



The Eyeliners break the mold when it comes to all-girl punk bands. Their second CD, "Here Comes Trouble," is out now. Courtesy photo

Eyeliners defy tradition, lash out with new album

By Jason Hardy
Staff writer

When it comes to all-girl poppy punk bands, it's pretty easy to be cliched.

Key requirements include leopard-skin stuff, leather stuff, songs about guys named Johnny and songs about parties.

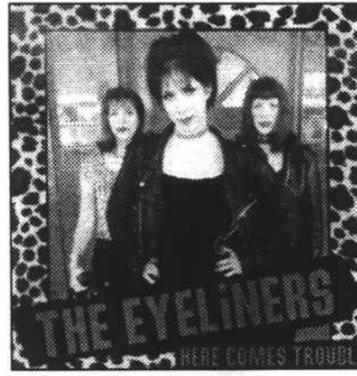
Considering all the aforementioned criteria directly apply to the Eyeliners, an Albuquerque, N.M. three-piece, they appear to be pretty average bubblegummers on the surface.

Unlike other three-chord girl-punk groups, like the Donnas, the Eyeliners are what happens when bubblegum is done right. They keep it fast, fun and interesting, succeeding in a genre marred by stock bands and tired, overused song structures.

On their second full-length release, "Here Comes Trouble," the Eyeliners combine standard pop-punk elements with unexpected tempo shifts and vocal breaks to create a cohesive and energetic album.

Probably the most notable characteristic of the band is the voice of singer-drummer Laura.

Her throaty and pleading vocal style has enough gravel and umph to command attention over the crunchy



guitar riffs while maintaining a nice tonality.

Despite starting off a bit lacking, "Here Comes Trouble" arrives in full force by the fourth song, "See You Tonight," which is a powerful showcase of the band's best traits. Interesting bridges and drum work help this song blast fast and punchy and slow and melodic without losing the established energy.

From there, the group continues to experiment with similar musical elements but does so in a way that establishes an individuality with each song. By and large, the album rarely strays from a three-chord format, and the tempo, while shifting at times, can become a bit repetitive.

However, there are moments in

REVIEW The Eyeliners

TITLE: Here Comes Trouble
LABEL: Panic Button
GRADE: B-
FIVE WORDS: Group defies punk-rock stereotypes.

songs, such as "That's The Way It Goes" and "Rock 'N' Roll Baby," where Gel's guitar work breaks from the song's format and keeps the album from being just another stock and monotonous Ramones rip-off.

Last summer, the Eyeliners played at Knickerbockers, Ninth and O streets, and put on an intense show. Their energy didn't let up for an instant, and the only thing crazier than Gel's guitar playing was the fact that she was blowing bubbles at the same time.

As with any good live band, the goal of the album is to capture what makes the band so great live.

With "Here Comes Trouble," the Eyeliners come pretty close to packaging the destruction they emit live and, despite being a little more polished and slick-sounding than their live show, the album is still a fun representation of their attitude and style.

Letterman, 'America' achieve higher ratings

NEW YORK (AP) — The return of heart patient David Letterman and an appearance by the reluctant bride of a multimillionaire steered two perennial second-place TV shows to ratings milestones last week.

Letterman's CBS "Late Show" had its best ratings in five years and its largest margin of victory over Jay Leno's "Tonight Show" on NBC since the week of July 7, 1995, Nielsen Media Research said Thursday.

Meanwhile, ABC's "Good Morning America" had its highest ratings since 1997, a surge solely attributable to its coup in booking "Who Wants to Marry a Multimillionaire" bride Darva Conger.

On Monday, Feb. 21, Letterman made his first appearance on "Late Show" since his January heart surgery. The show drew an estimated 12 million viewers. He appeared again on Wednesday and Friday.

The homecoming enabled Letterman to average 7.13 million viewers last week, compared to Leno's 5.86 million, Nielsen said. It was Letterman's best week since 1995.

The true test is whether Letterman

can carry over the audience's warm feelings. In weeks without special events, Leno consistently beats him.

Letterman is working three days again next week, with Janeane Garofalo filling in on Tuesday and Dana Carvey on Thursday.

"Good Morning America" averaged just more than 5 million viewers last week, still behind NBC's first-place "Today" show, which had 6.1 million. But it was the closest those two shows have been in the ratings since December 1996, and "GMA's" most-watched week since the week after Princess Diana died.

The ABC morning show beat its rival with Conger's heavily-promoted first interview after her honeymoon on Feb. 23. That show drew an average audience of 6.1 million people, Nielsen said.

Conger didn't appear on the "Today" show until the next day.

More important for ABC, it kept some of that audience the next two days, averaging 5 million viewers on Thursday, when Conger's husband, Rick Rockwell, appeared, and 5 million on Friday.

'Planet' script alienates audience

■ Director Mike Nichols doesn't meet standard of earlier efforts.

By Samuel McKewon
Senior editor

Want a real life version of the Grady Tripp character in "Wonder Boys"? Try director Mike Nichols.

After making two of the finer films of the 20th century, "The Graduate" and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" in the middle 1960s, Nichols settled for the mainstream. And he's never eclipsed (or, in my opinion, even approached) the standard of those first two efforts.

Is it an unfair assessment? Maybe. But his first movie of the 21st century, "What Planet Are You From?," fits the bill as well as anything else.

There's a touch of class to the proceedings, and enough humor to go around, too. It's a nice movie starring Garry Shandling, Annette Bening and John Goodman. But in terms of originality and directing, it's so far below the bar Nichols set for himself years ago.

"What Planet," from a story that Shandling developed himself, plays a familiar comedic riff: A distant colony of aliens wants to conquer Earth and must impregnate a native to accomplish its goals.

The aliens have lost their reproductive organs, and so the lead alien, Harold Anderson (Shandling), must have a penile attachment, which, when aroused, hums. It provides the set piece for 20 minutes worth of humming penis jokes and an off-color joke in the middle of the movie that's so off-color, the audience might go silent.

Harold, posing as a banker, finds a potential mate in Susan (Annette Bening), a recovering alcoholic. Meanwhile, a Federal Aviation Agent (Goodman) is hot on the alien's trail.

Some of it's funny. But beneath the surface are some strange revelations. Bening's character is so strange, almost eerily irresponsible, it borders on ridicule of women.

Her rationale for getting married after one date with a man whose penis



Garry Shandling and Annette Bening star in Director Mike Nichols' new film "What Planet Are You From?" Courtesy photo

hums: "I'm running out of time."

Uh-huh. And for as much as this movie makes fun of Harold's underestimating women, Susan jumps overboard awfully quickly.

So do most of the women in the movie. In fact, every one of them is a foolish, overreacting, jealous, sad creature in some way — not one of them seems capable of being anything but a catcher's mitt for male genitalia.

Maybe Nichols didn't mean it that way. In the past, especially with Elizabeth Taylor and Anne Bancroft in "Woolf" and "The Graduate," Nichols displayed a deft hand at revealing subtleties. With Shandling's script, Nichols reveals depth by giving Bening a mussed-up hairdo and campy clothes.

Shandling is out of his element here in a straight comic role. He's perfectly cast for "The Larry Sanders Show," but most of his lines in "What Planet" fall flat or don't soar as high as they should.

Steve Martin takes this role, and it flies. You keep expecting Shandling to talk about his ass. And then, he does.

The movie is pretty — not perfect, but pretty — and supposedly takes place in Phoenix. It wouldn't really matter, because all we see is the inside of a bank and Susan's home. All scenes shot on the alien planet are

REVIEW What Planet Are You From?

STARS: Garry Shandling, Annette Bening
DIRECTOR: Mike Nichols
RATING: R (language, nudity, humming penis)
GRADE: C
FIVE WORDS: Nichols going through the motions.

stock remakes of better-looking pictures.

Which makes me wonder what Nichols is doing in a project like this. He has his pick of actors; the clout is there for serious (or at least intelligently funny) pictures.

Any director could have put this together.

Unfortunately, Nichols is starting to develop an unhealthy habit for choosing strictly orthodox movies. His previous effort, "Primary Colors," was a fine movie, too. But utterly forgettable in the scheme of things.

There are laughs in "What Planet Are You From?" Even a few hard ones.

But it's sad to see a talent like Nichols going through the motions. It wasn't always like that.



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