to alternative music — a sound reproduced a seemingly infinite number of times by local bands nationwide.

The exception here is that "New Miserable Experience" works by incorporating a driving electric and acoustic guitar sound with an unusual blend of mandolin, accordion and piano. The end result is a fast-paced, 12-song set that echoes the works of Matthew Sweet and The Connells.

The album opens with the tune "Lost Horizons," a guitar-filled, up-tempo number that starts things off on solid ground.

"Hey Jealousy" and "Mrs. Rita" follow with equal intensity and style that finds the listener searching for some much-needed diversity.

Southern folk goes alternative on "Cajun Song" with several accordion and acoustic guitar breaks on a bouncy tune that breaks the electric guitar monotony.

Side two opens, quite disappointingly, in the same fashion as side one, and offers nothing new to the listener.

"Allison Road," "Pieces of the Night" and "29" continue side two, with a country-esque song called "Cheatin'" ending the album in a fashion that should have been used throughout the entire set.

Complete with steel pedal guitar and every country lyric cliché, "Cheatin'" is one of the few truly original songs from "New Miserable Experience."

Though not a classic alternative album, this quintet out of Tempe, Ariz., has turned in a fair effort with "New Miserable Experience."

Shoppers should take heed that after a first listen to the album, this review might seem a bit harsh. But in the end, the only place you'll find this album is on a fixed spot on your CD shelf to be lost in the shuffle.

-Michael Lehr