

Pharcyde rolls into town

BY SEAN MCCARTHY

The infectious grooves of The Pharcyde will infect Knickerbockers, 901 O St., tonight. Their ability to infuse psychedelic rhythms with street core rap and R&B have put The Pharcyde in the premier circle of underground rap groups.

Formed in the early 1990s, The Pharcyde gained a cult following from its legendary shows at the underground club circuits of south-central Los Angeles. The four MCs that formed The Pharcyde are Imani Wilcox, Booty Brown (Royme Robinson), Slim Kid (Tre Hardson) and Fat Lip (Derrick Stewart).

Pharcyde has toured with

such rap pioneers as De La Soul and A Tribe Called Quest. Appropriately, The Pharcyde appeared on the "Half Baked" soundtrack. The band released two albums on Delicious Vinyl records before switching labels last year.

The Pharcyde are currently supporting their latest album, "Plain Rap," which was released on Edel America last September. "Plain Rap" finds The Pharcyde continuing with their eclectic style of mixing different genres of rap and R&B and coming up with something that is totally their own.

Tickets are still available at Knickerbockers for \$15. Ugly Duckling is slated to open for The Pharcyde.

Julia beware: Cell snoops spot celebs

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — So whatever happened to Henry Winkler? Well, career moves aside, he's scoping out the toiletries at a Duane Reade pharmacy in midtown Manhattan.

Uma Thurman? Looking toasty in her long red coat in Union Square.

James Woods, well, he's looking good—shorter than he does on screen—as he strolls through Rockefeller Center.

From one end of the city to the other come the bulletins from amateur celebrity seekers. Filed via cell phone, pager or other device, the tidbits are posted to a Web forum, "NYC celebrity sightings."

For celebrity hounds who want instant notification, text messages on sightings can be flashed to a wireless pager.

The site was developed by New York-based Upoc (www.upoc.com), which lets users send instant messages for free to people with shared interests. Some wireless service providers charge for text messaging.

Similar celebrity-seeking

groups have sprung up in Los Angeles and Boston.

So far, gossip columnists say they're not worried about competition.

"I'll bet we'll continue to have the best 'sightings' since we invented the genre," Richard Johnson, editor of the New York Post's Page Six, said in an e-mail.

Roughly 1,000 of Upoc's 27,000 members have joined "NYC celebrity sightings," one of the first groups formed on the site. They share a handful of messages each day describing the activities of the rich and famous.

"I hadn't thought of this as a service," said Greg Clayman, a co-founder and vice president of marketing. "What it did was prove that if you create the tools to let people do it, they will."

Kasia Anderson, a reporter who covers celebrity news at the New York Daily News, said the service could be fun for amateur star-seekers but could also cause concern among celebrities.

"Any publicity is good publicity, but there's a certain structure to that lifestyle where you have your public time and your private time," Anderson said. The rapid exchange of information on celebrity doings "does a lot to kind of destabilize this sort of shaky structure."

She said she wouldn't use the service.

Clayman said he hadn't received any complaints from stars.

New York police said the information sharing would be a problem only if someone used it for something illegal, such as stalking.

Compilation soars

■ Gorillaz celebrates three masters coming together.

BY NEAL OBERMEYER

Rock star collaborations, for all their potential, don't always add up in a 1 + 1 = 2 fashion. Rather, it's usually more of a 1 + 1 = -43 sort of mess.

Case in point: When David Bowie and Mick Jagger got together for "Dancing in the Street" it was no Ziggy Stardust meets the Rolling Stones. Ohhhhhh no.

And when George Michael and Aretha Franklin hooked up, it was nothing like the "Respect" meets "Monkey" masterpiece we wanted. Well, that's I wanted, at least.

The latest looking-good-on-paper superstar collaboration is Gorillaz, featuring the combined talents of Damon Albarn from Blur, Del the Funky Homosapien and Dan the Automator.

The three formed this little group after Damon appeared on Del and Dan's "Deltron 3030" album last year. And now together, they've made the 4-song "Tomorrow Comes Today" EP.

The difference between this and other collaborations is that Damon has gone and hooked up with two other musicians who, like Blur, have quite a reputation for sonic playfulness.

And that, my dears, is why Gorillaz shine. These are three genre-crossing geniuses who have demonstrated a proven ability to work with other artists in a collaboratively creative context and turn out incredible results.

The whole EP has a very laid-back feel, which is somewhat

Gorillaz
★★★★★

predictable given the members of the team. Each song is also equally infectious and inventive.

"Tomorrow Comes Today" and "Latin Simone," with their rhythm tracks and piano loops, start out sounding very hip-hop until Damon starts his raspy whisper of a tune, and they transform into songs that could have easily fit on Blur's "13."

Placed around the solo Del song "Rock the House," the underlying theme of this album emerges.

It's hard to tell from the opening seconds of these songs whether they will be indie rock or hip-hop. You have to wait for the vocalist to be able to categorize these songs, demonstrating how the lines between the genres have been blurring especially in the past few years.

Music makers these days grew up on their Joy Division and Black Flag, but the cooler kids on the playground were the ones who also knew about the Bomb Squad, Dre, Terminator X and Yella.

And so today we have artists like the Beta Band, Modest Mouse, the Super Furry Animals and Blur that display their indie rock credentials proudly on the surface, but betray an underlying understanding and appreciation for hip-hop masters of the past.

"Tomorrow Comes Today" is a perfect celebration of that. These are three masters at their respective crafts, and together they build a beautiful tribute to the paths that led some of the most inventive indie rock to where it is today.

Gorillaz "Tomorrow Comes Today" EMI Records

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Film flops might get reprieve

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Some movies that died early at the box office — including "Almost Famous," "Nurse Betty" and "Wonder Boys" — are hoping their Golden Globe awards will give them new life.

DreamWorks SKG, for example, said Monday it may reissue "Almost Famous" in U.S. theaters because of its two Golden Globe wins Sunday and honors from smaller organizations.

USA Films said it plans a theatrical re-release for "Nurse Betty," which won a best comedic actress Globe for Renee Zellweger.

Those movies are already out of theaters, but have yet to come out on video.

"Right now, it's not too late at all," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box office tracker Exhibitor Relations.

One film that might benefit most from its award — because it debuted only in December and is still expanding to more theaters — is "O Brother, Where Art Thou?," which won best actor in a comedy for George Clooney.

The same goes for the narcotics-trade drama "Traffic," which claimed best supporting actor for Benicio Del Toro and best screenplay for Stephen Gaghan.

The Roman blockbuster "Gladiator," which won Golden Globes for best dramatic movie and original score, probably won't benefit much from the added exposure, Dergarabedian said. It already has grossed more than \$200 million domestically, which means that most people who were interested already saw it.

"But for 'Almost Famous' or 'Nurse Betty,' the awards can make people who missed them sit up and take notice," he said.

Studios will also most likely use the awards to plug video releases or add prestige to Oscar campaigns.

"Almost Famous," which won best comedy and supporting actress for Kate Hudson, grossed only about half of its reported \$60 million budget. Its scheduled video debut is March 13 — just a couple of weeks before the Academy Awards.

The Golden Globes also could help the movie when it is released overseas, said Terry Press, DreamWorks' marketing chief.

Some analysts remain doubtful that most film honors affect a movie's earning potential at all.

"The only awards that really have an effect are best film winners and Oscar nominees," Robert Bucksbaum said.

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